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AWORD

The Hidden Third



The vetoing or blocking third in the Lebanese Cabinet is a flexible number and is open to many equations: 10+1+19 or 14+16 or 13+17 or 15+15 or 29+1 or 30x1 or 33/3...etc.

Consequently, the "national accord Cabinet" is formed of different numbers symbolizing seemingly strange equations yet consistent with the Lebanese society. From support of "Lebanon as one electoral district based on the proportional system" or "Mohafaza based on the proportional system", we are talking now about "qada'a" or "districts smaller than qada'a"; and all for the sake of "national unity", the opposition tells us.

From a "quartet alliance" to a "majority rule", an "imaginary majority" to a "consensual rule" and an "illegitimate government", to resigned but acting ministers and not resigned but not acting ministers; all for the sake of "national unity", the opposition tells us.

From seeking to "know the truth" and who "planned, conspired, perpetrated...", to the "international tribunal" and Chapter VII, to 16+14 or 11+19 or 17+13; all that because the "tribunal" is the essential priority, the pro-government forces tell us.

From "let the majority rule" to the rejection of popular presidential elections because the "majority" embraces the notion that Lebanon is based on consensus; all that because the "tribunal" is the essential priority, the pro-government forces tell us.

We are lost between a "vetoing third", a "blocking third" or a "sharing third" and monopolization of power; all for the sake of "national unity" and the "international tribunal".

In fact, "national unity" and the "international tribunal" are two sides of one currency in a society that is not truly a society, a state which is not truly a state and citizens who are not really citizens. Neither slogan achieves what it claims.

Out of all these numbers, equations and thirds, there is a hidden third which is beyond these banners, away from all confessions and their zu'ama.

This third of the Lebanese support civil marriage; this third wants non-confessional parliamentary elections; the same third calls for the prosecution of all warlords; this third wants true reconciliation and forgiveness. It wants a modern society free of confessional zu'ama and religious leaders⁽¹⁾.

It is the hidden third that would have had a major impact had the media been independent within an environment conducive to change.

It is the hidden third that has never surrendered to foreign forces or to religious leaders even when facing the hardest challenges. It is the resistant third, not because it is "Shia'a" or "Persian". It is a sovereign third, not because it is "Maronite" or "Phoenician". It is a justice-seeking third, not because it is "Sunni" or "pro-Hariri". It is a unifying third not because it is "Druze" or "Jumblati".

This third does not have absolute zu'ama and does not even want them.

This third has a memory, a heart and a mind. It is aware that the solution does not reside in the so-called national Cabinet, international tribunal or disarmament, but in building a State and forging citizenship.

It is a third that is truly attached to its roots and seeks to hold true dialogue. It does not swim with the current, be it Syrian, American or Iranian, but it flows like ideas without prejudice.

Neglected by both the government and the opposition, this hidden third, once discovered, would be recognized as the guardian and the cornerstone of this country.

⁽¹⁾ *The hidden third is an allegory of the third of Cabinet ministerial seats called for by the opposition. Since 1995, in all opinion polls conducted by Information International, respondents have shown opinions diverging from the political and social mainstream by a low of 20% and a high of 70%.*

_____ *Jawad A. Adra*

Lebanese heads of Confessions: Elected by Few, Ruling over Many and Accountable to No One

“No prosecution of religious leaders was registered over the past decades.”

The Lebanese laws acknowledge 18 confessions with a personal status, in line with Decision no.60/l.r., issued by the French High Commissioner on March 13, 1936.

Each of these confessions has its own law which regulates the affairs of its followers, including the election of the religious leader.

What is common between the 18 confessions is that not all the followers participate in the election of the leader, but only a few selected people. The religious leader is generally elected for life and cannot be overthrown unless he commits a breach, harms the interests of the confession or becomes unable to run its affairs.

The following article addresses the election of religious leaders in Lebanon.

Sunni Mufti

- **Conditions for candidacy:** The Sunni Mufti should be a Lebanese Sunni religious scholar of good reputation, with a degree in religious studies or no less than 15 years of experience in the religious judicial field. He should be above 40 years-old.
- **Term:** The Sunni Mufti's term ends when he reaches 72 years-old. However, his term should never be for less than 5 years. He cannot be exempted from his post unless for health problems that prevent him from carrying his duties or for other dangerous causes determined as such by the Higher Islamic Religious Council. In such case, the Islamic electoral council issues an exemption decision upon an order from the Council.
- **Electoral committee:** The Mufti is elected by the Islamic Electoral Council, which is formed of Sunni who occupy the following positions:
 - 1- Current and former prime ministers
 - 2- Sunni ministers
 - 3- Current Sunni deputies
 - 4- Members of the Higher Islamic Religious Council
 - 5- Current muftis
 - 6- Current religious judges
 - 7- Retired religious judges
 - 8- Amin al-Fatwa in Beirut and Trablous
 - 9- Director general of Islamic Awqaf

- **Electoral Process:** The election of a Sunni Mufti is regulated by Law No. 18 issued on January 13, 1955 and amended by decision No. 5 of March 2, 1967 and decision No. 50 of December 28, 1996. The elections require the presence of the two-third of the Islamic Electoral Council in the first round and half of them in the second round. The winner is the one who gets the absolute majority of votes. The elections are held by secret ballot. If only one candidate meets the necessary requirements for the position, he wins uncontested.
- **Authority:** The Sunni mufti is the religious head of Sunni followers and supervises their interests and affairs. He is also the president of all Muslim religious scholars and the highest authority in the Islamic Awqaf and al-Ifta'a departments. He exercises all the competences bestowed on him by laws and regulations. The mufti also appoints administrative employees and prominent religious men, like religious teachers, muezzins and orators.

President of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council

- **Conditions for candidacy:** The president should be a devoted Lebanese religious scholar, known for his jurisprudence among religious scholars.
- **Term:** His term ends when he reaches 65 years-old. He cannot be exempted from his post but for health

reasons or other serious causes determined as such by the executive and religious Shia'a committees.

- ⊙ **Electoral committee:** The president of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council is elected by the religious and executive committees. The religious committee is formed of 12 Lebanese religious scholars who are elected by a group of religious scholars for a 6-year term. The executive committee is formed of Shia'a deputies and 12 civil members, who are elected by a general committee by secret ballot. The general committee is formed of:

- 1- **Religious judges and current and former muftis**
- 2- **Lebanese religious scholars who graduated from religious institutes**
- 3- **Current and former Shia'a deputies and ministers**
- 4- **Shia'a civil judges**
- 5- **Shia'a university professors**
- 6- **Registered Shia'a lawyers, physicians, pharmacists and engineers**
- 7- **Civil servants in the second grade and above**
- 8- **Shia'a mayors in centers of each mohafaza and qada'a and members of municipal councils in Beirut**
- 9- **Shia'a representatives of cultural and social institutions and charitable associations in Beirut and its surroundings and in centers of each mohafaza and qada'a**
- 10- **Shia'a newspaper publishers, owners of news agencies, editors-in-chief and seven journalists registered in the Journalists' Association and elected by a group of registered journalists**
- 11- **Shia'a presidents and members of the Journalists Union's Council**
- 12- **Shia'a presidents and members of the chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture, presidents of Bank Owners' Union and Merchants and Industrialists Associations**
- 13- **Presidents and members of public institutions' administrative boards**
- 14- **Presidents of labor and professional unions**
- 15- **Presidents and representatives of Lebanese Diasporas around the world.**

- ⊙ **Electoral process:** The election is regulated by Law No. 72 of December 19, 1967 and amended by decision No. 16 of April 1, 1975 and Law No. 314 issued on March 24, 1994. The president is elected by vote of the relative majority whether he was member of the religious committee or not.

- ⊙ **Authority:** The president of the Higher Islamic

Shia'a Council supervises Shia'a religious affairs and implements decisions made by the council's committees. He represents the higher council and the Shia'a confession before the public authorities and private bodies. He also appoints the Ja'afari muftis and the employees of al-Ifta'a al-Ja'afari departments.

President of the Islamic A'alawi Council

- ⊙ **Conditions for candidacy:** The president of the Islamic A'alawi Council should be a member of the general committee and known for his good conduct and deep knowledge of religious affairs. He should be above 35-years old.

- ⊙ **Term:** The president is elected for 4 renewable years and cannot be exempted from his post but for health reasons or other serious problems determined by the religious and executive committees.

- ⊙ **Electoral committee:** The president is elected by the religious and executive committees. The executive committee is formed of ministers and deputies from the Islamic A'alawi Confession, in addition to 6 civil members elected by civil members in the general committee for a 4-year term.

The religious committee is formed of current muftis and 5 religious scholars elected for 4 years by current and former religious judges and muftis and religious scholars of the general committee.

The general committee is formed of:

- 1- **Current and former deputies and ministers**
- 2- **Presidents and members of the Islamic A'alawi Council and current and former religious judges and muftis**
- 3- **A'alawi judges, university professors and civil servants in the third grade and above**
- 4- **Retired officers**
- 5- **20 religious scholars elected by all A'alawi religious scholars**
- 6- **Presidents and members of public institutions' administrative boards**
- 7- **20 people registered in unions of free professions elected by A'alawi members of these unions**
- 8- **20 people with university degrees not registered in free professions' unions and elected by A'alawi holding university degrees**
- 9- **Two representatives of presidents of cultural, social and sport institutions and charitable associations, elected by the presidents of these institutions of the A'alawi confession**

Number of Clerics and Sheikhs

There are no official statistics on the number of clerics and sheikhs in Lebanon. According to Islamic and Christian religious sources, the number of Muslim sheikhs is estimated in the region at 1,700 (1,000 Shia'a and 700 Sunni). The number of clerics is estimated at 1,500 monks and 2,500 priests. Unofficial estimates, however – which critics consider exaggerated – approximate the number of clerics at 10,000.

Table no.2 shows the number of clerics and sheikhs compared to other occupations (2001-2002).

Number of clerics and sheikhs compared to other occupations (2001-2002) Table 2

	Number
Clerics and sheikhs	5,700-10,000
Doctors	11,000
Engineers	17,000
Bankers	15,000
Teachers	82,000
University professors	12,000
Lawyers	7,000
Military and security forces	90,000

Source: Compiled by Information International from syndicates, religious leaders and other sources (11 Monthly issue no.16 of October 2003)

10- A representative of public and private schools' directors, elected by A'alawi directors

11- Members of the following administrations: chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture – merchants and industrialists' associations

12- Heads of agriculture, labor and farmers' unions

13- a- Presidents and members of municipal councils in mohafaza and qada'a and mayors of villages and towns

b- A mukhtar representing each qada'a and elected by the A'alawi mayors of the qada'a.

14- Ten people working in sectors not included in the general committee and elected by current ministers and deputies by two-thirds majority

- ⊙ **Electoral process:** The election is regulated by Law No. 449 of August 17, 1995 and amended by Law No. 3 of February 20, 1999 and Law No. 490 of December 12, 2002. The president is elected by the executive and religious committees by secret ballot and relative majority. If two candidates receive the same number of votes, the older wins.
- ⊙ **Authority:** The president of the Islamic A'alawi Council heads the general, religious and executive committees. He also proposes names to be appointed to the Council.

Druze Confession Spiritual Leader (Sheikh A'akl)

A law that regulates the affairs of the Druze confession was issued on June 9, 2006.

- ⊙ **Conditions for candidacy:** The candidate should be a Lebanese Druze above 40 years-old, who has been practicing the Druze religious duties for more than five years. A spiritual leader should have a good reputation and a deep religious knowledge.
- ⊙ **Term:** The Sheikh A'akl is elected for 15 years which can be renewed by a decision made by the absolute majority of the Druze Religious Council. He cannot be

exempted from his duties unless he resigns or because of "serious causes that threaten the Confession's dignity, reputation and unity". He may also be exempted for health problems.

- ⊙ **Electoral Committee:** The Sheikh A'akl is elected by the members of the Religious Council, which is formed of permanent and elected members.

The permanent members include:

Sheikh A'akl, current ministers, current and former deputies, current Druze judges, the two Druze members of the Constitutional Council and the Druze member of the Higher Judicial Council.

The elected members include:

- 1- Druze with university degrees or free professions, such as lawyers, engineers, physicians, dentists, pharmacists and licensed accountants: members are elected in syndicates.
 - 2- Members representing Lebanese qada'a: eight representatives for the Chouf qada'a, eight for Aley, five for the Ba'abda qada'a, five for Hasbaya, five for Rashaya and two for Beirut and the remaining areas. Representatives are elected by the areas' mayors, members of municipal councils, mukhtars and members of mayoral councils.
 - 3- A religious committee formed of representatives of qada'a: four members for the Chouf, four members for Aley, two members for Ba'abda, two members for Hasbaya, two members for Rashaya, one member for Beirut and one member who represents the remaining areas.
- ⊙ **Authority:** The Druze spiritual leader presides over the Religious Council, supervises Druze assemblies and approves the confession's religious educational program. Moreover, the spiritual leader assigns Lebanese Druze to practice the confession's rites abroad, approves on all publications related to the confession and receives grants and donations according to the relevant laws.

President of the Higher Council of the Evangelical Confession in Syria and Lebanon

- ⦿ **Conditions for candidacy:** The president should be an Evangelical pastor above 45 years-old and ordained since more than 15 years.
- ⦿ **Electoral committee:** The president is elected by the general committee of the higher assembly, which is formed of representatives of member-churches, with a minimum of two representatives for each church, parish or area in Syria and Lebanon.
- ⦿ **Electoral process:** He is elected by the majority votes of the general committee.
- ⦿ **Term:** The president is elected for a four-year term.
- ⦿ **Authority:** He represents the Evangelical confession and churches before official and religious authorities. He also presides over the sessions of the general committee, the executive committee and the higher assembly's office and delegates the presidents of the courts of first instance and appeal. Moreover, the president approves sale, purchase and transfer transactions of funds belonging to member-churches and other Evangelical institutions.

The Maronite Patriarch

- ⦿ **Electoral process:** The patriarch is elected by the two-thirds majority of the Maronite Bishops in the world.
- ⦿ **Term:** He is elected for a life term. He quits when he becomes unable to assume his duties.
- ⦿ **Authority:** The patriarch presides over the Maronite Bishops' Council, which convenes at the first Wednesday of each month and discusses current issues.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch

- ⦿ **Conditions for candidacy:** He should be a bishop in the Greek Orthodox Church. He should be above 33 years-old with a baccalaureate degree and a degree in theology from a Greek Orthodox institute. The candidate should stand before a committee assigned by the Greek Orthodox Council to look into his eligibility.
- ⦿ **Electoral process:** The Patriarch is elected in line with the Greek Orthodox Church Charter. He is chosen from the members of the Holy Synod.
- ⦿ **Authority:** The patriarch is the president of the Holy Synod and the symbol of the unity of the Antioch Church. He represents the Church before other churches and states. He has full authority over the endowments of Antioch and Damascus and their monasteries.

- ⦿ **Term:** The patriarch is elected for life.

The Armenian Catholic Patriarch

He is elected for life by the Holy Synod of the Armenian Catholic Church, which is formed of 16 members. He should be above 40 years-old.

The Greek Catholic Patriarch

He is elected for life by the Bishops' Synod.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch

- ⦿ **Electoral process:** He is elected by the electoral committee which is formed of civil representatives and religious men.
- ⦿ **Electoral committee:** Each parish delegates one representative to the committee.
- ⦿ **Term:** The patriarch is elected for life.

Table no.1 shows the electorate of religious leaders by confession.

Religious Confessions' Organization

Law issued by Decision no.60/l.r.

On March 13, 1936

Amended by Decision no.146 issued on November 18, 1938 and by Law issued on December 21, 1962

The French High Commissioner,

According to the Mandate for Syria and the Lebanon, in particular Article 6;

According to the two decrees issued by the French president issued on November 23, 1920 and July 16, 1933;

According to Part A, Chapter II of the Lebanese Constitution issued on May 23, 1926;

According to Part A, Chapter II of the Syrian Constitution issued on May 22, 1930;

According to the Declaration of Rights listed in the Organic Law of the Latakia Cabinet issued on May 22, 1930;

According to the Declaration of Rights listed in the Organic Law of Jabal al-Druze Cabinet, issued on May 14, 1930;

Decides the following:

Part A, Personal Status Confessions

Article 1: Legally acknowledged confessions, such as confessions with personal status, are historical confessions, the organization and regulations of which were set in a legislative document. (...)

Electorate of religious leaders by confession

Table 1

Religious men from the confession	Civilians with free professions (physicians, lawyers, pharmacists, engineers, accountants, journalists, editors)	Members of local councils (municipalities, mayoral councils)	Cultural, social and charitable associations and institutions	Current and former deputies and ministers	Current employees (judges, professors, university students)	Current and former prime ministers	Civilians with free professions elected by the confessions members	Chambers of commerce, industry, labor and agriculture	Civil members appointed by the parishes	People with university degrees	Lebanese Diasporas
Higher Islamic Shia'a Council President	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+			+
Lebanese Mufti	+	+		+	+	+					
Druze Spiritual Leader	+			+	+		+				
President of the Islamic A'lawi Council	+	+	+	+	+			+		+	
Maronite Patriarch	+										
Greek Orthodox Patriarch	+										
Greek Catholic Patriarch	+										
Armenian Orthodox Patriarch	+								+		
Armenian Catholic Patriarch	+										
President of the Evangelical Higher Assembly	+										

Source: Compiled by Information International



Decision no. 60 of March 13, 1936, issued by French High Commissioner Damien de Martel, acknowledged 17 confessions. On July 24, 1996, Law no. 553 acknowledged the Copt Orthodox Confession and raised the number to 18 confessions.

Who Holds Heads of Confessions Accountable?

The Lebanese Constitution stipulates the respect of the freedom of belief and religion of all citizens.

Article 9 of the Constitution states that “there shall be absolute freedom of conscience; the state...shall respect all religions and creeds and guarantees, under its protection, the free exercise of all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. It also guarantees that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, is respected”.

The Lebanese Law deals with heads of confessions as heads of states in legislations and official ceremonies since they represent the first authority in their confessions.

However, unlike the prosecution of the prime minister and ministers regulated in Article 80 of the Constitution and Law no.13 of August 18, 1990, there are no laws or special mechanism to prosecute heads of confessions; therefore they cannot be held accountable for their acts.

No prosecution of religious leaders was registered over the past decades.

Moreover, heads of confessions and religious men enjoy a strong and sometimes absolute authority over religious courts. Lebanon’s history has witnessed the marginalization of many scholars and clerics due to their positions that were not welcomed by the religious authority. Among these figures were Boutros Chidiac who embraced the Protestant rite; Gebran Khalil Gebran and Gregory Haddad, who were both marginalized, in addition to Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah and his stands toward al-Faqih authority.

Muslim Clerics in the French Mandate

Some Muslim clerics were marginalized during the French Mandate and were referred to the Disciplinary Council, as shown in the examples listed below. 🍷

Decree no. 554

The President of the Lebanese Republic, the Prime Minister
According to the Decisions no. 55 and 56 issued by the higher commissioner on May 9, 1932,

According to Decision no. 641 of September 18, 1919

According to Inspection Report of July 11, 1932,

According to the proposal of the Judiciary director,

Decides to:

Article 1- Refer Sheikh Habib Moghnieh, the Ja’afari judge of Sour (Tyre) to the Ja’afari Court of Cassation formed as the Disciplinary Council.

Article 2- Publish and announce this decree whenever necessary.

Beirut, August 16, 1932

Signature: Charles Debbas

Director of Judiciary

Signature: Sami al-Khoury

Decree no. 2879

The President of the Lebanese Republic

According to the Lebanese Constitution issued on May 23, 1926;

Whereas Ali Afandi Zgheib, the Shia’a mufti, and Kamel Afandi al-Rifa’i, the Sunni mufti, have signed a petition against the government’s project;

According to a proposal from the prime minister, the minister of the judiciary and the general education;

Decides to:

Article 1- Prevent Ali Afandi Zgheib, the Shia’a mufti, and Kamel Afandi al-Rifa’i, the Sunni mufti in Ba’albeck, from working and refer them to the Disciplinary Council; Article 2 – Publish and announce this decree whenever necessary.

Beirut, February 28, 1928

Charles Debbas

Issued by the President of the Republic

The Prime Minister, the Minister of the Judiciary and the General Education

Bechara Khalil al-Khoury

Two Presidents, Two Cabinets and Two Parliaments?

In its issue no.55 of January 2007, *li Monthly* published an article entitled: “Lebanon 2007: A Constitutional Deadlock Leading to: Two Presidents, Two Parliaments, Two Governments or a Temporary Compromise?”

The article was a political and constitutional analysis that stated that Lebanon might have “two presidents - Emile Lahoud (or someone else) residing in Ba’abda Palace and the pro-government’s president who might make of the palace of Beiteddine his presidential seat - a divided Parliament and two Cabinets, one based in the Grand Serail and the other based in the Cabinet’s temporary headquarters in Mathaf (the National Museum area)”.

The article also said that “the impasse can also be temporarily resolved if the two sides acknowledge the necessity to reach an accord in order to preserve what remained of the country and its citizens”.

These presumptions, which were seen by some political analysts as unrealistic, are today widely discussed by politicians and in the media.

The following are some excerpts of articles and statements on this issue. ●

قماطى: ماذا سيحصل في لبنان إذا وصلنا للرئاسة بلا توافق؟

أبدي عضو المجلس السياسي

Hizbullah politburo member Mahmoud Qomati expresses concerns over the situation in Lebanon if no agreement was reached over the presidency. As-Safir, 11-4-2007.



li Monthly issue No. 55, January 2007.



قريباً في لبنان: رئيسان ومجلسان وحكومتان

Soon in Lebanon: Two Presidents, Two Parliaments, and Two Governments. Ash-Sharq Al-Awsat, 29-3-2007.



“The opposition is preparing to announce the second government” Al-Akhbar, 11-5-2007.



Al-Hoss: “The creation of two governments today is more dangerous than the past.” Al-Akhbar, 11-5-2007.

جنبلاط: الوضع محفوف بالخطر
والمواجهة تتمخض عن حكومتين

Jumblat: The situation is dangerous and will bring about two governments. An-Nahar, 29-3-2007.

نقاش دستوري سياسي يقود إلى بلد بحكومتين

A political constitutional discussion that will lead the country to two governments. Al-Akhbar, 12-4-2007.

Syrian - Lebanese Border Crisis

1958 = 2007

Syrian-Lebanese relations passed through different phases from the proclamation of Greater Lebanon in 1920 until today. At times, cooperation and friendship prevailed, and at others, disagreements, conflicts and enmity shook the Syrian-Lebanese ties.

Needless to say, regional and international events played a key role in this regard.

Following the 15-year period of “cooperation and unity of fate and path” (1995-2000) between Lebanon and Syria, a rupture in the relations occurred on the official level. Some Lebanese politicians and officials went on to call for “toppling the Syrian regime”, announcing their support to forces opposing it. Talks about arm smuggling from Syria into Lebanon to destabilize the country’s security and back Hizbullah started to spread on the international level. United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon told Lebanese officials that he had pictures proving arm smuggling into Lebanon, while the Lebanese minister of defense denied this accusation. Attempts were made to deploy international observers along the Syrian-Lebanese borders. In response, Syria threatened to close its borders with Lebanon in case such measure was taken.

A look into the history of Lebanese-Syrian relations shows that what is happening today is in fact very similar to past experiences. In July 1958, a dispute erupted between the two countries due to conflicting stands toward the Baghdad Pact, which was supported by Lebanon and rejected by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. The Lebanese president at the time, Camille Chamoun, and Prime Minister Sami al-Solh had the same stands towards Syria. However, there are some differences between the situation in the past and in the present.

Today, Prime Minister Fouad Sanioura is taking Al-Solh’s position against Syria while President Emile Lahoud is backing the Damascus regime. Meanwhile, the minister of foreign affairs in 1958, Charles Malek, was anti-Syrian, while the present Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fawzi Salloukh, is pro-Syria.

As for the Druze leadership, it is today accusing some Lebanese parties of receiving weapons from Syria, while in the past it was opposed to the Lebanese government and depended on Damascus officials to rearm.

In 1958, the United Nations and its secretary general, Dag Hammarskjold, did not adopt the Lebanese government’s complaints about arm smuggling. Today, they are acknowledging claims about weapon smuggling and Syrian militants entering Lebanon to hit its security.

Al-Solh issued a statement saying that “when the Lebanese government submitted complaints before the Arab League and the Security Council against the United Arab Republic, for interfering in Lebanon’s internal affairs, providing weapons to militants and inciting for strife, the UAR rejected the claims through its representatives to both institutions... The UAR went too far in sending arms of all kinds to Lebanon, heavy and light weapons, and in all means, times and places, without fearing the Security Council, which took into account the Lebanese complaint and appointed international

observers... If the secretary general stated that the observers did not find any hard evidence on a significant infiltration of armed people in the present time, how could the observers watch the flow of weapons and armed people from Syria as they were few of them and were prohibited from getting near the borders and in most areas controlled by militants”.

Al-Solh threw accusations against his opponents about receiving arms from Syria to overthrow the power and join the United Arab Republic. He also presented some evidence on his accusations based on testimonies obtained from some arrested people:

- 1- Nohad Mahmoud Munir al-Haddad from Trablous said that a Syrian military airplane was transporting weapons to the Qammoua’a plain, adding that he saw ten soldiers from the Syrian army in Trablous.
- 2- Khaled Abdallah Soueid from Trablous said that he went to bring weapons from Talklakh and saw there hundreds of Trablous citizens being trained to use arms by the Syrian Army.
- 3- A commander of a squad, Chief Fouad Bazzi, said that there were several Syrian officers with Kamal Jumblat, including Mohammed Tarabey, Hassib Reslan, Ghaleb Seif and Youssef al-Hakim.
- 4- Merhi Ayoub al-Naboulsi from Bakha’oun said that a committee was formed in Dinnieh to bring weapons from Syria to overthrow the power in Lebanon and join the UAR.
- 5- Najib Fares Imad stated that he saw in Mukhtara Syrian officer Ahmad al-Khatib who was training the rebels how to use weapons. He added that six or seven Syrian officers were leading the armed militants.
- 6- Jawad Ahmad al-Shahimi from Markaba said that he and his companions from the followers of Ahmad al-Asa’ad went to Baniyas and received weapons and artillery from a Syrian military barrack and brought them to Lebanon.
- 7- Ghazi Khattar Hassan said that 500 Syrian and Egyptian commandos arrived in Lebanon and joined the popular resistance in Beirut led by a Syrian officer called Mouwafaq. He added that Abi Taisir as-Sous, of Egyptian nationality, was the chief of bodyguards at the house of Sa’eb Salam and that the latter had a wireless device that allowed him to be in direct contact with Damascus.

The president at that time, Camille Chamoun, stated that “between 3,000 and 4,000 men infiltrated into our territories and they are part of a group of 12,000 rebels, including Syrian and Lebanese volunteer soldiers who were trained in Syrian military camps. As to arms, the rebels have more than 30,000 weapons, from guns to mortars”.

Today, Syria is accusing some Lebanese parties of being part of a regional scheme against it and those parties are accusing Syria of providing weapons to Lebanese groups in order to destabilize the government. Consequently, Syrian-Lebanese relations have drastically deteriorated.

Faces and roles change but the problem is the same: A Syrian-Lebanese crisis, perhaps caused, but definitely controlled by regional and international interests. ●●

Maronite Bishops' Statements and Declarations

A Rejection of Syrian "Interference" and "Concerns" over the Socioeconomic Situation

Few months after the election of Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir and for more than two decades now, the Maronite bishops have been holding monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month to discuss political and economic issues and the situation of the Maronites in Lebanon.

The bishops' meetings, held for the first time on September 30, 1986, are always headed by Sfeir, and end by the issuance of a statement that expresses the bishops' position toward the situation in the country.

Every year in September, the Maronite bishops issue a declaration, presenting an overview of the situation in the country and the Maronite Church's stands toward current issues.

The declarations focus generally on coexistence and unity, as well as the respect of the Lebanese Constitution and the international legitimacy.

They also highlight the importance of Lebanon's sovereignty and warn against monopolizing the decision-making.

Most Important Statements - Declarations

As they are issued by the highest Maronite religious authority in Lebanon, the declarations are seen as an expression of the Maronite stands and positions.

Some statements issued by the Maronite bishops raised controversies among politicians and religious men and instigated a wave of mixed reactions. The following are the major declarations since 2000 that met disputed reactions.

The bishops' declaration of September 20, 2000: After the parliamentary elections in 2000, the Maronite bishops issued a statement calling for the Syrian troops' withdrawal from Lebanon and focused on the following issues:

- 1- **Parliamentary elections:** The bishops attacked the electoral law, saying that it created large electoral districts with a large majority formed of a certain group and a minority of another group and resulted in the election of deputies who do not represent all factions of the people. The statement also criticized the large amounts of money spent in electoral campaigns and the role of the "Syrian intelligence" in forming the electoral lists and forcing the voters to vote for a list or another.
- 2- **Economic situation:** The bishops sounded the alarm over the difficult economic situation. They said that factories were closing down and schools were losing their students as parents cannot afford the tuition fees. They also warned against the emigration of the youth, adding that Lebanese products and labor force were facing competition from the Syrian products and labor force and that the government was doing nothing in this regard.
- 3- **Political situation:** The statement said that the political situation was unbearable in light of "tutelage over public institutions and the judiciary".
- 4- **Syrian troops' withdrawal:** The bishops said that after Israel's withdrawal, it was time for the Syrian Army to redeploy as a first step towards its final withdrawal in line with the Taif Accord. They also stressed that the withdrawal of the Syrian troops would not lead to internal strife and underlined the need to "establish excellent brotherly relations with Syria".

The bishops' statement met strong rejection from the Muslim figures in general and particularly from the supporters of the Syrian regime. Sunni and Shia'a leaders strongly opposed the Syrian troops' withdrawal. Sunni Grand Mufti Sheikh Mohammed Rashid Qabbani announced his support to the Syrian troops' presence in Lebanon, saying during a Friday's sermon: "This is our conviction and our will".

For his part, Vice President of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council Sheikh Abdel-Amir Qabalan called for national dialogue, adding that the Syrian presence in Lebanon was necessary.



“The bishops said that after Israel’s withdrawal, it was time for the Syrian Army to redeploy as a first step towards its final withdrawal in line with the Taif Accord.”

“Sunni Grand Mufti Sheikh Mohammed Rashid Qabbani announced his support to the Syrian troops’ presence in Lebanon, saying during a Friday’s sermon: “This is our conviction and our will”.”

The bishops’ declaration of September 11, 2004: After a summer of heated debates over the extension of President Emile Lahoud’s term and UN Security Council Resolution 1559, the bishops sounded the alarm over the emigration of the youth and the public debt which had reached 40 billion USD. It also criticized political bickering and corruption in public administrations, the manipulation of laws by top officials and the politicization of the judiciary. The bishops also expressed their concerns over squandering of public money and taxes imposed on families with limited income.

The bishops raised complaints over the amendment of the Constitution, which was “imposed by foreign parties”. The declaration said that ministers and deputies were forced to approve the constitutional amendment. While they highlighted the need to avoid any attempts to hit the Christian-Muslim unity, the bishops reiterated their calls for the withdrawal of Syrian troops. They said that “the Syrians have the last say in Lebanon and they consider the country as a Syrian district”.

This declaration was characterized by a harsh rhetoric against Syria, which was accused by the bishops of appointing the ministers and rulers, organizing the parliamentary elections in a way that best suits its interests, interfering in public administrations and institutions, protecting the corrupted leaders, which contributed to the emigration of the youth and the increase of the public debt.

The declaration also said that no party in Lebanon wanted to harm Syria, adding that it was for both countries’ interests to consolidate their bilateral relations.

The bishops’ declaration of September 7, 2005: The bishops stressed in clause 15 of the sixth declaration that arrests of security officers who were found suspects in Rafik Hariri’s assassination were an “embarrassment”. They also said that the presidential status was being criticized and attacked. The bishops expressed their positive stands toward the pullout of the Syrian troops but added that the Syrian intelligence was still present in Lebanon by proof of bomb attacks and assassinations.

The declaration noted that despite the developments that marked the year, parliamentary elections were held on time, adding that the return of Michel Aoun and the release of Samir Geagea have restored balance to the Lebanese political life. The bishops underlined the need to fight corruption in public institutions and administrations and public money squandering. They called for settling the controversial issue of Hizbullah’s arms through national dialogue and the deployment of the Lebanese Army in the South. Moreover, the bishops said that the Lebanese Diasporas should be granted the right to participate in the Lebanese political life and encouraged to invest in the country.

The bishops’ declaration of September 6, 2006: The bishops said that Lebanese parties were seeking their own interests instead of national ones. They added that the president’s role was inexistent and was used as a cover up for some politicians to reach personal ambitions. The declaration said that the new president should be “competent and fulfill Lebanon’s interests”. Moreover, the Maronite bishops noted that some parties were “monopolizing the decision-making in Lebanon by maintaining their weapons following the Israeli withdrawal in 2000 in violation of the Taif Accord”.

The bishops’ monthly statement issued on April 4, 2007, expressed the Maronite Church’s concerns over a presidential vacuum that would hamper the role of the other constitutional institutions. ●●

Marriage, Divorce and Civil Laws in Lebanon

Lebanon does not have a civil law that regulates personal status. Consequently, marriage, divorce and inheritance contracts fall under the competence of religious courts, as each confession has its own laws for personal status. Lebanese religious courts include:

- ⦿ Christian religious courts for the Maronite, Orthodox, Catholic and Armenian confessions and other Christian confessions
- ⦿ Sunni religious courts
- ⦿ Ja'afari (Shia'a) religious courts
- ⦿ Druze religious courts

The adoption of a civil law that regulates personal status raised controversies among the Lebanese, especially during Elias Hrawi's presidential term (1989-1998). The latter considered that the adoption of an optional law for civil marriage would pave the way for eliminating confessionalism in the future. On March 18, 1998, Hrawi submitted before the Cabinet a draft-law for an optional civil marriage, which was approved by a majority of 21 ministers and rejected by the prime minister and five ministers. Paradoxically, two of these five ministers were married civilly, one abstained from voting and two were absent. The prime minister refused to sign the decree and send it to Parliament. The Cabinet session was then described as "not only a civil marriage session but also a session of political divorce". Demonstrations were held in Beirut and before Dar al-Fatwa, the headquarters of the Sunni confession. Muslim religious men said that whoever approves civil marriage, even if optional, will be considered as an apostate". Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir also said at the time that civil marriage contradicted the Church's teachings. He added that "we are all equal before the law and we should support our Muslim brothers"⁽¹⁾.

Marriages in Lebanese Confessions

Marriage conditions differ from one confession to another:

Christianity

Matrimony is one of the seven sacraments of the Christian Church. The spouses should belong to the Christian confession; hence, a Muslim who wants to marry a Christian in a church should embrace Christianity. However, a Muslim who decides to adopt Christianity is considered as an apostate.

Druze

As for the Druze confession, marriage can only be concluded between two Druze spouses of Druze parents. A spouse of another confession cannot become Druze, as the Druze advocacy ended at the beginning of the 11th century. In case a Druze wished to marry a person of another confession, he/she should abandon the Druze confession.

Islam

Marriage in Islamic confessions is essentially a civil contract made by a religious man and registered in religious courts. Marriage between Sunni and Shia'a can occur without any obstacles. If a Muslim woman wished to marry a Christian, her husband should convert to Islam, while a Muslim can marry a Christian woman without her converting. However, in most cases, the Christian woman converts to Islam so she can have the right to inherit her husband's properties in case he dies.

Mixed and Civil Marriages in Lebanon

Civil marriage cannot be concluded in Lebanon as no law has been adopted to regulate it. A civil marriage concluded by Lebanese outside the country is then registered in departments of personal status.

In 2003, the number of marriage contracts reached 30,636 and decreased to 30,015 contracts in 2004 and to 29,705 in 2005. Moreover, divorce cases rose over the past years, reaching 4,746 contracts in 2005 compared to 4,372 in 2004 and 4,328 in 2003 (Graph no. 1).

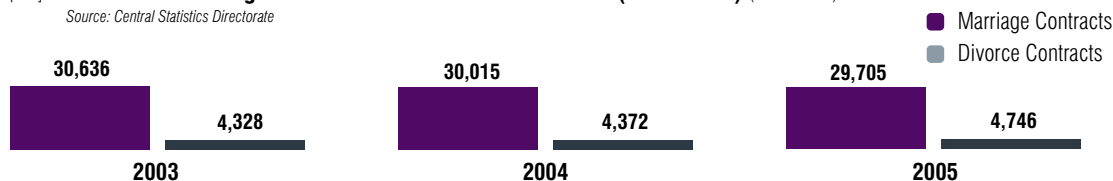
No statistics or official figures about the number of mixed and civil marriages are available. Unofficial estimates based on civil marriage contracts received from outside the country show that around 700 civil marriages are concluded yearly.

As for mixed marriages between Christians and Muslims, estimates show that around 50 to 75 contracts are concluded annually, which represents 0.16% of the total number of marriages.

Marriages between spouses of same religion but different confession (Sunni-Shia'a, Maronite-Orthodox and others) reach very high numbers. ●

⁽¹⁾ Kamil Mnassa, "Elias Hrawi, *The Return of the Republic, from Petty States to State*, p.587-582. Draft-law text p.653-674. Minutes of Cabinet session p.677-685.

[Graph 1] **Number of Marriage and Divorce Contracts in Lebanon (2003-2005)** (in thousands)
Source: Central Statistics Directorate



Article 58 of the Constitution: Laws executed by Decrees

The Cabinet has the authority to issue legislative decrees based on precedents, while the Constitution allows the President to issue laws deemed urgent by the Cabinet, without being passed by Parliament. Article 58 of the Constitution states: "Every Bill the Council of Ministers deems urgent and in which this urgency is indicated in the decree of transmission to the Chamber of Deputies may be issued by the President within forty days following its communication to the Chamber, after including it on the agenda of a general meeting, reading it aloud before the Chamber, and after the expiration of the time limit without the Chamber acting on it".

Before its amendment in 1990, Article 58 stipulated that "every Bill the Council of Ministers deems urgent and in which this urgency is indicated in the decree of transmission to the Chamber of Deputies may be issued by the President after the approval of the Council within forty days following its communication to the Chamber and without the Chamber acting on it". 273 laws executed by decrees were issued between 1958 (Camille Chamoun's tenure) and 1984 (Amin al-Gemayel's tenure).

The amended law stipulates that the bill should be listed on the agenda of a parliamentary general session and read before Parliament.

Conditions to implement Article 58 of the Constitution

1- Determining the Urgency of Bills⁽¹⁾:

Article 58 stipulates that determining the urgency of a bill falls within the authority of the Cabinet. Article 105 of Parliament's by-laws states that Parliament can pass, amend or return a bill, but not determine its emergency. Moreover, the Cabinet cannot deem urgent a bill that had already been returned by Parliament during the same session. Article 38 of the Constitution states: "No Bill that has been rejected by the Chamber may be re-introduced during the same session".

Some people might ask whether Article 38 covers draft-laws submitted by deputies but not those submitted by the Cabinet.

The Constitutional Council answered this question in its decision no.3/2001, stating that Article 38 was comprehensive and included draft-laws and bills.

2- The expiration of the time limit without the Chamber discussing the bill:

The time limit raised controversies prior to the constitutional amendment of 1990. In the past, the Cabinet used to refer to the date when the decree is communicated to Parliament's office in order to determine the beginning of the 40-day time limit. The Cabinet used to include the following expression in the laws executed by decrees: "Whereas more than 40 days have passed since the communication of this Bill to the Chamber of Deputies without the Chamber acting on it..."

However, other theories used to say that the 40-day time limit starts when the bill is discussed during a parliamentary session. As of 1970, the expression included in the laws executed by decrees became: "Whereas more than 40 days have passed since the Bill was discussed by Parliament without acting on it..."

The new text eliminated all ambiguities around the beginning of the time period, which starts "after including the bill on the agenda of a general meeting and reading it aloud before the Chamber".

This text allows the Speaker of Parliament to delay the inclusion of a bill in Parliament's agenda. Moreover, Article 108 of Parliament's by-laws states that "the period between the two general sessions is not included in the 40-day time period. If the decree stipulating the opening of an extraordinary session does not require the Chamber to study the urgent Bill during the session, the 40-day time limit remains suspended".

This text was added because former governments used to announce the end of the 40-day term whether an ordinary or extraordinary session was held or even if Parliament was not convening.

Legal Nature of Decrees

Determining the legal nature of these decrees helps determining the judicial party which can look into their constitutionality.

Are they administrative works that can be challenged before the State Shura Council or legislative works that are challenged before the Constitutional Council? Are they governmental works that do not fall under the control of the judiciary?

The Shura Council made its remarks on this issue in several phases. It first considered these decrees as governmental works, as stated in its decision no.113 of November 15, 1959: “Whereas relations between the heads of the executive power of the Chamber of Deputies such as inviting electors to vote or issuing an urgent and reiterated law by a decree, represent governmental works that do not fall under the control of the judiciary...”

In decision no.1198 of December 6, 1961, the Shura Council said that the decree which executes an urgent and reiterated law was legislative, thus cannot be controlled by the Shura Council. There was no constitutional council to challenge these decrees.

The Shura Council then changed its position and its Affairs Council (al-Qadaya Council) issued decision no.8 of December 9, 1970, which considered decrees that issue laws under article 58 are administrative works. The decision stated: “Whereas decrees issued by the Cabinet by its extraordinary competence under Article 58 of the Constitution make bills transferred to the Chamber valid even if they were not passed by the Chamber. They are works issued by the executive power and emanating from government’s authority”.

Consequently, these decrees can today be challenged before the State Shura Council, which controls the decree in form and discusses its constitutionality with regards to the 40-day time limit and its inclusion on the agenda of a general meeting.

Table no.1 shows presidential tenures during which Article 58 was implemented.

Presidents during the French Mandate did not implement Article 58 because the High Commissioner had the authority to issue legislations along with Parliament, which used to act according to Cabinet’s orders.

President Suleiman Franjeh issued 99 laws executed by decrees. Article 58 was aimed at encouraging Parliament to issue laws deemed urgent by the Cabinet. However, the issuance of a large number of decrees in a short period of

Presidential tenures during which Article 58 was implemented
Table 1

President	Number of Laws	Year
Camille Chamoun	2	1958
	5	1960
Fouad Chehab	4	1961
	14	1962
	17	1963
	47	1964
Charles Helou	1	1966
	3	1967
	21	1968
	15	1969
	5	1970
Suleiman Franjeh	14	1971
	23	1972
	24	1973
	24	1974
	9	1975
	3	1977
Elias Sarkis	1	1978
	23	1979
	3	1980
	2	1981
	6	1982
Amin al-Gemayel	6	1983
	1	1984
Total	273	

Source: Al-Mushitamal (Lebanese legislation records)

time means that the president went too far in implementing Article 58 and did not distinguish between urgent and non-urgent bills.

The Cabinet used to deem laws urgent on purpose, such as the case with the State Shura Council law issued under decree no.10434 of June 14, 1975. The Cabinet referred the decree to Parliament on May 31, 1974, at the end of the first ordinary session (Article 32 of the Constitution) and the law became valid at the end of the 40-day time period.

Today, the Cabinet is no longer able to do so as the Constitution stipulates that the bill should be included on the agenda of a general meeting and read aloud before the Chamber. ●●

⁽¹⁾ Some Lebanese jurists considered that determining the urgency of a bill was within the competence of the legislative power. They believed that granting the executive power the exclusive right to determine the urgency of a bill would hamper the principle of equity between the executive and legislative powers.

Lack of Passport Papers:

A technical problem or an attempt to limit Lebanese emigration?

An opinion poll conducted by **Information International** in February 2007 showed that around 11.9% of Lebanese youth have submitted emigration applications in light of the political and economic situation (see *li Monthly* issue 58). This news coincided with a problem at the General Security, consisting of a lack of passport papers. In this article, *li Monthly* addresses this problem and its causes.

During the first months of 2007, a passport crisis erupted and the Lebanese wishing to travel were not given passports. Rumors spread about government's attempts to stop the issuance of passports for a period of time in order to limit emigration or to stop some people from leaving the country. Other rumors said that foreign embassies asked the government to do so in order to decrease the number of people applying for visas.

After a while, the General Security Directorate General issued a statement saying that the passport crisis was due to the contractor's failure to provide it with laminated paper especially used for passports and that it was seeking to sign a contract with another company.

What is the true story behind this crisis?

A statement issued following a Cabinet session on March 14, 2007 said:

"In 2001, the General Security Directorate General held a public bid to modernize Lebanese passport papers. The number of passports required was one million, in addition to 750,000 passports later added;

The winner of the bid, Computer Information Systems (CIS), was assigned to provide one million passports for 3,391,200,000 LBP. The price list presented by CIS stipulated:

LAMINAT + PASSPORT

Number: 1,000,000

One passport: 15.7 French Francs (FF)

In one of its letters sent on August 13, 2002, the company said that the price of the passport also incorporates the laminated paper;

The Directorate General of the General Security said that

bid document no.418/m of November 2, 2001 did not include the price for laminated papers, but the price of the passport as a whole, including that of the papers;

The Directorate General received the 1,750,000 passports, which were delivered in eight phases between November 13, 2002 and October 6, 2003. The value of the contract was paid in six installments between March 20, 2003 and July 12, 2003. The documentary credit amounted to 3,920,871 USD;

In cooperation with CIS, the Directorate General received the laminated papers in several phases.

The quantity of laminated papers received until this date (March 14, 2007) is 1,135,812 and the remaining prepaid quantity is 614,188 papers, valued at 600,000 USD;

The General Security Directorate General asked the company for an additional 300,000 laminated papers, estimated at 300,000 USD. Consequently, the total number of laminated papers to be delivered amounted to 914,188, estimated at 900,000 USD;

The CIS Company signed a contract with the French Imprimerie Nationale to print the laminated papers. A representative from the printing company consulted the ministry of interior saying that the CIS did not pay for the laminated papers delivered to the General Security;

The price set by CIS was in French franc but the documentary credit opened by the General Security was in USD. In this context, the company submitted a letter in 2004 asking for settling the differences in exchange rates which amounted to around one million USD;

When consulted, the Court of Audit stressed the necessity to compensate for the loss and pay a part of the amount to the company, provided that unexpected charge losses are confirmed. For its part, the legislative and consultative committee at the ministry of justice said the unexpected charge losses should be confirmed before setting the amount of the compensation;

In order to guarantee the continuation of delivery of papers, the minister of interior and municipalities decided

to conclude a reconciliation agreement with the company. Despite this agreement, the company did not provide laminated papers or pay for the Imprimerie Nationale;

The Directorate General of the General Security stated that a deposit of 104,000 USD was placed as a guarantee to receive laminated papers from CIS and that the company, after receiving the whole amount set in the contract, did not meet its responsibilities;

Consequently, the company has abstained from implementing the contract, which necessitates the application of Articles 135 and 140 of the Public Accounting Law, in addition to Paragraphs 97 and 98 of Article 9 of the contract administrative conditions;

The General Security Directorate General did not mention in the administrative conditions any information on the delivery means of the laminated papers. It also paid for the whole package before receiving the remaining quantity of papers.

An investigation is required in order to determine the reason for this problem;

The Directorate General of General Security held several meetings with the Imprimerie Nationale's advisor in Lebanon to discuss the means to ensure the continuous delivery of laminated papers.

It appeared that the printing company was selling the laminated papers to CIS at 0.84 Euro for one paper, and that the latter was giving it to the Directorate General at the same price, in addition to shipping and custom costs. The whole value of the deal is estimated at one million USD and requires a mutual agreement in line with Paragraph 12 of Article 147 of the Public Accounting Law.

The ministry presents the issue before the Cabinet and proposes the following:

- 1- Approving on holding a mutual agreement with the French Imprimerie Nationale or with its representative, in line with Paragraph 12 of Article 147 of the Public Accounting Law in order to ensure the delivery of laminated papers;
- 2- Considering that CIS did not abide by the contract and implementing Articles 135 and 140 of the Public Accounting Law, in addition to related texts in the

administrative conditions of the contract. Moreover, adopting all the adequate measures to ensure the government's rights in this regard;

- 3- Opening an administrative investigation at the Directorate General to clarify the reasons why the means of delivery were not mentioned in the contract and why the total value was paid before receiving the whole package;
- 4- Providing an immediate credit of two billion LBP to conclude a mutual agreement with the abovementioned printing company, distributed as follows:
 - ⊙ 756,000 Euros or 1,496,880,000 LBP for the price of laminated papers (0.84 Euro per paper);
 - ⊙ 15.5% of the total amount is reserved for customs and shipping fees, in addition to the Value Added Tax".

The resumption of issuing passports shows that the problem was technical and not political.

However, some questions remain unclear:

- ⊙ Why didn't the General Security hold a direct agreement with the Imprimerie Nationale instead of working through CIS?
- ⊙ Why wasn't the banking account opened in Euro instead of USD?
- ⊙ Do the differences in prices represent 25% of the contract value (one million USD as differences resulting from the exchange rate and 3.9 million USD as the total value of the deal), particularly that exchange rates at that time do not explain these differences. Why is the government bearing the costs of these differences and not the company?
- ⊙ Why did the company place 104,000 USD only as a guarantee to receive the laminated papers knowing that the value of laminated papers amounted to 600,000 USD?
- ⊙ Why has the French printing company referred to the ministry of interior and municipalities instead of consulting the CIS about the latter's abstention from paying the installments?
- ⊙ Is the price for one laminated paper (0.84 Euros) overstated in an attempt to compensate the losses of the Imprimerie Nationale?

No evidence has been reached to confirm the rumors about emigration. However, the number of 1,750,000 passports is definitely indicative of the frequency of travel and emigration. ●●

Real Estate Ownership by Foreigners:

Emiratis rank first followed by Saudis and Kuwaitis

The real estate ownership by foreigners flourished in Lebanon with the beginning of the 1950s. In fact, many residents of Arab countries come every year to Lebanon to spend the summer and buy houses or lands to build on.

A law executed by Decree no.11614 of January 4, 1969, allows non-Lebanese to purchase a real estate of a maximum area of 3,000 square meters without a license. A license from the Council of Ministers is required if the real estate surpasses this area.

Licenses to own spacious real estates increased over the past few years, in particular after February 14, 2005. Table no.1 shows foreigners' ownership licenses in all Lebanese areas from January 1, 2005 until the end of 2005.

Some facts are noteworthy:

- 1- The Cabinet issued these licenses during 12 sessions held on January 25, February 18, June 16, August 8, September 5, 6, 15 and 29, October 6, 20, 27 and November 24, 2005.
- 2- The total area of real estates licensed for purchase reached 4,143,722.8 square meters.
- 3- The real estates were mainly distributed in the qada'a of Ba'abda, Aley and Matn.
- 4- Foreign companies ranked first with 2,468,364 square meters of real estate licensed for purchase. Real estates owned by individuals were as follows: Emiratis: 554,533 square meters; Saudis: 386,185.5 m²; Kuwaitis: 240,584.7 m²; Qatari: 187,056.6 m²; Jordanians: 91,649 m²; Canadians: 12,683 m²; Bahrainis: 49,860 m²; Iranians: 21,731 m²; Americans: 20,277 m²; Libyans: 9,736 m²; and Syrians: 9,095 m². The US Embassy purchased a real estate of 83,008 m² to build its new offices.

The ownership of licenses to purchase real estates by foreigners from January 1, 2005 until the end of 2005 Table 1

Decree # and date	Owner's Country	Area (square meter)	Real Estate location- qada'a	Ownership purpose	Date of submission of ownership request
14064 of 25-1-2005	Qatar	12740	Bekfaya- Matn	Building and residence	25-8-2004
14114 of 4-2-2005	Kuwait	3200	Shabanieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	21-10-2004
14115 of 4-2-2005	Kuwait	3175	Ba'abda	Building and residence	27-10-2004
14116 of 4-2-2005	Company	4283	Beirut	Hotel and furnished apartments	19-11-2004
14117 of 4-2-2005	Kuwait	4462	Ma'aisra- Kesrouan	Building and residence	20-9-2004
14118 of 4-2-2005	Saudi Arabia	33430	Benta'el- Jbeil	Building and residence	18-8-2004
14132 of 7-2-2005	Company	25599	Shabanieh- Ba'abda	Tourist resort	19-11-2004
14133 of 7-2-2005	Kuwait	25743	Shananieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	18-11-2004
14134 of 7-2-2005	Saudi Arabia	7857	Araya- Ba'abda	Building and residence	13-11-2004
14135 of 7-2-2005	Kuwait	3851	Qornayel- Ba'abda	Building and residence	12-10-2004
14136 of 7-2-2005	Kuwait	1509	Qornayel- Ba'abda	Building and residence	2-11-2004
14137 of 7-2-2005	Kuwait	2625	Mansourieh- Aley	Building and residence	27-9-2004
14138 of 7-2-2005	Saudi Arabia	1714	Aley	Building and residence	24-9-2004
14139 of 7-2-2005	Bahrain	5019	Aley	Building and residence	18-11-2004
14140 of 7-2-2005	Qatar	6378	Souk al-Gharb- Aley	Building and residence	27-9-2004
14141 of 7-2-2005	Saudi Arabia	53965	Aramoun and Qobbeh- Aley	Building and residence	2-11-2004
14142 of 7-2-2005	United Arab Emirates	6508	Dahr al-Souwan- Matn	Building and residence	6-12-2004
14143 of 7-2-2005	United Arab Emirates	3588	Saqiat al-Misk- Matn	Building and residence	22-1-2004
14144 of 7-2-2005	Saudi Arabia	2413	Broumana- Matn	Added to another real estate	18-11-2004
14145 of 7-2-2005	Company	5375	Mar Boutros Karm el-Tein- Matn	Industrial purpose	9-8-2004
14146 of 7-2-2005	UAE	1550	Feytroun- Kesrouan	Building and residence	20-9-2004
14147 of 7-2-2005	Saudi Arabia	6090	Chna'anir-Kesrouan	Building and residence	25-11-2004
14238 of 26-2-2005	Company	4492	Al-Oumara'- Aley	Industrial purposes	15-9-2004
14239 of 26-2-2005	Saudi Arabia	1800	Abeih- Aley	Building and residence	13-10-2004

Decree # and date	Owner's Country	Area (square meter)	Real Estate location- qada'a	Ownership purpose	Date of submission of ownership request
14240 of 26-2-2005	Kuwait	5000	Ba'alshamieh-Aley	Building and residence	29-10-2004
14241 of 26-2-2005	Libya	9736	Meshmesh-Jbeil/ Mansourieh-Matn	Building and residence	28-9-2004
14242 of 26-2-2005	Company	1036915	Baskinta- Matn	Tourism investment	7-8-2004
14233 of 26-2-2005	Company	17035	Baoushrieh-Matn	Tourism investment	7-8-2004
14466 of 24-2-2005	US Embassy	83008	Ba'abda	Building embassy headquarters	22-4-2005
14704 of 20-6-2005	Company	24648	Mina al-Hosn-Beirut	Tourism resort	11-6-2004
14705 of 20-6-2005	UAE	120	Ain al-Mraisseh- Beirut	Building and residence	17-3-2005
14706 of 20-6-2005	UAE	11090	Mtein- Matn	Building and residence	31-5-2005
14707 of 20-6-2005	UAE	17010	Mar Moussa al-Dwar- Matn	Building and residence	12-5-2005
14708 of 20-6-2005	Qatar	10467	Abbadieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	17-9-2004
14709 of 20-6-2005	Qatar	4709	Abbadieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	21-2-2005
14710 of 20-6-2005	Qatar	7417	Abbadieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	17-9-2004
14711 of 20-6-2005	Qatar	64749	Falougha- Ba'abda	Building and residence	14-4-2005
14712 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	13192	Falougha- Ba'abda	Building and residence	7-1-2005
14713 of 20-6-2005	Qatar	1215	Fatqa- Kesrouan	Building and residence	24-2-2005
14734 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	7110	Mansourieh - Aley	Agricultural project	2-3-2005
14735 of 20-6-2005	Saudi Arabia	21015	Ras al-Matn- Ba'abda	Building and residence	11-1-2005
14736 of 20-6-2005	UAE	10936	Jouret al-Ballout- Matn	Building and residence	7-2-2005
14737 of 20-6-2005	Saudi Arabia	5030	Qa'aqour-Matn	Building and residence	24-2-2005
14738 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	4635	Beit Mery- Matn	Building and residence	29-2-2005
14739 of 20-6-2005	Saudi Arabia	5833	Dahr al-Souwan- Matn	Building and residence	26-2-2005
14740 of 20-6-2005	Saudi Arabia	69749	Different areas	Real estate investment	12-10-2004
14741 of 20-6-2005	Saudi Arabia	12790	Bekfaya- Matn	Building and residence	28-1-2005
14742 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	3108	Sin el-Fil- Matn	Building and residence	9-3-2005
14743 of 20-6-2005	Company	3331	Ma'aisra- Kesrouan	Building and residence	5-4-2005
14745 of 20-6-2005	Company	65397	Kfardebian- Kesrouan	Tourism project	6-4-2005
14746 of 20-6-2005	Company	36470	Ain Ksour- Aley	Real estate investment	4-1-2005
14747 of 20-6-2005	Canada	1245	Souk al-Gharb- Aley	Building and residence	2-2-2005
14748 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	5485	A'aitat- Aley	Building and residence	2-2-2005
14749 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	14000	Aramoun- Aley	Real estate investment	16-5-2005
14750 of 20-6-2005	UAE	127	Aley	Building and residence	13-1-2005
14751 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	3595	Falougha- Ba'abda	Building and residence	6-12-2004
14752 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	893	Falougha- Ba'abda	Building and residence	8-1-2005
14753 of 20-6-2005	Saudi Arabia	5413	Ba'abda	Building and residence	9-5-2005
14754 of 20-6-2005	Saudi Arabia	5422	Ba'abda	Residential project	12-4-2005
14755 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	6602	Abbadieh and Ta'alabaya	Building and residence	26-4-2005
14756 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	3063	Hamana- Ba'abda	Building and residence	9-5-2005
14757 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	13192	Falougha- Ba'abda	Building and residence	8-1-2005
14758 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	3351	Sin el-Fil- Matn	Building and residence	21-12-2004
14759 of 20-6-2005	Iran	21731	Bqa'asafrin-Minieh	Building and residence	21-4-2004
14760 of 20-6-2005	Company	44295	Adous-Ba'albek	Agricultural investment	26-7-2004
14761 of 20-6-2005	Bahrain	40505	Jarjoui'- Nabatieh	Building and residence	25-1-2005
14762 of 20-6-2005	Company	8888	Mina al-Hosn- Beirut	Real estate project	23-3-2005
14763 of 20-6-2005	Jordan	25875	Dibbieh- Chouf	Building and residence	8-1-2005
14764 of 20-6-2005	Kuwait	220	Msaitbeh- Beirut	Residence	18-11-2004
14765 of 20-6-2005	Company	7269	Halat- Jbeil	Industrial project	28-12-2004
14766 of 20-6-2005	Company	18158	Msaitbeh- Beirut	-	11-6-2005
14842 of 28-6-2005	Company	12411	Ouyoun- Matn	Real estate investment	4-1-2005
14869 of 1-7-2005	Company	14878.46	Ba'abda	Building luxury apartments for investment	2-7-2005
14870 of 1-7-2005	Company	86796	Louaizeh- Ba'abda Chtaura- Zahleh Bhamdoun al-Qarieh- Aley	Real estate investment	24-2-2005
14983 of 16-8-2005	Kuwait	80.46	Bshamoun- Aley	Building and residence	15-6-2005
14984 of 16-8-2005	Saudi Arabia	6623	Shemlan- Aley	Building and residence	25-6-2005
14985 of 16-8-2005	Saudi Arabia	2004	Shemlan- Aley	Building and residence	23-7-2005
14986 of 16-8-2005	Qatar	10291	Ba'abda	Building and residence	1-7-2005
14987 of 16-8-2005	Company	11745	Ras al-Matn- Ba'abda	Building and real estate investment	28-6-2005

Decree # and date	Owner's Country	Area (square meter)	Real Estate location- qada'a	Ownership purpose	Date of submission of ownership request
14988 of 16-8-2005	Syria	9095	Falougha- Aley	Building and residence	30-7-2005
14989 of 16-8-2005	Saudi Arabia	14390	Baskinta- Matn	Building and residence	6-7-2005
14990 of 16-8-2005	UAE	3980	Saqiet al-Misk and Bhorsaf- Matn	Building and residence	18-7-2005
14991 of 16-8-2005	Saudi Arabia	49.2	Zouk Mosbeh- Kesrouan	Residence	18-7-2005
14992 of 16-8-2005	Jordan	65774	Kfar Abida- Batroun	Building and residence	29-6-2005
14993 of 16-8-2005	Kuwait	53036.50	Ta'anayel- Zahleh Abbadieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	22-1-2005
15159 of 23-9-2005	Kuwait	6234	Hamana- Ba'abda	Building and residence	4-8-2005
15160 of 23-9-2005	Saudi Arabia	3036	Mhaidseh- Matn	Building and residence	8-8-2005
15161 of 23-9-2005	Kuwait	2916	Bhamdoun al-Mahata- Aley	Restoration and residence	9-8-2005
15162 of 23-9-2005	Company	482.22	Bhamdoun al-Mahata- Aley	Building and investing in a hotel	18-8-2005
15163 of 23-9-2005	Company	13100	Al-Ta'azanieh- Aley	Commercial project	22-8-2005
15164 of 23-9-2005	Company	539474	Bqa'a Sfarin- Minieh- Dinnieh Btater- Aley	Building and trade	19-8-2005
15165 of 23-9-2005	Saudi Arabia	1102	Sahel Alma- Kesrouan	Building and residence	1-8-2005
15166 of 23-9-2005	Company	81.312	Msaitbeh- Beirut	Food warehouse	7-6-2005
15216 of 27-9-2005	Company	232	Mina al-Hosn- Beirut	Added to another real estate to build a hotel	3-9-2005
15285 of 5-10-2005	UAE	485.891	Qobai'- Ba'abda Ghandourieh- Bint Jbeil Qobbah- Aley	Building and residence	9-5-2005
15286 of 5-10-2005	Company	1308	Msaitbeh- Beirut	Real estate investment	10-9-2005
15287 of 5-10-2005	Saudi Arabia	29465	Ras al-Matn- Ba'abda	Building and residence	5-8-2005
15288 of 5-10-2005	Qatar	1261	Abbadieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	10-9-2005
15289 of 5-10-2005	Kuwait	4671	Ba'abda	Building and residence	13-9-2005
15290 of 5-10-2005	Qatar	14596	Ballouneh- Kesrouan	Building and residence	7-9-2005
15291 of 5-10-2005	Saudi Arabia	16693.3	Azza- Nabatieh	Poultry project	2-9-2005
15292 of 5-10-2005	Canada	11438	Shemlan- Aley	Commercial and residential project	31-8-2005
15293 of 5-10-2005	Company	5477	Batloun- Aley	Touristic and residential project	28-7-2005
15340 of 5-10-2005	Saudi Arabia	59164	Smar Jbeil and Kfar Abida- Batroun	Residence and real estate investment	8-8-2005
15342 of 5-10-2005	Kuwait	12212	Haret Hamza- Ba'abda	Building and residence	30-8-2005
15476 of 17-10-2005	Saudi Arabia	3470	Qornayel- Ba'abda	Building and residence	14-9-2005
15477 of 17-10-2005	Saudi Arabia	3440	Ba'abdatt and Saflieh- Matn	Building and residence	16-9-2005
15478 of 17-10-2005	Qatar	843	Abbadieh- Ba'abda Qobbah- Aley	Residence	12-9-2005
15479 of 17-10-2005	United States	16778	Jedita- Zahleh	Residence and agriculture	14-9-2005
15601 of 29-10-2005	Bahrain	4336	Bekfaya- Matn	Building and residence	27-9-2005
15657 of 7-11-2005	Germany	8960	Assia- Batroun	Building and residence	15-10-2005
15666 of 9-11-2005	Waterfront City Company	193655	Dbayeh-Matn	Tourism project	13-10-2005
15667 of 9-11-2005	Saudi Arabia	3543	Kfar Matta- Aley	Building and residence	20-10-2005
15668 of 9-11-2005	UAE	2660	Saqiet el-Misk and Bhorsaf- Matn	Building and residence	3-10-2005
15669 of 9-11-2005	Saudi Arabia	4525	Broumana- Matn	Building and residence	11-10-2005
15670 of 9-11-2005	Kuwait	11315	Mar Moussa- Matn	Building and residence	17-10-2005
15671 of 9-11-2005	Saudi Arabia	121	Abbadieh- Ba'abda	Building and residence	5-10-2005
15838 of 29-11-2005	Uniceramic Company	14945	Mandra- Zahleh	Expanding the company	7-10-2005
15839 of 29-11-2005	Kuwait	18105	Qornayel- Ba'abda	Agricultural project	26-10-2005
15840 of 29-11-2005	Kuwait	1860	Falougha- Ba'abda	Building and residence	8-11-2005
15841 of 29-11-2005	Saudi Arabia	6039	Kfar Matta- Aley	Building and residence	9-11-2005
15842 of 29-11-2005	UAE	1618	Dahr al-Souwan- Matn	Building and residence	11-11-2005
15843 of 29-11-2005	Qatar	56160	Aqoura- Jbeil	Building and residence	8-11-2005
15844 of 29-11-2005	UAE	9455	Adonis and Snour- Jbeil	Building and residence	12-11-2005
15851 of 1-12-2005	Qatar	54,6	Ras Beirut- Beirut	Residence	1-11-2005
15879 of 6-12-2005	Qatar	6467	Al-Ta'azanieh- Aley	Building and residence	19-11-2005
15881 of 6-12-2005	Company	272,106	Zahleh	Health project	16-9-2005
15912 of 9-12-2005	United States	3499	Rmaileh- Chouf	Residence	23-11-2005
15913 of 9-12-2005	Kuwait	126.2	Beit Mery- Matn	Residence	14-11-2005

Source: Lebanon's Official Gazette

Water Resources in Lebanon

15 Rivers but Lack of Proper Infrastructure

The Arab per capita water consumption dropped from 3,500 m³ in 1960 to 1,500 m³ in 1990, compared with the international average of 4,700m³. Population growth, lack of water management policies and the Arab-Israeli conflict have further contributed to aggravating this problem.

Resources

In Lebanon, the average amount of rainfall per year is estimated at 823 mm, varying between 600-900 mm in coastal areas, 400 mm in the eastern part of the country, 1,400 mm in the high mountains, and below 200 in the northeast.

Lebanon relies on 15 main rivers and basins to meet its needs in water. Their level increases during rainy seasons between January and May, and decreases during dry seasons between June and November. The average water discharge per year is about 3,874.5 million m³ (table no.1).

Groundwater resources are estimated at 3.2 billion m³, in addition to 2,000 springs that yield 1,150 million m³ of water annually. There are several dams in Lebanon such as the Qaraoun dam on the Litani River which has a storage capacity that amounts to 220 million m³.

Water Needs

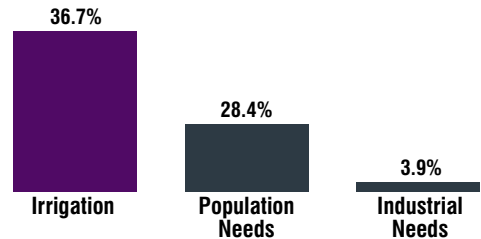
The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated the yearly amount of water consumption in Lebanon at 1,293 million m³ in 1994. Water consumption is distributed as follows: irrigation (67.7% - to irrigate 189,206 Hectares out of the 360,000 Hectares of arable land in Lebanon), population needs (28.4%), and industrial needs (3.9%) (Graph no.1).

Problems

Following the 1975-1990 war, Lebanon tried to improve its resources and rebuild its infrastructure. Between 1992 and 2000, governmental and non governmental institutions have carried out 129 projects for drinking water (worth \$409.2 million), 129 waste water projects (\$227.1 million), and 46 projects in the agricultural sector (\$51.8 million). Additionally, a project was initiated in 2002 on the Wazzani River, despite Israeli objections.

Lebanon faces several problems related to its water resources. The main hurdle is lack of planning, which leads to immense waste of water. Adding to this are problems of population growth, ground water pollution due to the absence of proper infrastructure and waste water projects, and the ongoing conflict with Israel.

[Graph 1] **Water Consumption in Lebanon (%)**
Source: Information International - FAO



River	Discharge (million m ³)		Average Yearly Discharge (million m ³)
	Dry season (June-November)	Wet Season (January-May)	
Al Kabir Al Janoubi	38.6	151.5	190
Al Ostowan	16.5	48.6	65
Aarqa	15	50	65
Al Bared	92	189	282
Abu Ali	62.3	200	262
Al Jawz	8.6	67	76
Ibrahim	94.5	413.4	508
Al Kalb	55	198.7	252
Antelias	5.3	12.5	17.8
Beirut	6.4	95	101
Al Damour	17.7	239	256.5
Al Ouwali	77.5	207	284.4
Sinniq	0.37	11	11.3
Al Zahrani	6.5	32	38.6
Litani (Between Khardali and Massab)	25.5	104	129.8
Nabe' Ras El Ain Tyre	13	15	28
Al Aassi basin Nabe' Ras El Ain, Baalbeck	4.48	6.57	11.5
Yanabee' Al Labweh	15.91	12.17	28.08
Al Aassi near Al Hermel	209.33	205.25	414.58
Upper Litani Basin	85.73	317.26	403.99
Litani Until Qaroun			
Aain El Zarqa	26.65	50.40	77.05
Litani between Zarqa and Khardali	40.72	120.54	161.26
Hasbani basin			
Yanabee' Hasbani and Jawzeh	9.25	3.90	13.15
Hasbani	30.80	107.44	138.34
Total	992.32	2890.83	3874.55

Source: Mounzer Khaddam, Arab Water Security: Reality and Challenges

International Tribunals in the World:

All dealing with Massacres and Genocides One with a Political Assassination

International tribunals are created to prosecute those who commit crimes against humanity. The first court was created in 1943 at the Nuremberg Palace of Justice in Germany.

At the time, the presidents of the United States, Soviet Union and Great Britain met in Tehran and decided to punish those responsible for crimes committed during World War II.

The first set of trials was the “Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal (IMT)”, which prosecuted 24 leaders of Nazi Germany. It was held from November 20, 1945 to October 1, 1946. The second set of trials prosecuted doctors involved in the “Nazi human experimentation”.

The allied forces based the creation of the court on the right of the winners in the war to impose their conditions on the defeated countries. However, the legitimacy of such measures raised controversy among many legal experts.

The Nuremberg trials were followed by the creation of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in Tokyo by the commander of the Allied Forces, Douglas MacArthur on June 19, 1946.

This court dealt with crimes that were not included in the Nuremberg trials, such as launching an “illegitimate aggression”, attacking a country without prior warning or declaring war.

The courts of Nuremberg and Tokyo made French Judge Henri Donnedieu de Vabres submit a proposal in 1947 about the creation of a permanent international criminal court. However, this court was not created until 1998 and was preceded by the formation by the Security Council of two tribunals in Rwanda and Yugoslavia, under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

I- Courts Formed under Chapter VII

The United Nations Charter did not stipulate the creation of courts under Chapter VII. However, such courts were deemed necessary to maintain international peace and security.

1- International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

It was the first international criminal tribunal formed in line with Security Council Resolution 808 of February 22, 1993. The tribunal was in charge of prosecuting persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991. The tribunal was based in The Hague and issued its first sentence in May 1997. By the beginning of 2004, the court had issued sentences against 140 people.

2- International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was formed in line with Resolution 955 of November 8, 1994 upon a request from the Rwandan government.

The tribunal was created to prosecute persons responsible for genocide and serious violations of the international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Rwanda and neighboring States between January 1, 1994 and December 31, 1994. Trials began in 1997 and by the end of 2003 only 15 sentences were issued against 21 accused. 120,000 people remain in prison until today awaiting their trial.

II- Mixed Tribunals

After noticing stalling in international courts procedures, it was necessary for the Security Council to consider some obstacles such as the distance between the relevant country and the headquarters of the tribunal and the difficulty of relevant officials in following-up on the trials, as well as other problems. Consequently, the Security Council started to create mixed international tribunals upon an agreement with the country in question. These tribunals were less costly than courts created under Chapter VII and are formed of local and international judges who implement national and international laws.

1- Special Tribunals for Cambodia

The purpose of these tribunals, which are formed of international and Cambodian judges, is to prosecute Cambodian leaders and persons responsible for serious violations of the Cambodian Criminal Law and international agreements signed by Cambodia between April 17, 1975 and January 6, 1979. The United Nations and the Cambodian authorities reached this agreement on March 2004.

In April 2005, the main suspects of serious human rights violations committed during the Khmer Rouge power (1975-1979) were brought to justice.

2- East Timor Trials

In 2001, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor set the legal and institutional bases for investigations into serious crimes committed in East Timor.

The trials looked into serious crimes of the international humanitarian law, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and torture. A special anti-crime unit was created to investigate into Human Rights violations committed by the pro-Indonesian militia and Indonesian security forces in 1999. However, lack of support and resources has contributed to a stalling in the investigations.

The special anti-crime unit did not conduct efficient investigations but into five cases. Twelve official accusations were issued in November and December. However, no accused people were brought to justice by the end of 2000.

In May 2005, the role of the anti-crime unit ended but the mission itself was not completed. The special judicial committees affiliated with the United Nations convicted 84 people with serious crimes, including crimes against humanity, and acquitted three people.

More than 300 people, who were accused of perpetrating serious crimes, were not convicted because they could not have been brought to justice before the end of the committee's term.

3- Special Court for Sierra Leone

This court was created on January 16, 2002 upon an agreement between the United Nations and the Sierra Leone government in line with Security Council Resolution 1315 of August 14, 2000. The court was created to "try those who bear greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Sierra Leone after November 30, 1996.

In 2004, trials began against those accused of committing serious violations of the international humanitarian law and war crimes.

4- Tribunal to try the Suspects in Rafik Hariri's Assassination

Security Council Resolution 1664 of March 29, 2006 asked Secretary-General Kofi Annan to negotiate an agreement with the Lebanese Government aimed at establishing a tribunal of an international character to try those found responsible for the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005 and other assassinations that occurred on the Lebanese territories and deemed related with Hariri's murder.

It is noteworthy that this tribunal will be the first international tribunal to deal with an assassination case, as other courts were dealing with genocides, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The agreement was concluded between the two parties according to the Secretary General's report of November 21, 2006. However, it is yet to come into force due to internal disagreements over constitutional procedures. Moreover, the court's Statute includes stipulations that would require constitutional amendments.

Courts formed under Chapter VII and mixed tribunals are temporary tribunals, the mission of which ends with the end of the case. However, other permanent courts were created.

III- International Criminal Court

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was set on July 17, 1998 and came into force on July 1, 2002.

The ICC looks into the "most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole", such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression.

The court complements the role of the national criminal judiciary; however, it can represent the sole judicial authority in case the relevant country does not wish to assume investigations and trials or does not have the capabilities to do so.

Until today, Lebanon, the United States and Israel did not ratify the Rome Statute, hence they are not party to the ICC.

On January 30, 2007, the court issued war crime charges against Congolese militia leader Thomas Lubanga, making the latter the first defendant to face trial before the ICC.

Charges issued against Lubanga included conscripting of children under the age of fifteen years into the FPLC, the military wing of the Union des Patriotes Congolais (UPC) during the civil war that led to the death of four million civilians.

It is noteworthy that powerful countries' "support" of some leaders, who were accused of committing crimes against humanity, such as former Chilean President

Augusto Pinochet, prevented those from being held accountable for their actions; hence, they were kept away from international courts.

Moreover, agreements made by the United States with many countries about not holding US soldiers accountable in case they perpetrated crimes against humanity contradict the essence of the international tribunal.

The United States went to threaten these countries, saying that it would stop its financial aid if they refused to sign the agreement. ●●

National Accounts of 2004

Game of Numbers between INSEE and the Government. Growth of Trade and Services against a Deterioration of Industry and Agriculture

The National Accounts Mission, affiliated with the presidency of the Council of Ministers, issued the economic accounts of 2004, presenting the current economic situation based on figures and statistics in the various sectors.

The Economic Accounts of 2004 constituted the fourth report since the signing of a cooperation agreement with the French government through the French Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) to help Lebanon provide a “macro-economic overview and mapping of the domestic economy”.

The three previous reports focused on economic accounts of 1997, economic accounts of 1997-2002 and of 2003.

Domestic Output

The GDP reached 32,357 billion LBP in 2004 compared to 29,851 billion LBP in 2003 or a growth of 8.4%. Based on these figures, the average income of a Lebanese resident reaches around 8.5 million LBP annually or 5,650 USD. The contribution of economic sectors to the GDP is distributed as shown in Graph no.1.

Comparison with 1997

In the economic accounts of 1997, the GDP reached 24,700 billion LBP. On one hand, contributions of economic sectors in the GDP witnessed significant changes represented by a decrease of 1% in the contributions of agriculture and

breeding, 3.1% in the contributions of industry, energy and water, 2% in construction. On the other hand, contributions of services increased by 10.2%, those of trade by 2.7% and transport and communication by 2.1%.

Gross National Disposable Income (GNDI)

The GNDI is the Gross National Income (GNI) increased by net foreign transfers.

The GNI is equal to the GDP plus the net foreign incomes, salaries and taxes. The GNI reached 31,129 billion LBP, while net foreign transfers amounted to 5,067 billion LBP. Thus, the GNDI reached 36,196 billion LBP.

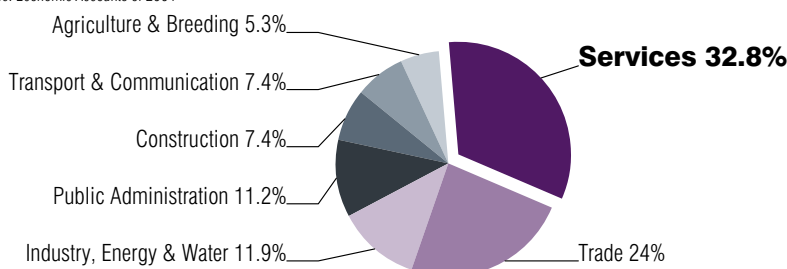
Accuracy of Figures

Figures mentioned in this report are perhaps overstated. This exaggeration in figures has been occurring since 1997. For example, the government estimated the GDP for 1997 at 22,880 billion LBP, while according to INSEE, the GDP for the same year was 24,108 billion LBP, or a 5.3 % difference of 1,228 billion LBP.

In fact, increasing the GDP figures leads to decreasing the public debt. For example: at the end of 2004, public debt reached 54,122 billion LBP while GDP was estimated at 28,385 billion LBP; thus, public debt represented 190% of the GDP. However, according to official figures, public debt represented only 167% of the GDP and 150% of the GNDI. ❄

[Graph 1] **Contribution of Economic Sectors to the GDP (%)**

Source: Economic Accounts of 2004



Fighting Money Laundering

An Overall Decline in Reported Cases

Counterfeiting and Terrorist Financing in the Lead

Lebanon's Special Investigation Commission (SIC) in charge of fighting money laundering issued its sixth annual report, presenting a detailed account of its work in 2006.

Establishment of the Commission

Article 6 of Law no. 318 of April 2, 2001 stipulated the establishment of an "independent, legal entity with judicial status at the Banque du Liban" (Central Bank) to investigate money laundering operations. The commission is headed by the Central Bank governor and includes three members, in addition to 46 employees.

Money Laundering Cases in 2006

Number of Cases

The number of cases reported to the SIC in 2006 reached 185 (compared to 195 cases in 2005, 199 cases in 2004 and 272 cases in 2003) – Graph no.1.

This number includes 79 foreign cases and 106 local cases. The number of cases not subject to law 318 provisions amounted to 84, while cases where banking secrecy was lifted and forwarded to the relevant judicial authorities reached 70. However, 31 cases remain pending, according to the report.

Reporting Sources

Among the reporting sources, the Financial Investigation Units (FIUs) ranked first with 59 reported cases and followed by commercial banks, with 57 cases. Graph no.2 shows the distribution of cases by source.

Nature of Crime

Counterfeiting and forgery ranked first with 30 cases, while terrorism and terrorist financing (TF) amounted to 16 cases, embezzlement of private funds operations reached 12 cases, embezzlement of public funds reached seven cases, while six cases were related to drugs and 114 cases related to other crimes.

Reporting Countries

79 cases were reported from 31 states (including the United Nations with nine cases reported). The United States and Belgium were at the top reporting countries with seven cases reported by each, followed by Syria with six cases, and one case from each of the following 16 states: Austria, Bahamas, Chile, Cayman Islands, Cyprus, Georgia, Mexico, Monaco, Moldova, Netherlands, Paraguay, Turkey, Ukraine, Rwanda, Portugal and New Zealand.

Table no.1 shows the number of cases reported by some countries.

Distribution of the cases reported by some countries Table 1

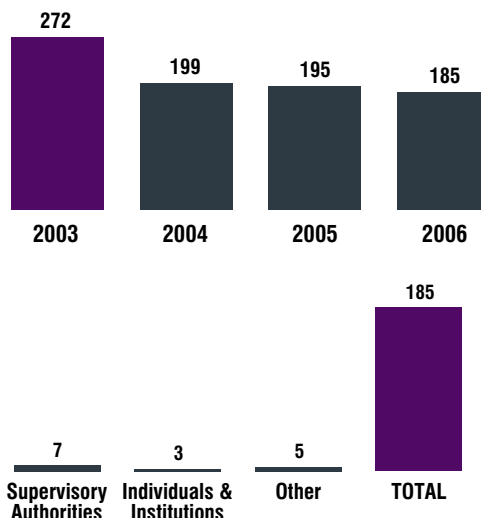
Country	Number of Cases	Country	Number of Cases
United Nations	9	Romania	4
United States	7	Iraq	3
Belgium	7	Luxembourg	3
Syria	6	Venezuela	2
France	5	Egypt	2
Bulgaria	4	Australia	2
Bolivia	4	Algeria	2

Source: 6th annual report of SIC – 2006

Six years after the creation of the Special Investigation Commission, the number of cases reported has decreased gradually but whether this indicates a decline in money laundering operations in Lebanon remains to be seen.

[Graph 1] **Number of Money Laundering Cases between 2003 and 2006**

Source: 6th annual report of SIC - 2006



[Graph 2] **Distribution of Cases by Reporting Source**

Source: 6th annual report of SIC - 2006



Sami al-Solh

Nicknamed the “Father of the Poor” and accused of “Treason”

The Lebanese had different opinions about former Prime Minister Sami al-Solh (1890-1968). Muslim zu'ama (leaders) considered that he stood behind the Maronite president Camille Chamoun in local and regional politics. He was forced out of the premiership and his political life ended too soon. However, this Lebanese figure played a key role in the country's political life.

According to his autobiography, Sami Abdel-Rahim al-Solh was born on May 7, 1890 in A'akka (but the family originated from Saida) which was at the time associated with the province of Beirut. He pursued his studies at the French Lazarian School in Astana and received his baccalaureate degree in Beirut in 1905. Al-Solh studied law at the University of Astana and was among the first figures that supported Al-Sharif al-Hussein in the Great Arab Revolt in 1915. In the wake of World War I, Djamal Pasha ordered his arrest on charges of forming with Saleh Qanso a cell to cut communications between Alexandria and Aleppo. This is how Sami al-Solh's escape episode began. He stayed in Beirut disguised as a woman and then left the city as a Bedouin. He hid in the desert for a long time before taking refuge in Baghdad.

Djamal Pasha sent him afterwards a message with one of his friends saying, “If he surrenders himself at the Hotel Baron I will settle his affairs; but I will order his hanging if he was caught abroad”.

Consequently, al-Solh returned to Beirut and stood before the Military Court, which found him innocent and exiled him to Istanbul.

After the instauration of the French Mandate, he returned to Beirut and joined the judiciary from 1920 until 1942. He was appointed First President to the Cassation Court.

During World War II, French and British civil and military authorities appointed al-Solh as Prime Minister on July 27, 1942. He resigned from his post on March 18, 1943.

Al-Solh won in the parliamentary elections for the first time on August 29, 1943 and kept winning until 1960. He returned to Parliament from 1964 till 1968. After the arrest of Lebanon's president, prime minister and ministers in Rashaya, al-Solh was summoned by General Catroux, who told him: “We want to open al-Basta (an Islamic area in Beirut which was against the French Mandate). I had the intention to form a Cabinet and appoint you as a prime minister”. Al-Solh said that he rejected the offer.

He went on to hold demonstrations against the Rashaya arrests and ordered the erection of the Lebanese flag at the top of Parliament's building.



Sami al-Solh was appointed as prime minister for several terms: from August 22, 1945 till May 22, 1946; February 11, 1952 till September 9, 1952; September 16, 1954 till September 19, 1955; and November 18, 1956 till September 24, 1958. He also occupied several ministerial portfolios, including: the ministries of justice, interior, national defense, public works, planning, information, commerce, industry, provisioning, telegraph and post.

Sami al-Solh sees himself as a defender of the “Palestinian Cause”, repeating that “if someone wanted to impose by force a national Jewish state in Arab Palestine, we are ready to wipe out by force any attempt to harm Palestine’s Arabism”. He also believed that Lebanon should not be dissolved in an Arab entity but that relations with Arab countries should be based on productive cooperation.

Important Events in the Life of Sami al-Solh

- ⦿ In 1942, Beirut and other Lebanese areas witnessed starvation and lack of wheat. Al-Solh tells in his book that he headed to Syria asking for help. However, Syrian officials replied by saying that the situation in Damascus was difficult and Aleppo and Damascus were facing famine. However, al-Solh tricked the Lebanese and circulated an official statement saying that provisions would arrive from Damascus soon and would cover the needs of the people. As soon as they heard the news, Lebanese merchants, who were monopolizing wheat and cereals, displayed their products in the streets and the crisis was resolved. That is why Sami al-Solh was surnamed as the “father of the poor⁽¹⁾”.
- ⦿ Merchants achieved huge profits during the war in 1942. Consequently, Sami al-Solh tells that he was determined to implement the law and impose fair taxes on these merchants. He said that “wealthy merchants have invaded the poor’s pockets and made profits illegally. Those profits should be returned to the treasury”. He said that he discovered that there were ten big merchants whose average profits reached 88 million LBP during the first three years of war, while 20 merchants gained 20 million LBP and the remaining merchants gained 42 million LBP.
- ⦿ Al-Solh tells in his autobiography that a crisis erupted between him and President Bechara al-Khoury in August 1952 after he allowed the opposition, which was calling for the resignation of the president, to hold a rally in Deir al-Qamar. Although the opposition had pledged not to harm the president’s status, harsh speeches were delivered on the occasion. Consequently, Nazem A’akari was appointed as an interim prime minister before al-Solh resigned. A’akari was then replaced by Sa’eb Salam, who remained in his post for two days then resigned along with the president on September 18, 1952. Camille Chamoun was elected president on September 23.
- ⦿ After the ratification of the Eisenhower Doctrine in Lebanese Parliament, several deputies submitted their resignation. On May 30, 1957, street protests were organized involving confrontations between security forces and demonstrators and resulting in the death of seven people and the injury of 60. Demonstrators shouted slogans in support of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel-Nasser.

Al-Solh said the Revolution of 1958 destabilized the security of the State and explained the reasons behind it by the following:

- 1- The indignation of the opposition in Lebanese cities and the Chouf for its failure in parliamentary elections, holding the governing authorities responsible;
- 2- The preservation of relations between Lebanon and western countries despite France and United Kingdom’s attack on Egypt after the nationalization of the Suez Canal.
- 3- Lebanese president, Cabinet and people’s refusal to surrender to Damascus and Cairo’s will.

However, according to Kamal Jumblat, the reason behind the Revolution of 1958 consisted mainly of Camille Chamoun’s performance, particularly the use of security forces as his own forces, the undermining of 1957 elections’ results and his attempts to strike national leaders at the expense of his foreign policies.

- ⦿ Al-Solh accuses the United Arab Republic (Syria and Egypt, UAR) of smuggling weapons into Lebanon to put the president in an awkward situation and tells the facts of the revolution that started in the Chouf. On May 21, 1958, the Lebanese government filed a complaint against the UAR’s interference in Lebanese affairs before the Arab League and before the Security Council on May 22. The UAR replied by saying that the revolution in Lebanon was instigated by internal causes and led by the people against the president for several reasons, among them his willingness to renew his term. The Security Council convened on June 8, 1958 and decided to dispatch a monitoring team to Lebanon to make sure that no arms are being smuggled or people are illegally entering the Lebanese territories. On July 14, 1958, the United States complied with Chamoun’s demand for a military intervention in Lebanon under Article 51 of the UN Charter. The number of soldiers that arrived in Lebanon was estimated at 5,000. Al-Solh considered this intervention a kind of support to Lebanon’s independence and protection from UAR interference. His position met rejection from a large number of Muslims, who accused him of stabbing Arab leader Gamal Abdel-Nasser in the back.
- ⦿ Al-Solh survived three assassination attempts on July 29, August 28 and September 6, 1958.
- ⦿ He passed away in November 1968. A street in Beirut was named after him by the city’s municipality.

Sami al-Solh, described the “father of the poor” by one part of the population and accused of “treason” by another, is a true example of the complexity of the Lebanese history. ●●

Source: *Mouzakarat Sami Bek Al-Solh (Sami Bey Al-Soh Memoirs) – First Edition, 1960*

⁽¹⁾ *Others point out to certain ties between Al-Solh and the Syrian Barazi family, who controlled the wheat and that through them he was able to control the wheat flow to Lebanon.*

The Druze Confession:

From the Rulers of Mount Lebanon to a Minority

The Druze religion is one of the eighteen Lebanese confessions and is considered an Islamic denomination. Druze leaders gained a major importance in the ancient and modern history of Lebanon. Ma'an Emirs ruled over Mount Lebanon which enjoyed autonomy during the Ottoman power. The Druze zu'ama also played an important role in the establishment of the Lebanese State after the independence in 1943, particularly through Kamal Jumblat and Majid Erislan.

“After the termination of the divine call in 1027, no one could embrace the Druze religion.”

Origins and Faith

The Druze confession dates back the Fatimid era during the rule of the sixth Fatimid Caliph Al-Hakem bi Amr-Allah (996-1021).

Three of the main founders of the Druze religion were Hamza bin Ali Mohammed al-Zouzani, Hassan al-Farghani al-Akhram and Mohammed Ibn Ismail ad-Darazi (also known as Beshtekin Ad-Durzi). The latter claimed his own divinity after the ghyab (disappearance) of Al-Hakem and was killed and excommunicated by the Druze.

In 1017, the followers of this religion moved from Egypt to Bilad ash-Sham (Syria), where they disclosed their Unitarian faith (da'awat al-Tawhid). The religion gained widespread support from the peoples of the Chouf Mountain and Wadi at-Taym in Lebanon and Jabal al-Arab in Syria, in particular from the Tanukh and Ma'an populations.

The Druze believe in one God, who is “unique, eternal, without beginning and abiding without end”.⁽¹⁾ They practice the taqiya or secrecy in revealing their religion. In his book “A History of the Druses”, Kais M. Firro quoted Nejla Abu Izzeddin as saying about the Druze doctrine or taqiya:

“The Druze do not reveal their faith to outsiders. The secrecy is partly taqiyya, the concealment of one's religious affiliation when the person or community is in danger... A more important reason for the secrecy is the concern with keeping the faith from the reach of those who, being unprepared to accept its message, could misinterpret and corrupt its truth”.

They were “accused” in history by renowned Islamic scholars of having based their religion on the Greek and Indian philosophies and followed the teachings of Aristotle and Plato, in addition to some Persian philosophers.

Abu Izzedin quoted by Firro stated that the Druze religion was based on seven pillars or Unitarian principles: “(1) truthfulness, (2) mutual aid, (3) and, (4) renunciation of belief inconsistent with tawhid, (5) belief that the doctrine of unity is preached at every age, (6) resignation with satisfaction to whatever God does, and (7) submission to His will”.

The Druze believe in the reincarnation of the soul. “Upon the death of the body, the soul immediately settles in a new human body. This transmigration enables the soul to pass through every possible human experience and condition: health and illness, wealth and poverty, etc.”⁽²⁾

After the termination of the divine call in 1027, no one could embrace the Druze religion; thus, only he/she who has Druze parents was considered Druze.

A Druze should marry a person of the same confession. While divorce is allowed, polygamy is not.

The Druze are divided into two groups:

- **Al-Uqqal:** or the “Knowledgeable Initiates” and include the Druze religious men
- **Al-Juhhal:** or the “Ignorant” and include the politicians and people

Druze high religious authorities wear a “circular turban” called “Amama”.

The religious authority is bestowed a turban or “Amama” from a higher authority.

However, the number of religious men who wear the turban is very limited. Around the end of the nineteenth century, Sheikh Abu Mohammed al-Ouqaili was the only religious authority who wore the turban. Al-Ouqaili bestowed the turban on several sheikhs. In the 1980s, Sheikh Abou Hassan Aref Halawi was the only authority with a turban. In order to preserve the continuity of this tradition, he bestowed turbans on three sheikhs: Abu Mohammed Saleh al-Indari (died in 1992), Sheikh Abu Youssef Raidan Chehayeb (died in 1997) and Sheikh Abu Mohammed Jawad Walieddine, who is currently the highest authority after the death of Sheikh Halawi in 2003.

At the end of 2006, Sheikh Abu Mohammed bestowed turbans on two sheikhs: Abu Said Amin Abu Ghanam and Abu Youssef Amin as-Sayegh.

Druze Emirs, the Rulers of Lebanon

Tanukh populations arrived in Lebanon in 758 and settled in Chouf areas and Wadi at-Taym. They embraced the Druze religion at the beginning of the eleventh century A.D. The Ma'an also adopted this religion. During the Ottoman power that began in 1516, Ma'an emirs allied with the Ottomans so they continued to rule the Chouf and were able to extend their authority from Yafa (Jaffa) to Trablous (Tripoli). Among their most prominent figures was Emir Fakhreddine II (1572-1635) who allied with Tuscany and consolidated his power. However, the Ottomans exiled him to Astana where he was killed. After the Ma'an, the Shehabi took over the power in 1697.

In 1752, the ruling branch of the Shehabi of Sunni confession embraced the Maronite confession, which contributed to Druze-Maronite conflicts.

After 1860, the Druze emigrated to Jabal Houran, which was later known as Jabal al-Druze.

Divisions among the Druze

The Druze were politically divided into two groups: the Yazbaki and the Jumblati. In modern history, the Jumblati were led by Kamal Jumblat and the Yazbaki by Majid Erslan. Druze families were in turn divided between these two groups.

Erslan's authority was mainly present in Aley and Hasbaya while Jumblat imposed his power over the Chouf. Kamal

Jumblat managed to reach large factions of non-Druze Lebanese by creating the Progressive Socialist Party on May 1, 1949.

It is difficult to talk about Kamal Jumblat without mentioning his mother, Sit Nazira, who took over the leadership of Mukhtara following the assassination of her husband, Fouad Jumblat, by the supporters of Shakib Wahhab, who were against France.

Some historians stress that Fouad Jumblat's assassination was the first political assassination in Lebanon's modern history. Sit Nazira was characterized by a strong personality and was greatly respected by Lebanese and French figures. During her rule, Mukhtara became one of the most important political seats in Lebanon, which paved the way for Kamal Jumblat to enter the political life in grandeur.

Sit Nazira was keen on arranging a marriage between her son and the daughter of Shakib Erslan, one of the most prominent Arab intellectuals who were against the French mandate. However, Erslan opposed the marriage as he was confident that Jumblat and his mother were supporters of the French.

The Druze and Power

The Druze confession is not represented in any top position in the Lebanese State.

However, Article 22 of the Constitution states: “With the election of the first Parliament on a national, non-confessional basis, a Senate is established in which all the religious communities are represented. Its authority is limited to major national issues”. The Druze believe that the Senate's President should be from the confession.

The Druze share in the Council of Ministers varies according to the total number of ministers in each Council. The confession is given three ministerial portfolios if the Cabinet was formed of 30 ministers, two if it was formed of 24 or 16 ministers and only one portfolio if the Cabinet was formed of less than 16 ministers.

In Parliament, the number of Druze deputies ranges between four to eight deputies according to the total number of legislators, as shown in Table no.1.

The Druze in the Public Sector

Nine Druze occupy first-grade civil services. Those include: the South Governor, the director general of the ministry of the displaced, the director general of the ministry of health, the director general of the Civil Servants' Cooperative and vice-president of the Central Bank. 39 Druze judges occupy positions at the ministry of justice.

Number of Druze deputies from the Independence and until 2006**Table 1**

Parliaments	Total Number of Deputies	Number of Druze Deputies
5th Parliament: 21-9-1943 until 4-6-1947	55	4
6th Parliament: 5-6-1947 until 4-6-1951	55	4
7th Parliament: 5-6-1951 until 30-6-1953	77	5
8th Parliament: 13-8-1953 until 11-8-1957	44	3
9th Parliament: 12-8-1957 until 4-5-1960	66	4
10th Parliament: 18-7-1960 until 19-2-1964	99	6
Post-Taif Parliaments	128	8

Source: Electoral Laws

Numbers

During the first years of the Druze presence in Lebanon, the number of Druze followers in Lebanon reached 3,000 people. However, other theories say that many druze did not reveal their faith at the time to avoid being persecuted. The number of Druze voters reaches 169,829, who represent 5.6% of the total number of voters.

The number of registered Druze residents reaches 260,000 or 5.8% of the total number of registered residents. Meanwhile, Druze residents reach 230,000 or 6.2% of the total number of residents. In the only official census conducted in Lebanon in 1932, the Druze amounted to 62,084, including 53,334 who reside in the country.

Druze Spiritual Leadership (Sheikh Akl)

The spiritual leadership is the Druze confession's official religious authority. A law issued in 1962 stipulated the presence of three spiritual leaders. However, with the third seat being vacant, the confession acknowledged two spiritual leaders: one chosen by the Jumblati (at the time Sheikh Abu Shaqra) and the second chosen by the Erslan leadership (Sheikh Rashid Hamadeh).

After the death of Sheikh Hamadeh in 1970, an agreement was made between Kamal Jumblat and Majid Erslan to acknowledge only one Sheikh Akl.

Following the death of Abu Shaqra in 1991, Sheikh Bahjat Ghaith was assigned the duties of the Sheikh Akl awaiting an agreement between the Druze leaders over the appointment of a spiritual leader. That is why Sheikh Bahjat Ghaith was called an acting spiritual leader.

However, a dispute erupted between Ghaith and Deputy Walid Jumblat over the latter's support of a draft-law to regulate the Druze affairs and hold elections of a spiritual leader.

Jumblat's attempts were not successful as Ghaith challenged the draft-law several times before the Constitutional Council.

Following the parliamentary elections in 2005, Parliament passed the draft-law regulating the Druze affairs. President Emile Lahoud returned the law to Parliament, which passed it a second time; thus making it legally operative, as stipulated in Article 57 of the Constitution.

The law issued on June 9, 2006 stipulated the presence of one spiritual leader, who is elected for a renewable 15-year term. The Sheikh Akl represents the confession in religious affairs before public authorities and other confessions.

He also presides over the Druze religious council and supervises seminars and councils related to the confession.

The religious council is a Druze institution that elects the spiritual leader and manages Druze social and financial affairs.

The law created divisions among the Druze, especially between the leaders Walid Jumblat and Talal Erslan.

Erslan rejected the law and appointed Sheikh Abu Faisal Nasreddine al-Gharib in a ceremony held on September 24, 2006. Meanwhile, elections were held to elect the Druze Religious Council, which in turn elected Sheikh Na'im Hassan, who won uncontested on October 14, 2006.

Consequently, the Druze confession restored the old tradition of two spiritual leaders, with a slight difference today: one is official and the other is not.

The spiritual leadership receives an annual share from the government's general budget. In 2006, its share amounted to around 543 million LBP, while the budget of the Druze religious courts reached 968 million LBP.

Conclusion

□
However, the emergence of leaders or zu'ama like Kamal Jumblat and Majid Erslan has compensated for this decline.

AI□
Today, the main concern of Druze leader Walid Jumblat is that of demographics, whether population or purchase of land in Druze areas by other confessions.

Some analysts also point out that the Druze confession, the leaders of which were, the rulers of Mount Lebanon, now became a small minority facing major challenges. ●●

⁽¹⁾ *Kais M. Firro, A History of the Druzes, 1992, p.10*

⁽²⁾ *Kais M. Firro, A History of the Druzes, 1992, p.12*

Bashir Jumblat and Bashir ash-Shehabi

Lebanon's history saw strong conflicts and disagreements between confession's zu'ama, including continuous conflicts between the two Bashirs: Bashir Jumblat and Bashir ash-Shehabi.

In 1788, Emir Youssef ceded the Principality to his nephew Bashir Qassem ash-Shehabi, who pleaded support from Akka and Jamal Pasha al-Jazzar. In 1791, Al-Jazzar put Sheikh Qassem Jumblat in jail and the leadership was transferred to his son Bashir, who implored the Ottoman power to grant him the Principality of the Chouf and marginalize the Shehabi emir. This is how enmity between the two Bashirs began. Each of them was backed by a group of Lebanese people. Druze, Muslim and some Christian leaders stood behind Jumblat, while the Maronite Church supported Emir Bashir ash-Shehabi, who had embraced the Christian religion but pretended to be Muslim. The Emir received help from the army of Abdallah Pasha, the wali of Akka, and defeated Jumblat in the battle of Simqanieh in 1825. Jumblat fled to Hauran and his castle in Mukhtara was destroyed. He was then arrested and transported to Akka, where he was executed on November 11, 1825 upon orders from the wali of Egypt Mohammed Ali Pasha, who asked the wali of Akka to kill Jumblat upon the demand of Emir Bashir.

This is how the conflict between the two Bashirs ended but yielded negatively on the Druze-Maronite relations in the following decades.

The Druze star

The Druze believe in five cosmic principles represented in a five colored star: green for mind, red for soul, yellow for word, blue for cause and white for effect.

Druze Leaders as Described by the People

In his book, *Fifty-Three Years in Syria*, which depicts the situation in the Mountain in the nineteenth century, Henry H. Jessup says about the Druze: "They live in Lebanon, in Wady Et Teim, northwest of Mount Hermon, and in Hauran. They number in all between 75,000 and 100,000. They have several feudal families in Lebanon, the Jumblatts, the Arslans, the Telhooks, the Bu-Nakids, the Abdul-Meleks, the Hamadys, the 'Amads, etc. Said Beg Jumblatt was called Kess ed Druze, "The Purse of the Druses," Khattur el Amad, the "Sword of the Druses," and Sheikh Hassein Telhook, the "Tongue of the Durzes." As a national body they are compact, united and bound to obedience in peace and war".

Source: Fifty-Three Years in Syria, Henry H. Jessup, p.157-158

The Druze in World War II

According to Firro, in World War II, the British formed a Druze unit called the Druze Regiment, which joined the British Army in Transjordan. Druze officers trained during this war later played a political role in Syria and Lebanon.

Jwar al-Hashish

A village inhabited by one family



Etymology

“Jwar” derives from the word “joura” which in Arabic means a hole and “Hashish” means “grass”. Consequently, Jwar al-Hashish means “the hole of grass”.

Location

Jwar al-Hashish is located in the qada'a of Hermel in the Ba'albek al-Hermel Mohafaza at an altitude of 1,300 meters above sea level. It is 172 kilometers away from Beirut and 107 kilometers from Zahleh and extends over an area of one hectare.

The town can be reached via the following roads: Al-Qasr- Faisan or al-Bustan-al-Hmairi.

Population

The number of registered residents reaches 1,300, who belong to the Shia'a confession. There are around one hundred residential houses in the town but no commercial shops.

Voters

In 2004, the number of voters amounted to 869 compared to 763 voters in 2000. All voters belong to the Ja'afar family.

Local Authorities

The town's mukhtar, Yassin Ja'afar, heads a mayoral council of three members. However, the town does not have a municipality.

Educational Institutions

There is one public school in the town, Jwar al-Hashish Elementary School, which contains 30 students distributed in five classes.

Other students are enrolled in the Sahlat al-Mai School in Hermel, which contains around 500 students.

Economic Activities

Residents depend on agriculture and breeding. They also produce and sell dairy products and meat. Free professions and civil services are also a source of income to the residents.

Problems facing the Residents

Among the main problems facing the town:

- ⊙ Lack of financial resources;
- ⊙ Lack of drinking water;
- ⊙ Electricity problems and power cut for consecutive days and;
- ⊙ Bad roads especially during wintertime, thus isolating the village.

Bteddine al-Loqqosh

The hometown of Boulos Salameh

Etymology

Historians give various definitions of the name. Some of them say that it has Syriac origins and formed of two words, "Bet Dina," the first meaning "place" and the second "law" or the "place of law".

The word "Loqqosh" or "Liqsha" is Aramaic and means early or spring harvest.

"Al-qosh", a Hebraic word, means belated rain. In spoken Arabic, it means a type of red wood in pine trees that has a nice smell and is highly inflammable.

Location

Bteddine al-Loqqosh is located in the qada'a of Jezzine in the South Lebanon mohafaza at an altitude of 820 meters above sea level. The town is 66 kilometers away from Beirut and 28 kilometers away from Saida. It extends over an area of 284 hectares surrounded by pine trees.

Bteddine al-Loqqoch can be reached via Saida-Jezzine road or Deir al-Moukhales-Bisri.

Population

The number of registered citizens reaches 830 people, with the majority belonging to the Maronite confession (around 94.6%). The town counts 80 houses and 10 shops and commercial institutions.

Voters

The number of voters in 2004 reached 634 people compared with 628 in 2000. They are distributed in the following families:

Abu Sleiman:	100 voters
Eid:	93 voters
Qattar:	90 voters
Akl:	60 voters
Salameh:	52 voters
Sayegh:	31 voters
Abu Samra:	25 voters
Hajj:	25 voters
Abu Nader:	20 voters
Khalil:	20 voters

Other families include Abou Akl, Nawfal, Atallah, Abdo, Chukri, Aoun, Sema'an, Farhat, Elias and Karam.

Local Authorities

The town has a municipal council formed of nine members and headed by Nabil Qattar. It was created according to decision no. 273 of March 9, 1964. Revenues from the independent municipal fund reached 28.8 million LBP in 2004, compared to 45 million LBP in 2003 and 39.1 million LBP in 2002. In addition to the municipal council, the town has a mayoral council formed of a mukhtar and three members.

Educational Institutions

There are no public or private schools in the town and students go to nearby schools, in particular in Jezzine, which is only six kilometers away from Bteddine.

Archeological and Cultural Sites


Many ruins were found in the town, including two Roman columns that stand today in the Beiteddine Palace, sarcophagi engraved in rocks, an ancient church - Mar Youssef church - and buildings dating back to the previous century.

Economic Activities

Residents depend on agriculture, especially the cultivation of olive, pine and fruit trees. They also depend on public employment and commercial institutions in the town.

Difficulties facing the Residents

Residents of Bteddine al-Loqqosh are facing economic and financial problems mainly resulting from the July-August 2006 Israeli war on the country. The town's farmers were afflicted by financial losses due to the destruction of crops during the war. They are also facing difficulties in selling their products.

Bteddine al-Loqqosh is also the hometown of late Poet and Judge Boulos Salameh, the writer of Eid al-Riad and Eid al-Ghadir poems. 

“History Repeats Itself”

The Events of 1840 that Led to the Massacre of 1860

“History repeats itself”... Internal conflicts stirred by foreign interference and zu’ama abiding by the orders of world powers.

This extract of Henry H. Jessup’s “Fifty-three Years in Syria” recounts the Druze-Maronite conflict in the 1840s, as seen by the American missionaries.

A Maronite champion now appeared on the scene, Tannoos Shahin el Beitar, who had led the rebellion of the Kesrawan peasants against their feudal sheikhs of Beit el Khazin, with the aid of the Maronite patriarch (...)

At ten o’clock we went down to the little church under Mr. Calhoun’s⁽¹⁾ house.

It was my turn to preach.

I looked down on a company of anxious faces. I had begun the service and was reading the first verse of “My faith looks up to Thee”, “Araka bil eeman,” when the report of a gun near by, followed by a scream, startled the congregation. Just then a man ran by the church door shouting, “Abu Shehedan is killed. Rise and run for your lives!” That church was emptied in a moment.

It had been agreed beforehand among the Protestants, Greeks and Maronites, that if any Christian was killed in Abeih they would all run en masse down the steep mountain descent of six miles to Moallakah, a large Maronite village on the seashore and thence twelve miles to Beirut. So no time was needed for consultation (...)

That Sunday was a weary and dismal day. All to the north we could see the smoke of burning villages, and just below Abeih, a Maronite village was burned (...)

On the 27th of May, 3,000 men of Zahleh advanced to attack the Druses of the Arkoob, near Aindara. On the Damascus Road they were encountered by 600 Druses led by their sheikhs and after fighting all day, the Christians were defeated and fled.

The Druses then entered the Metn at Modairij, and burned down some Christian villages. Indeed during the month of the war, some sixty villages in that district were entirely destroyed. The Christians lacked leaders and discipline.

Every priest, monk and Sheikh wanted to lead and give orders, and the result was utter confusion and defeat. They were brave enough, but had no leaders. The Druses on the contrary had perfect discipline, skilful and daring leaders and all moved as one man.

Khurshid Pasha of Beirut had stationed a regiment of Turkish troops at Hazimiyeh, three miles from Beirut at the foot of Lebanon, on the road running from Northern to Southern Lebanon.

Tannoos el Beitar, hearing that the large Maronite villages of Baabda and Hadeth near Beirut, home of the Shehab emirs, were in danger, sent 300 men to protect them. The pasha allowed the force to go to Baabda, but the next day, May 29th, sent word to the emirs to send back the reinforcements, as he would protect them.

They obeyed, but immediately the mass of the male inhabitants fled to Beirut, having lost all faith in his assurances of protection. On the morning of May 30th, the Druses from our part of Lebanon descended on Baabda and Hadeth, compelling their Greek and Protestant tenants to go with them and help in burning those two fine villages.

We saw the column of black smoke ascending all that day, and the Druse begs came in and told us what had been done.

At 9 p.m. we went up-stairs. I closed the door at the head of the stairs and lighted the candle on the bureau. Just then Mrs. Jessup, who was hardly able to bear a sudden shock, called out “Listen!” and hurried into the vaulted study which was in darkness.

I turned and saw the bedstead shaking violently, and just then out crawled a burly fellah, who rushed to me trying to kiss my feet and begging to be allowed to stay under my protection. I had never seen him before, and ordered him to leave. I never carry weapons and was glad I had none at that time, or he might have followed Abu Shehedan.

He refused to go. I threw open the door at the head of the stairs and pushed him towards it, and planting my foot in the middle of his back, sent him headlong down the stairs. He fell into the crowd of women who were gathered there and were allowed to sleep there, and they broke into terrified screams. Then there came a clamour of voices and a loud laugh. “Why,” said they, “it’s old Shaheen. He was afraid of the Druses and crept in through the upper door and under the bed, expecting you to protect him!” He was allowed to stay near the house all night, but the nervous shock was not soon forgotten.

All that night, the drear sound of the Druse war-song echoed over the mountains and would startle us from sleep. On this day, May 29th, the Druse begs came and begged Mr. Calhoun to write the European consuls, and secure their influence to stop the war. Mr. Calhoun was anxious to go to Deir el Komr to see Mr. Bird and confer about his removal to Abeih, but the Druse begs advised him not to go, owing to the marauding parties on the roads and passes. We could hear firing to the north and east and south and the air was lurid with smoke.

Here were the subjects of the Porte killing one another and destroying the mountain villages, and yet the pasha’s troops

outside of Beirut looked on, doing nothing, but occasionally aiding the Druse bands in killing Lebanon refugees on the highways leading to Beirut.

Khurshid Pasha was afterwards brought to trial and, at least temporarily, disgraced. After burning Hadeth and Baabda, the property destroyed in Central Lebanon was immense. The silk crop comprising tons of cocoons had been carried off or burned.

(...) The gardens around Beirut now became hourly thronged with masses of unhappy fugitives, lying about under the trees in all directions, some bleeding, some naked, all in the last stage of destitution.

The Europeans in Beirut now bestirred themselves to aid the sufferers, and subscriptions were appealed for to America and England. We could hear the Druses on all sides rejoicing over their victories. Kasim Beg sent down to Moallakah-by-the-Sea, and begged the Abeih Christians to return, but they refused, and soon all reached Beirut and crowded our mission premises.

(...) So, on the 31st of May, we set out for Beirut, over that rough, rocky, tortuous road (...)

We were frequently passed by armed bodies of Druses hastening north to the Metn district, the men carrying guns, swords and ammunition and the women bread and water. These Druses saluted us with profuse salutations and we had no fear whatever of being molested.

(...) We found the village in great excitement. They were all Orthodox Greeks and Protestants, and were in favour with the Druses, and donning white turbans for their own protection, had been forced to help in the burning of Baabda and Hadeth. Their white turbans had saved them from being killed by Turkish irregulars, who hung around the villages during the pillage and burning.

(...) Mr. Bliss and I walked over to the neighbouring house to see the famous Colonel Churchill, the English officer of engineers, who stood on his flat roof watching with his field-glass the burning villages of the Metn.

This remarkable man of the Marlborough family came to Syria at the time of the bombardment in 1841, remained as British agent, and, liking the climate, settled at B'Howwara in a Lebanon valley, married a Syrian lady and spent nineteen years in studying the history of Lebanon and especially the religion and history of the Druses, and published two octavo volumes which are reliable and deeply interesting.

He was allied by his second marriage with the Maronite

Shehabs and yet was the confidential adviser and military counsellor of the Druse begs and sheikhs. Regarding this war as begun by the Maronite patriarch and bishops, who openly announced their plan for exterminating the Druses, and anticipating that, after a short season of village burning and plunder as had been usual in previous civil wars, peace would be restored, he threw his whole influence on the side of the Druses.

But, in justice to him, it should be said that as soon as the Druses, with the aid of Turkish military officers of the Nizam, or regular army, began to disarm the Christians and then massacre them like sheep, he turned against them, wrote to them and spoke to them denouncing them as wild beasts and fiends. His book on "The Druses and Maronites" is the only correct published account of the struggle of 1860 and its political causes and results.

At 2 p.m. we resumed our march to Beirut (...)

We found Beirut in a ferment, the Moslems morose and insolent, threatening trouble, and the Christian refugees, terror-stricken, hungry and shelterless, fearing for their lives and not knowing whom to trust. Their ecclesiastics had urged them to begin the war, and now were powerless to aid them. We found it necessary to open relief measures at once. Two hundred and fifty refugees were sleeping in the room now occupied by the steam printing machines of the American Press.



HASHEIYEH
The village, in the foreground, was the scene of the massacre in 1860.

(1) American missionary

The American University College of Science and Technology

In the series dedicated by *li Monthly* to Lebanese higher educational institutions, the following article addresses the American University College of Science and Technology (AUST), which was established in 2000.

Establishment of AUST

The American University College of Science and Technology is one of the institutes that were established by the Sakr family. The first step was the establishment of the American Lebanese Language Center (ALLC) in the early 1980s. In 1988, a private technical institute was founded - the American Universal College (AUC) - the degrees not recognized until 1994 by virtue of Decree No. 4897 dated March 21, 1994.

In 2000, Hiam Sakr and her family established the American University College of Science and Technology by virtue of Decree No. 3585 dated August 7, 2000.

In August 2003, all the degrees granted by this educational institution became equated with the Lebanese License by the Equivalence Committee of the Lebanese Ministry of Education. The administration is currently seeking to get the government's equivalence for its Master degrees. The university college has four faculties: Business Administration, Computer Science, Arts and Sciences, Laboratory Science and Technology.

College Facilities and Educational System

The AUST main campus is formed of eight buildings and is situated in Achrafieh in Beirut. The university college has approximately 12,400

square meters which were not entirely used due to the presence of residential buildings in the area. AUST has two other branches; one is located in Zahleh in the Beka'a and extends over 4,600 square meters and the second is located in Saida in South Lebanon over 4,500 square meters.

The university college adopted the free American system or the credit system. The academic year is divided into four terms (Fall- Spring-Summer 1 and Summer 2), unlike other higher education institutions based on the American system (except for the Lebanese American University) and which divide the academic year into three terms. English and French are used in teaching.

The number of students in 2005-2006 reached 4,217 compared to 3,586 students in 2004-2005 and 2,059 in 2000-2001; hence, registering an increase of 2,158 students or a rate of 105% in a period of five years. The administration and teaching body is formed of 300 members.

The building in Achrafieh has five cafeterias, two parking lots and some green spaces; however it does not have dorms for students.

Tuition Fees

Statistics prepared by the university college showed that 61% of the students work and study at the same time, while 34% of registered students benefit from financial aid which constitutes 8% of the budget of the 2005-2006 academic year.

Table no.1 shows the university college tuition fees by faculty, degree and credit.

AUST fees by faculty, degree and credit


Table 1

	Faculty of Business Administration	Faculty of Computer Science	Faculty of Arts and Sciences	Faculty of Laboratory Science and Technology
Estimated number of years to receive a degree	3 years	3 years	3 years	3 years
Estimated number of credits to receive a degree	105	Between 107 and 137	105	Between 105 and 120
Price of one credit (USD)	135	135	135	135
Tuitions for a degree	14,175	Between 14,445 and 18,495	14,175	Between 14,175 and 16,200
Estimated number of years to receive a Master's degree	2 years	2 years	2 years	2 years
Estimated number of credits to receive a Master's Degree	39	39	21	Between 28 and 32
Price of one credit (USD)	235	235	235	235
Tuition for Master or specialization (USD)	9,165	9,165	4,935 (Teaching diploma)	6,580 (specialization diploma)


Source: Information International based on numbers presented by AUST administration.

P.S.: AUST accepts freshman students who need to take 30 credits worth 4,050 USD



 **AUST main entrance in Achrafieh**
AUST - May 2007



 **AUST campus in Achrafieh**
AUST - May 2007

“The number of students in 2005-2006 reached 4,217 compared to 3,586 students in 2004-2005 and 2,059 in 2000-2001”

Characteristics of AUST

- ③ The university college divides the academic year into 4 terms; the Spring and Autumn are compulsory terms while Summer 1 and Summer 2 are optional.
- ③ A French section was established for the following specializations: business administration, hotel management, marketing, public relations, accounting, information technology, finance and graphic design.
- ③ A DNA laboratory was established and it is used by security forces in investigations into crimes, including the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri in February 2005. Other laboratories include a toxicology laboratory. Another laboratory for genetic diseases will be soon opened.
- ③ AUST was one of the three higher educational institutions in Lebanon (along with the American University of Beirut and Saint Joseph University) to receive a financial grant from the European Union to implement a food testing project.
- ③ An AUST representative office was set up in Pittsburgh in the United States to search for Lebanese professors who work in American Universities
□
- ③ Around 17 cooperation and exchange agreements were signed with higher educational institutions in Arab and foreign countries, including: Concordia University, New York University, Villanova University in Philadelphia, Ohio University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Sofia University (Bulgaria)□

Students Talk

AUST students said they suffered from the dispersion of their faculties in Achrafieh’s residential area and from the traffic noise, adding that they wished that a unified campus was established.

Some of the students believed that they have fewer chances to find job opportunities than students of other universities, although statistics showed that 85% of AUST graduates have found jobs.

Two inventions were made by the students over the past two years: the building of an environment-friendly electrical car in 2005 and a robot-tank to remove mines via a remote control.

On another level, and breaking with the prevailing “wisdom”, some students stressed that they were against the formation of student committees, which they said would stir political and confessional conflicts among them. ●●

Pottery Making: A lost heritage

“In the 1950s, Beit Chabab contained around 40 kilns used for pottery which provided jobs to tens of residents. Today, only one kiln survived in the town.”

Ancient populations used pottery in daily life for various purposes. *li Monthly* addresses in this article the pottery industry, which spread in the country hundreds of years ago.



White painted II and White Painted III Cypriote Jars from the Cypro-Geometric III period (800-700 B.C.). Levantine origin jar, used as a cinerary Urn.
Jawad Adra collection - 2006

History

Pottery making first appeared in the Fertile Crescent (including the Levant, ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt) around 7000-4500 B.C.

Other sources say that it was present in Japan before that time.

Pottery making spread in Lebanon in modern ages, as it flourished in the 18th century in several areas, such as Beit Chabab, Rashaya al-Fakhar, Aita al-Fakhar and Jisr al-Qadi and then in Assia and Batroun.

In the 1950s, Beit Chabab contained around 40 kilns used for pottery which provided jobs to tens of residents. Today, only one kiln survived in the town.

Pottery Utility

Pottery was first invented to make jars in order to transport food and liquids, such as water and milk. Over history, pottery was used to preserve water, food, wine and olive oil or for other purposes such as cooking.

Production

Craftsmen are still using the same old methods of pottery making with the same type of clay. Kilns are heated by coal at a temperature of 1,350 degrees (Celsius). The making of pottery is a long process that starts in the winter with the first phase by collecting and washing the soil, which comes in different colors, such as black red and yellow, and extends over the summer when soil is dried (June) and transformed into clay.

In the second phase, craftsmen place a ball of clay in the center of a wheel-head and rotate it with a stick or with foot power until the ball takes a shape and dries.

The third phase consists of making additional pieces, such as handles, by shaping balls of clay either manually or by the wheel-head. Handles are later added to the jar.

This phase takes around seven days to be completed.

The jar is then left for one month until it dries and then it is placed in a kiln for seven days (one kiln can contain up to 100 small jars) at a temperature of 1,350 degrees. It is left for 15 days in the kiln until it cools and becomes ready to use by the beginning of September.

Pottery in the Market

Pottery products are sold in various Lebanese areas. Before the 1975-1990 civil war, the Lebanese Craftsman House used to buy part of the production and sell it to tourists. Today, production costs increased and pottery use became limited to artistic purposes.

Problems and Solutions

Craftsmen point out to the need of a government plan to support the production of pottery. They also propose the establishment of training centers to teach pottery making to the Lebanese youth.



White painted II and White Painted III Cypriote Jars from the Cypro-Geometric III period (800-700 B.C.). Cypriot origin jar, used as offering jar in a tomb, put next to the cinerary urn. Jawad Adra collection - 2006



Traditional pottery making
Ministry of Tourism



li Monthly meets Sudanese Ambassador Jamal Ibrahim

Sudan is the largest Arab country as it extends over an area of 2,505,813 square kilometers. For several years, the Sudanese area of Darfur has been witnessing internal conflicts, which are nurtured by foreign interference among other causes. *li Monthly* met the Sudanese Ambassador to Lebanon, Jamal Ibrahim, in an interview on the Darfur conflict and the Sudanese-Lebanese relations.

Despite the important role played by Sudan, the media focuses only on Darfur. What are the main causes behind this conflict and what is the Sudanese government's position toward the Security Council's stands in this regard?

The Darfur conflict is mainly caused by powerful countries' ambitions and interests in the country's resources. It is a local and international issue and a conflict between local tribal groups that live in an area with scarce resources. The African continent witnessed a wave of heat and aridity during the mid-1980s, mainly resulting in lack of resources, in particular water and arable land. Land is used for agriculture by indigenous ethnic groups, while other Bedouin communities move from an area to another searching for water and fertile land. Consequently, it is natural that disagreements erupt between the indigenous communities and Bedouin groups.

These disputes have been occurring since the 1940s or the 1950s, but were always resolved through agreements between officials in both communities and were not a source of concern to politicians in Khartoum.

However, in 2001 and 2002, some foreign powers tried to take advantage of these conflicts to meet their interests after discovering that the area was rich in oil, a fact that the Sudanese government did not know before. Consequently, we became a target for these powers, as the economy of the West largely depends on oil.

Today, Sudan is blockaded. Reports on genocides, massacres and armament of militias by the Sudanese government are issued by NGOs, relief agencies and public organizations to distort the image of our country. In fact, world powers have strong tools to achieve this purpose. They want to incite the public opinion against us in order to control our resources.

Why did the Sudanese government reject the deployment of multi-national forces in Darfur to calm the situation?

Last year, we agreed with the United Nations and the African Union to implement a strategy of three consecutive phases. The first phase consisted of deploying African forces in the area, while the second phase consisted of sending experts and equipment to Sudan and the third phase in deploying multi-national troops to help African forces implement peace and stability. Until now, the first and second phases were not fully implemented. However, the United States and Britain are insisting today on the immediate deployment of 20,000 troops to Sudan. This makes us feel that there is a conspiracy against us.

In light of Sudan's efforts to resolve the crisis in Lebanon, how do you see the situation today and what are the solutions you propose?

Despite the problems facing Sudan, we feel that we have duties toward our Arab neighborhood. In fact, Sudan was one of the main founders of the

Organization of the African Union in 1961 and the Arab League. Today, there are attempts to weaken Sudan's role in the region.

Sudan played an important role in the Arab initiative to resolve the crisis in Lebanon.

Moreover, Sudanese Presidential Envoy Mustafa Othman Ismail joined forces with Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa to propose ideas for the Arab initiative. It was agreed that a representative from the government and another from the opposition meet around a table to sign an agreement over general headlines, and which will be accompanied by settling the issues of the international tribunal, the national unity government and Paris 3 Conference. We almost reached some positive results but Moussa and the envoy could not make the two representatives sit around one table.

The subsequent security and political developments also hampered the Arab initiative.

However, Lebanese leaders are convinced that disagreements should not turn into fights. This fact represents a glimpse of hope to resume national dialogue.

How do you describe the Sudanese-Lebanese relations?

Sudanese-Lebanese relations date back to tens of years, even before the Independence. In fact, in the early 1920s and during the mandate in Sudan, the Lebanese helped in translation and the management of the country's economic affairs.

Besides, the largest quarter in Khartoum was named "Kfoury" after a Lebanese citizen.

What about Lebanese investments in Sudan?

Sudan occupies an important position on the list of Lebanese investments. There are several Lebanese banks that opened branches in the capital and across the country, such as Fransabank, Byblos, Audi and Bank of Beirut. We are setting the true example of economic relations between Arab countries.

Moreover, there are more than 16 bilateral agreements, the last of which was an agreement for the protection of investments between the two countries.

What do you like the most and dislike about Lebanon?

Lebanon is a country of culture par excellence and this is one of the main reasons that made me come here. However, I regret that political leaders are not reaching an agreement over their national problems. ❖

“They want to incite the public opinion against us in order to control our resources.”

Women and Job Opportunities in Saudi Arabia

Positive changes but a lot is yet to be done

Women in Saudi Arabia have to comply with social and cultural restrictions before entering the business world. In fact, women in KSA cannot drive a car or go out to some public places unless accompanied by their husband or a male relative.

However, during the past few years, women started to enjoy a stronger presence in the Saudi business world, which helped them overcome their society's restrictions.

Ii Monthly examines the Saudi working women, their rights, obligations and job opportunities.

Working Women and the Law

In 1987, the Labor Force Council promulgated decision No.1/m19/1405, which stipulated in clause 2/a, the regulations applying to working women in KSA. They are as follows:

- ⊙ A woman has the right to work, but only out of necessity.
- ⊙ She can only work if her guardian approves.
- ⊙ Her work should not prevent her from performing her role as a housewife.
- ⊙ A woman has the right to practice her job as long as she does not share workspace with men.
- ⊙ She should always be veiled in the workspace.

In 2004, the Council of Ministers promulgated decision No.120 pertaining to the increase of job opportunities for women in Saudi Arabia. On September 27, 2005, the royal decree No.m/51 was promulgated and included a labor code that set the rights and obligations of women working in the private sector.

The texts allowed women to work in all fields, but prohibited jobs involving danger or poisonous material. Women were also forbidden to work at night.

However, the texts granted women many benefits, such as a maternity leave of 10 weeks and other privileges related to birth and maternity. The retirement age for women was set at 55 years, compared to 60 years for men.

Women and Economic Activities

In 2005, the total population in KSA is officially declared to have reached 23,435,835 individuals; 55.3% male and 44.7% female. However, only 17 million are Saudi nationals, while 6.4 million are foreigners.

In 2005, the total labor force amounted to 6,241,653 workers, and only 14.4% of whom were women (900,843). On the other hand, the Saudi labor force counts 3,148,719 workers, with a 14.8% of women workers (In Lebanon, 25% of the total labor force is female).

There are 8.5 million Saudi women or 50% of the Saudi population. 40% of Saudi women are between 18 and 60 years-old. This means that Saudi working women only constitute 13.7% of the total Saudi women in this age category.

Working Women by Sector

Saudi women are present in many economic sectors. However, 57% of them work within social and personal activities.

Table no.1 shows the distribution of the labor force in KSA (nationals and foreigners) by gender and economic activity.

Economic Activity	Men (nationals/foreigners)	Saudi Women	Women of other nationalities	% of women in the work sector
Agriculture, woods, wild hunting, fish	379,921	74	105	0.05%
Mines, oil and gas	75,755	667	3,348	5%
Manufacturing	603,106	1,770	7,690	1.5%
Electricity, water and gas	29,877	33	19	0.2%
Construction	1,917,325	4,368	21,777	1.3%
Retail and wholesale	1,402,304	4,809	5,239	0.7%
Transportation and storage	124,765	44	142	0.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate services and business	91,659	1,455	826	2.4%
Group, social and personal activities (including health and education)	566,455	18,592	40,614	9.5%
Undefined activities	90,786	433,153	355,426	89.6%
Total	5,340,810	465,338	435,505	14.4%

Source: Saudi Ministry of Labor – Center of Information

Despite positive changes with regards to Saudi women's rights and the issuance of the labor code, the government has a lot to do to meet international standards. ●●

Syrian Parliament Elections

Low participation rate

A change in figures or policies?

Syria's ninth parliamentary elections, which were held on April 22-23, 2007, did not bring out any surprises but new figures. Moreover, it is still too soon to determine whether there will be a change in political strategies knowing that the Syrian political structure has always been monopolized by the National Progressive Front and in particular, the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party.

Number of Voters

Voters registered in the electoral lists (18 years-old and above) reached 11,967,611. However, only 7,924,816 voters received the electoral card (including 516,000 voters who were not allowed to vote for several reasons, such as military or security personnel, mentally disabled people or people convicted with serious crimes). The number of actual voters reached 4,157,626, representing 34.7% of the total number of registered voters.

However, the Syrian ministry of interior announced that the voters' rate reached 56.12% based on the number of voters who received the electoral card and are allowed to vote.

In the parliamentary elections of 2003, around 4.5 million voters out of 10.8 million cast their ballots. These numbers definitely reflect a decline in people's interest in these elections.

Outcome

250 Syrian legislators are distributed according to the Constitution as follows:

- ⊙ 127 deputies who belong to the labor and farming sectors and;
- ⊙ 123 deputies who belong to the remaining sectors.

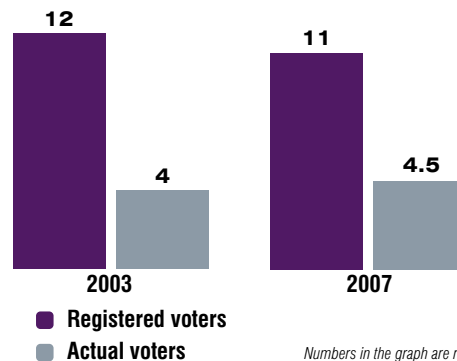
As to the number of candidates, 9,783 potential deputies (including 982 women) have submitted their candidacy, many of whom later withdrew.

2,293 candidates participated in the elections, including 649 candidates who represented the labor and farming sectors and 1,644 represented the remaining sectors.

The elections brought 180 new faces to Parliament, while 70 deputies maintained their seats. 31 women were elected compared to 30 in the previous Parliament. Moreover, 170 deputies belong to the National Progressive Front (NPF), while 80 deputies were elected as independents but with the approval of the NPF.

[Graph 1] **Number of Registered and Actual Voters in the Syrian Parliamentary Elections of 2003 and 2007 (in million)**

Source: Results of elections



Profile of Deputies

Deputies are distributed by profession or field of work as shown in Table no.1.

Distribution of deputies by profession		Table 1
Profession	Number of Deputies	
Lawyers	43	
Engineers	35	
Physicians	22	
Traders and Businessmen	23	
Workers and Farmers	127	

Source: Results of Syrian parliamentary elections – 2007

Meanwhile, the distribution of deputies by age category is shown in Table no.2.

Distribution of deputies by age category		Table 2
Age Category	Number of Deputies	
30-40 years old	29	
40-50 years-old	83	
50-60 years-old	81	
60-70 years-old	46	
Above 70 years-old	11	

Source: Results of Syrian parliamentary elections – 2007

This year's parliamentary elections in Syria were marked by the victory of 180 new deputies, the use of transparent ballot boxes and an "electoral ink" to prevent a second vote.

But whether these elections would bring about changes in the Syrian political life remains uncertain. ☞

Stats & Numbers

issue 59 - May/June 2007

2.4 billion LBP is the advance payment granted by the Lebanese government to the ministry of justice to sue Israel for its attacks on Lebanon in July and August 2006. The money will be paid to international law firms assigned for this task.

25 billion LBP is the annual costs for the maintenance of Rafik Hariri International Airport, which is undertaken by Middle East Airports Services (MEAS). The company has been assigned this task until June 30, 2008 with direct negotiation and without any bid invitations.

39 billion LBP is the amount paid by the government to decrease the price of a fuel tank by 3,000 LBP between November 15, 2006 and February 28, 2007. Some people tried to benefit from this measure and stocked fuel at this lower price in order to resell it after the rise of the prices.

14.7 billion LBP is the amount imposed on the Movenpick Hotel in Beirut to settle construction violations. The amount was decreased to around 2.3 billion LBP and current attempts are aiming at reducing it to 500 million LBP.

5,000 telephone lines were put at the disposal of Lebanese Army and Internal Security Forces officers between the end of 2006 and the first months of 2007. No exact numbers about the lines' annual costs are available but estimates amount to 30 million USD.



Lebanon 2005-2007: Slogans and Photos (to be published soon by Information International) Photo by Waddah Joma'a

Other publications by Information International and INMA (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- "I am Responsible, All of Us are Responsible"
- 8- "Our Environment is Our Home"
- 9- "My Society is My Responsibility"
- 10- "My Society is My Responsibility" Workbook
- 11- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building"
- 12- "Lebanon Wars, why?"



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Bee Series at the Kids Book Fair!

Within the framework of the National Reading Week organized by the Ministry of Culture on May 2-9, 2007, a Kids Book Fair was held on Saturday, May 5, at the weekly Souk el-Tayeb in Saifi village.

Lebanese authors, illustrators and publishers displayed their latest children books and publications in Arabic, French and English.

Among the publishers that participated in the event: The Social and Cultural Development Association (INMA) which presented its "Bee Series", Samir Library, Al-Ma'aref Publishing House, Turning Point, Dar Qonboz, YUKI Press, World Book Publishing, Dar Al-Adab and others.

The exhibition also featured story readings, mime shows (Jad Hakawati), puppet interaction by Wissam Dallati, in addition to a round table discussion entitled "Kids Books – Yesterday and Today" and a concert presented by the ACS music band.

*For further information on the "Bee Series", visit the INMA website:
www.inmadevelopment.org*



[1] ACS music band playing at the fair - May 2007

[2] Bee Series by INMA - May 2007

[3] A girl glancing through the pages of fairy-tale books - May 2007

