

Report of the Council of Civil Service

Between Yesterday and Today: Lebanon's Election

The Monthly meets with Mr. Hameed A. Opeloyeru, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Lebanon





Numbers for the Lebanese Memory



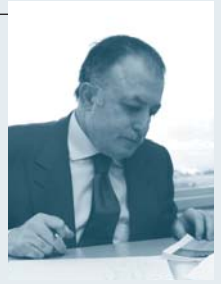
**End of 8th & 14th
of March**

\$ 339 million
**Election Expenditures
Ceiling**

\$ 5 Billion
Debt Increase in 2008

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Barazek, Croissants and Siniora Declare the End of March 8th and 14th



Citizen Zero remembers all the slogans of the participants in the demonstration of March 14th 2005. However, today he is recalling one he did not understand when hearing it for the first time: “we do not want Barazek, we want Croissants.” The crowds had decided at that time that French croissants were better than the Damascus sweet, Barazek.

From all the international sweets he had tasted, citizen Zero still finds some pleasure in eating Barazek. Something that reminds him of his childhood, of the day his father told him that Damascus, Beirut and Jerusalem were one. For him, croissants could not replace Barazek. This is not to say that he has any “ideological” position against croissant lovers, even having enjoyed some croissants himself. At that time, the ‘Sunnis’ rallied their voice as the opponents of Syria, declaring their love for croissants, as if their cousin, the pastry maker in Damascus, was now an enemy.

The March 8th demonstrators did not pay much attention to the importance of sweets in Lebanese politics and focused more on thanking Damascus for its ‘wonderful performance’ since its arrival to Lebanon in 1976 and until its withdrawal in 2005. Then again, Barazek would certainly have been unanimously acclaimed if more attention was given to it. Nothing on earth could convince Barazek and Croissant lovers to dialogue. Moreover Siniora, at that time was not the subject of discussion and preference, yet due to the ‘wonderful performance’ again and again of March 8th and 14th and of ‘the loyalists’ and ‘the opposition,’ Siniora gained importance and supporters.

Even so, citizen Zero announces to the Lebanese people that this dispute over ‘sweets’ has started to fade away, which is reflected in the electoral programs.

For instance, the Future Movement program mentions the following:

- ⦿ “A capable government is a civil government that does not hede to religious conflicts and confessional parties;
- ⦿ A capable government is the one that ensures the largest participation of citizens in managing their affairs through participatory mechanisms.”

The Hezbollah program includes:

- ⦿ “Building a state of laws and institutions and promoting the spirit of patriotism towards nation and land;
- ⦿ Developing the parties and syndicate activities and allowing civil society institutions and associations to play an active and vital role.”

Consequently, Mufti Kabbani will no longer have to pray in the Serail as a place reserved for the Sunnis since the Sunnis’ largest movement will adopt the norms of ‘civil society.’ Even more, the opposition (any opposition) would

be able to unseat the Prime Minister if it considers him illegitimate and the loyalists (any loyalists), or the opposition (any opposition), would be able to call for another Speaker of Parliament or overthrow him when he does not call the Parliament to order. And all this, would no longer lead to civil war.

The important point is that citizen Zero will not participate in the elections, neither as a candidate nor as a voter. He knows that the opposition is not an opposition, and the loyalists are not loyalists; that March 8th and 14th are gone and even their slogans have already started to change. He knows that today and tomorrow’s ‘independents’ and ‘moderates’ have never known in their lives neither moderation nor independence; all they knew was selfishness and obedience to external forces.

Ever since the situation has changed, the Barazek haters have come to rediscover its benefits and started eating it again, declaring not to have ever forgotten the taste. This is what Walid Jumblatt says in his most recent ‘discourses.’ As for the opposition that has always approved Siniora’s budgets since 1993 and trusted him as Minister of Finance, it has discovered today that it in fact does not like Siniora. Even though his budgets were endorsed to rule all over Lebanon, it is Saida, and only Saida that is now endangered by Siniora, according to the opposition.

The croissant lovers suddenly woke up and remembered that thyme has grown on their Mount and that they were the ones who made Kushk, Chanklish and quince jam.

Citizen Zero announces to the Lebanese people; tomorrow you will not hear about March 8th and 14th anymore; instead, you will hear about one demonstration or several harmonious ones praising Barazek, Croissants and Sinioras.

How beautiful Lebanon’s confessions are. To understand them, do not read March 8th and 14th programs; just focus on Barazek, Croissants and Sinioras and be aware of the fat!

Note: The word ‘Siniora’ in this article is a pun, referring to both the person (PM Fouad Siniora) and the Saida sweet. ‘Barazek’ is the Damascus sweet, and ‘Croissant’ is the French viennoiserie.

Jawad N. Adra

Parliamentary Elections - 2009

Number of Candidates 702, Ceiling of Expenditures

LBP 508,238,006,000 (\$339 Million)

The evenings of Tuesday and Wednesday, April 7/8 marked the last day to register as a candidate for the Lebanese Parliamentary Elections scheduled on Sunday June 7, 2009. The first candidate to register was Ali Badri Dandash (Shia'a seats allocated to Baalbak and Hermel district) and the last candidate was Mazhar Muhamad Osman (Sunni seats allocated to Minieh and Daniya district). The total number of candidates is 702. This number, presumably big, is mainly due to the adoption of relatively small electoral districts, in comparison with the past elections, consisting of 545 candidates in 2000 and 484 candidates in 2005.



Beirut 1st District

Maronites: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Massoud Al Achkar, Nadim Gemayel, Robert Marcel Prince, Emil Iskandar Hayek, Raymond Al Jubaily.

Catholics: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (3): Michel Pharoan, Nicloas Sehnaoui, Jad Sawaya.

Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Nayla Tueni, Jabour Jabour, George Forides, Issam Abou Jamra, Nasrallah Bou Fadel.

Armenian Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Sibouh Makhjian, Freij Sabounjian, Jean Ogasapian, Diran Sarkisian, Toros Harotyonian

Armenian Catholics: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Richar Koyoumijian, Krikwar Kaloust, Serj Tor Sarkisian, Fouad Karkour, Kichel Khoroizian.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
91,800	5	23	11,895,600,000

Beirut 2nd District

Armenian Orthodox: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (6): Artur Nazarian, Sbouh Kalbakian, Rafi Madaian, Mardiros Jamkojian, Hagob Krkrian, Alan Balian.

Shia'a: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (9): Haidar Kobeisi, Amine Sherri, Abbas Jaffal, Hani Hasan Kobeisi, Mohamed Mustapha Khawaja, Youssef Ali Chamas, Jihad Ali Hammoud, Abbas Mohamed Yaghi, Tarek Mohamed Amine Al Sayyed.

Sunni: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (6): Adnan Arakji, Maher Mohamed Abou Al Khodoud, Jalal Mohamed Kabrit, Fadi Mahmoud Saad, Mehieddine Ali Majbour, Nuhad Saleh Machnouk.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
98,860	4	21	11,454,240,000

Beirut 3rd District

Sunni: # of seats: (5), # of candidates (27): Ali Baajour, Mohamed Khaled Daouk, Mohamed Alwan, Mohamed Al Ajouz, Omar Ghandour, abdel Nasser Jiri, Ahmed Yassine, Saleh Arakgi, Zuhair Khateeb, Saadeddine Hariri, Ammar Hourri, Mohamed Kabbani, Bassam Barghout, Bahaa Eddine Itani, Tammam Saeb Slam, Khalil Chafic Kharma, Adel Abdel Rahman Daouk, Idriss Ali Saleh, Nizar Al Kadi, Marwan Mohamed Kheir Zanhour, Mahmoud Abdel Raham Adada, Imad Medhat Hout, Ghazi Medhat Khamis, Abdel Rahman Mahmoud Jnoun, Khodr Abdel Aziz Taha, Ghenwa Jalloul, Ibrahim Halabi.

Shia'a: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Nasser Kandil, Ghazi Youssef, Walid Mahmoud Jaber, Thou Alfekar Kobeisi, Rafic Nasrallah.

Druze: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (3): Ghaleb Abi Mesleh, Ghazi Aridi, Ghazi Aref Munzer.

Minorities: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (3): Edmond Boutros, Raymond Asmar, Nabil Defreij.

Evangelical: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (3): Bassem Chab, George Ashkhanian, Donald Babikian.

Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Bchara Merhej, Atef Merhej, Pierre Wadih Rbeiz, Fadi Chaker Roumi, Najah Wakim.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
245,096	10	46	51,997,664,000

Metn Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (4), # of candidates (19): Wadi Hajj, Emil Kanaan, Milad Sebaali, Ibrahim Kanaan, Fouad Abou Nader, Majed Eddy Abi Lama'a, Nabil Nicolas, Walid Abou Sleiman, Adib Tohme, Ghassan Achkar, Pierre Achkar, Salim Salhab, Emil Emil Lahoud, Naseeb Lahoud, Sami Gemayel, Kamil Khoury, Jean Youssef Abou Jawadeh, Fadi Farid Abou Jawdeh, Sarkis Sarkis.

Orthodox: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (6): Ghassan Mkheiber, Ibrahim Abi Haidar, Elias Mkheiber, Ghassan Rahbani, Michel Mur, Bahij Hawi.

Catholics: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (8): Antoine Haddad, Philip Maalouf, George Kassis, Elias Costantin Antoinios Karameh, Michel Haddad, Edgar Maalouf, Chalres Jazra, Ziad Saliba.

Armenian Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (2): Agop Bakradonian, Nazrat Georgi Sabonjian (Sabounjian withdrew and Bakradonian won without contest).

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
167,100	8	35	28,644,000,000

Keserwan Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (5), # of candidates (31): Youssef Khalil, Fares Boeiz, Klofis Klofis Al Khazen, Farid Elias Al Khazen, Gergi Nafa'a, Sejaan Kazzi, Nidal Khalil, Elie Zwain, Mansour Ghanem Al Bon, Youssef Salameh, Neamtallah Abi Nasr, Farid Haykal Al Khazen, Gilbert Zwain, Michel Aoun, Kamil Ziade, Joseph Al Zayek, Youssef (Joseph) Louis Abou Charaf, Simon

Sfeir, Nawfal Dao, Antoine Hkayyem, Tony Wehbe Al Kreidi, Henri Rachid Sfeir, Naaman Joseph Mrad, Fadi Abdallah Barakat, Hanna Assad Ghosn, Chaker Elias Salameh, Mansour Jirjis Akiki, Manwuel (Maroun) Louis Abou Charaf, Carlos Pierre Eddeh, Charles Hanna Khoury Ayoub, Habib Mdawar.

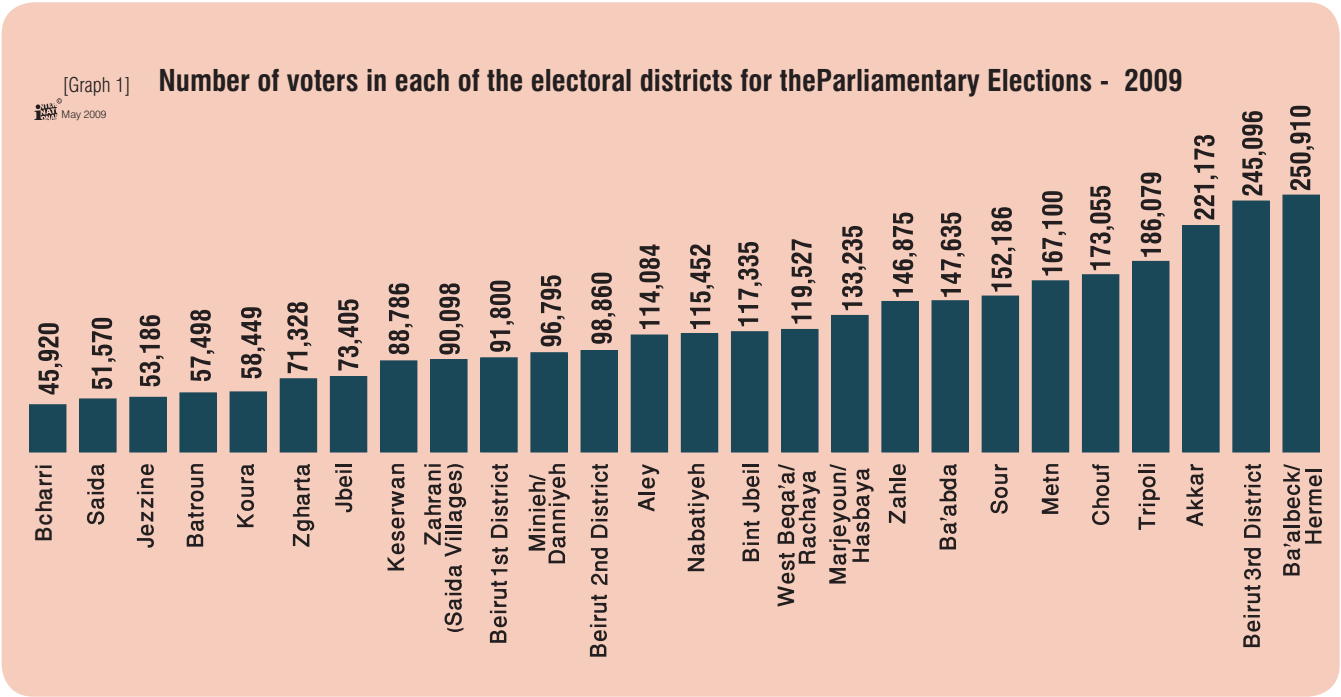
# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
88,786	5	31	15,659,464,000

Jbeil Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (13): Jean Hawwat, Bchara Abi Younes, Emil Nawfa, Rafic Abi Younes, Nazem Khoury, Michel Karam, Fares Saaïd, Walid Khoury, Chamel Mozaya, Fadi Rouhana Sakr, Simon Abi Ramia, Francois Semaan Basil, Bassem Assad Al Hachem.

Shia'a: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (13): Mohamed Haidar Ahmed, Mustapha Hussein, Abbas Hachem, Mohamed Haidar, Rabah Abi Haidar, Ali Awwad, Hikmat Hajj, Mashhour Haidar Ahmed, Mahmoud Ibrahim Awwad, Diab kamel Kanaan, Rami Suleiman Ollaik, Talal Mekdad, Naim Chamas.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
73,405	3	26	11,534,120,000



Baabda Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (21): Therese Rizkallah, Pierre Dakkach, Karim Sarkis, Naji Garios, Youssef Moanes, Joseph Hobeika, Chakib Kortbawi, Edmond Garios, Elias Abou Assi, Joseph Ghanem, Hikmat Deeb, Gabi Semaan, Milad Kareh, Alan Aoun, Abdallah Farhat, Joseph Abi Jawdeh, Charles Chidyak, Fadi Romanos Jirjis, Salah Hnein, Joseph Abdo Bashhalani, Pierre Daher Haddad (listed as Shia'a candidate).

Shia'a: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (15): Said Alame, Talal Hatoum, Ali Ammar, Ramzi Kanj, Salah Harakeh, Fadi Alame, Hasan Ahmed Hasan Khalil, Bassem Sabea, Tarek Youssef Harb, Rim Saadoun Hamadeh, Bassam Cherif Hamdar, Bilal Assad Farhat, Riad Aref Harakeh, Saad Slim, Riad Raad.

Druze: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (9): Suheil Aawar, Nadim Aawar, Omar Aawar, Ezzedine Makarem, Hicham Aawar, Ayman Chucair, Nabil Kamel Mezher, Naji Aflaton Hatoum, Fadi Aawar.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
147,635	6	45	33,324,300,000

Aley Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (7): Naji Kanaan, Suheil Bajani, Cesar Abou Khalil, Fouad Saad, Henri Heloum Antoine Zoghbi, Antoine Maaz.

Druze: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (3): Suleiman Sayegh, Akram Chehaib, Amir Talal Arslan.

Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (7): Walid Kheirallah, Jihad Matta, Salam Maamari, Fadi Habr, Marwan Abou Fadel, Albert Elias Matta, Khalil GebrayelAbdallah Kheirallah.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
114,084	5	17	10,307,712,000

Chouf Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (8): George Adwan, Amine Kazzi, Michel Dori Chamoun, Nassif Kazzi, Mario Aoun, Antoine Boustani, Elie Aoun, Ghattas Semaan Khoury.

Sunni: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (7): Zaher Khateeb, Mohamed Hajjar, Ala'a Eddine Terro, Yehia Ashour, Nabil Ahmed Awaidat, Mohamed Abdelhalim Houhou, Ayad Abdallah.

Druze: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (5): Bahaa Abdel Khaleq, Marwan Hamadeh, Walid Jumblat, Adnan Beainy, Sheikh Imad Kamal Imad.

Catholics: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (3): Walid Maalouf, Abdo Munzer, Nehme Tohme.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
173,055	8	23	19,371,060,000

West Bekaa & Rachaya Qada'a

Sunni: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (19): Sami Khateeb, Abdel Rahim Mrad, Mohamed Keraawi, Ahmed Ftouh, Samir Harb, Ali Jinani, Ali Hussein Al Hajj, Farouk Dahrouj, Amine Hammoud, Khalil Mohamed Yassine, Ali Al Jarouch, Nabil Fares, Ziad Al Kadri, Mohamed Taha, Hamadi Janem, Jamal Jarrah, Salah Hussein Bakri, Mohamed Shehade Smeili, Jamil Sharanek.

Shia'a: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (7): Nasser Nasrallah, Ali Sobh, Adnan Hussein, Mahmoud Abou Hamdan, Amine Wehbe, Sami Mohamed Khalil Raishouni, Mohamed Amine Abbas.

Druze: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (2): Faisal Dawood, Wael Abou Faour.

Maronites: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (2): Henri Chedid, Robert Ghanem.

Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (4): Elie Ferzli, Ibrahim Khoury, Norma Ferzli, Antoine Saad.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
119,527	6	34	21,355,672,000

Zahle Qada'a

Catholics: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (10): Naji Michel Skaff, Tony Abou Khater, Fouad Turk, Makda Breidi, Elias Skaff, Ghassan Naddaf, Tony Tohme, Nicloas Fattouch, Mousa Fattouch, Abdo Skaff.

Sunni: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (22): Assem Araji, Najib Hachem, Mohamed Araji, Ibrahim Meiss, Wajih Araji, Kamal Meiss, Omar Jammal, Said Salloum, Mohamed Omar Youssef Hocheimi, Abdallah Sayyed, Rida Meiss, Hasan Al Ali, Khaled Araji, Khaled Abdel Fattah, Rafic Rheimi, Wissam Tarchichi, Bahjat Mohamed Harati, Ghazi Faysal Meiss, Fayez Mohamed Araji, Jihad Hussein Muallem, Imad Meita, Imad Kazoun.



* Illustration by Ousama Hdeib

Shia'a: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (14): Mohamed Abdallah, Mehzen Dalloul, Hatem Taleb, Osama Salhab, Amer Sabouri, Chafic Sayyed Mohamed Mousawi, Afif Mehdi, Ahmed Safar, Ali Bou Hamdan, Hasan Yaacoub, Zahi Youssef Abdallah, Mohamed Youssef Hamdar, Ghezwan Ahmed Charaf, Iqab Iqab Sakr.

Maronites: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (7): Salim Aoun, Elie Marouni, Khalil Hrawi, Joseph Chamoun, George Merched Mazraani, Maroun Rachid Saghbini, Paul Jean Charbel.

Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (8): Joseph Maalouf, Kaisar Maalouf, Kamil Maalouf, Michel Dmou, Chukri Al Tini, Moussa Freiji, Antoine Chahine Hadad, Ibrahim Maalouf.

Armenian Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (8): George Kasargi, Boghos Kordian, Antoine Nachankian, Eddy Demerjian, Warojean Araklian, Nareek Ibrahimian, Chant Mardiros Jinjnan, Strak Gabriel Hawtian.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
146,875	7	69	50,887,500,000

Baalbeck & Hermel Qada'a

Shia'a: # of seats: (6), # of candidates (33): Ali Dandash, Fadi Ali Younes, Toufic Dika, Ali Saleh Mousawi, Fouad Mawla, Fayez Chukr, Rifeat Masri, Rifeat Zaaite, Hussein Mousawi, Ali Mekdad, Nawwar Sahli, Hussein Hajj Hasan, Ali Zaaite, Mohamed Abbas Hajj Suleiman, Assem Kansa, Ghazi Zaaite, Ali Al Hajj, Hafez Kamhaz, Bassam Mawla, Hayan Salim Haidar, Balkheir Abdo Chahine, Mohamed Sobhi Yaghi, Mefdel Mohamed said Alweh, Hussein Ali Hussein, Hani Ali Chamas, Hussein Ali Zaaite, Ali Hussein Mekdad, Mohamed Rached sabri Hamadeh, Mohamed Seifeddine Salman, Mohmaed Khalil Moussa haidar, Mohamed Abdallah Jaafar, Mohamed Husan Hajj Suleiman, Riad Zaaite.

Sunni: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (8): Ibtesam Saadi, Al Walid Mohamed Sukkariyeh, Kamel Rifaei, Bassel Hujeiri, Massoud Hujeiri, Hussein Mohamed Solh, Abdel Mine'm Mohamed Hojeiri, Fadlallah Khodr Solh.

Maronites: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (4): Emil Rahme, Chawki Al Fakhri, Aqid Hadshiti, Elias hadshiti.

Catholics: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (6): Marwan Fares, Michel Salloum, Tala Makdessi, Saadallah Hulo Ardo, Soud Youssef Rofaail, Khalil Mekhaeil Rofaail.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
250,910	10	51	58,835,640,000

Saida Qada'a

Sunni: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (6): Mustapha Kawwas, Bahia Hariri, Ali Sheikh Ammar, Usama Maarouf Saad Al Masri, Fouad Abdel Baset Al Siniora, Nasser Mehieddine Salim Hamoud.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
51,570	2	6	1,137,680,000

Zahrani Qada'a (Saida Villages)

Shia'a: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (6): Yehia Ghaddar, Zein Khalifeh, Nabih Berri, Hussein Youssef Zbeeb, Riad Said Al Assad, Ali Osseiran.

Catholics: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Phillip Khoury, Michel Moussa, Suleiman Salibi, Robert Elias Khoury, Walid Ibrahim Mezher.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
90,098	3	11	5,614,312,000

Jezzine Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (14): Samir Azar, Ziad Aswad, Maroun Kanaan, Fawzi Louis Asmar, Michel Helou, George Said Njeim, Kamil Serhal, Amal Hekmat Abou Zeid, Roni Tannoud Aoun, Ibrahim Aar, Edmond Rizk, Joseph Nahra, Nabil Bahjat Nassif, Claude Jamal Azouri.

Catholics: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (11): Ajaj Jirji Haddad, Issam Jirjis Haddad, Nicolas Nadim Salem, Issam Sawaya, Raymond Elias Semaan, George Hajjar, Antoine Dr Salim Khoury, Nicolas Hajjar, Hadi Al Hindi, Fawzi Abou Farhat, Asaad Najib Hindi.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
53,186	3	25	9,068,600,000

Nabatiyeh Qada'a

Shia'a: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (15): Nizam Ali Houmani, Mohamed Jaber, Amine Saleh, Abdel Latif Zein, Hazem Chahine, Mohamed Raad, Yassine Jaber, Adham Jaber, Majed Fayyad, Mohamed Ali Mokalled, Nadim Osseiran, Wafic Jaber, Mohamed Hasan Abbas, Ali Naeim Traboulsi, Kamal Hasan Wehbe.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
9,177,120,000	3	15	115,452

Sour Qada'a

Shia'a: # of seats: (4), # of candidates (8): Ali Khreis, Mohamed Jbaei, Abdel Majid Saleh, Mohamed Fneish, Nawaf Mousawi, Ali Sayyed Mohamed Baqer Al Amine, Sayyed Jamal Sayyed Raef Safiyeedine, Ali Afif Khalil.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
152,186	4	8	6,069,952,000

Bint Jbeil Qada'a

Shia'a: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (11): Mohamed Kaddouh, Nazem Ibrahim, Mahmoud Baydoun, Ali Bazzi, Hasan Fadlallah, Ali Mhanna, Badih Alawiye, Ayoub Fahed Hmayyed, Mohamed Abdel Husein Atwi, Mohamed Abdel Rida Sweidan, Ahmed Mohamed Khawaja.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
117,335	3	11	6,812,740,000

Marjeyoun & Hasbaya Qada'a

Shia'a: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (8): Ahmad Al Asaad, Merhef Ramadan, Ali Fayyad, Abbas Sharafeddine, Saadallah Mazraani, Ali Hasan Khalil, Adnan Khalil Abboud, Salman Mohamed Al Jabali.

Sunni: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (8): Jamil Zaher, Mohamed Kaadan, Munif Khateeb, Mahmoud Kassem Khateeb, Kassem Mohamed Ghader, Walid Nouredine Nouredine, Walid Asaad Barakat, Kassem Hachem.

Druze: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (2): Wissam Charrouf, Anwar Khalil.

Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (2): Elias Abou Rizk, Asaad Herdan.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
133,235	5	20	13,658,800,000

Tripoli Qada'a

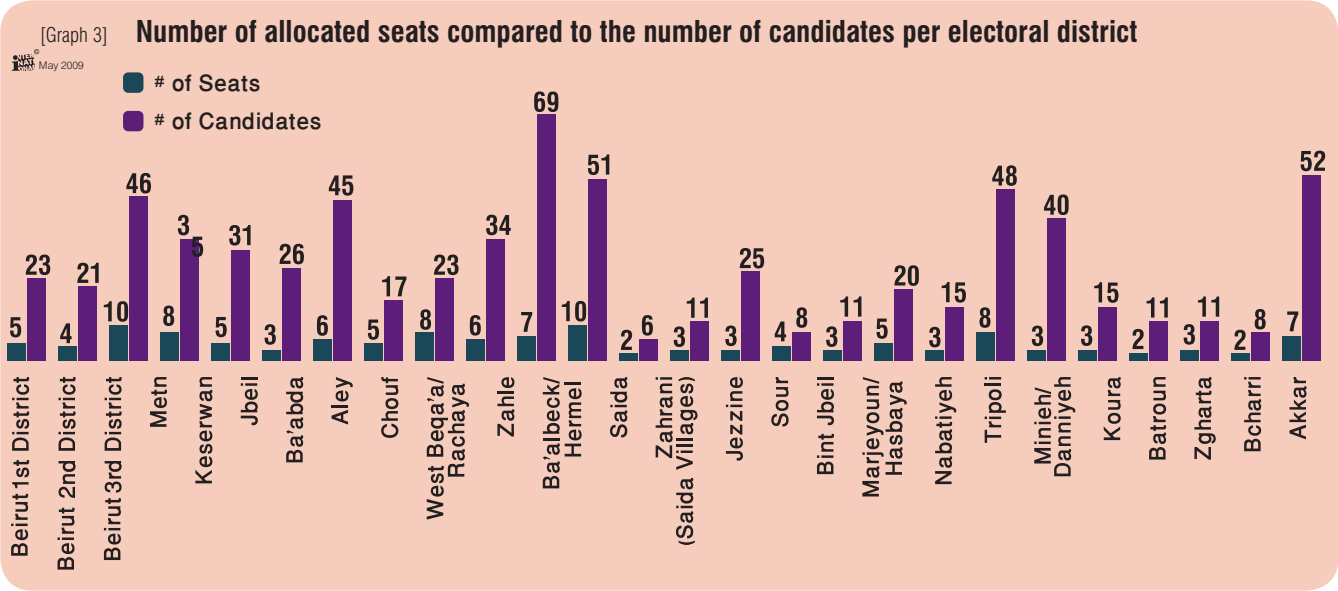
Sunni: # of seats: (5), # of candidates (26): Fadi Adra, Mohamed Zakour, Riad Salhab, Najib Mikati, Mohamed Meshab Issa, Mohamed Abdel Latif Kabbara, Mohammed Safadi, Ahmed Karami, Mostapha Awad, Ghada Dandashi, Mohamed Anas Abdallah Nadim Jisr, Bilal Said Jrad, samir Jisr, Rami Dargham, Mohamed Mesbah Ahdab, Hoda Mohamed Sankari, Bilal Ahmed Jamal Chwaiki, Omar Abdel hamid Karami, Khaldoun Salim Al Cherif, Mohamed Nabil Eqsmawati (Arja), Abdallah Saeb Baroudi, Hasan Said Chahhal, Fayyad Nadim Halabi, Rami Mohamed Fadel Hallab, abdel Khalek Hasan Nabulsi, Tarek Mesbah Kayyal.

Alawi: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (9): Mohamed Hajjaj, Nazih Tamour, Rifeat Ali Eid, Ali Ajaya, Nasr Khodr, Ahmed Omran, Badr Wannous, Nazih Deeb Raad, Mohamed Traboulsi.

Maronites: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Rafli Diab, Robert Fadel, Fadi Gbantous, George Wadih Toros, Antoine Alfred Habib.

Orthodox: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (8): Jean Obeid, George Chabtini, Ibrahim Tawil, Pierre Hashash, Regina Kantara, Michel Joseph Khoury, El Helou Ibrahim el Helou, Samer Saadeh.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
186,079	8	48	42,927,168,000



Minieh/Danniyeh

Sunni: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (40): Jihad Samad, Adel Fattat, Mohamed Fadel, Toufic Zraika, Mohamed Ali Khalil, Kassem Abdel Aziz, Hussein samad, Ahmed Abdel Rahman Obeid, Jamil Ahmed Burhan Al Ali Raad, Mohamed Kheir, Saleh Kheir, Fadi Kheir, Kamal Mohamed Saleh Kheir, Ahmed Shandab, Bassam rimlawi, Mjahed Shandab, Mohamed Ahmed Alam Eddine, Nafed Samad, Khaled Kheir, Mahmoud Seif, Hachem Alam Eddine, Mohamed Ezzedine Alameddine, Nazih Saadeh, Ahmed Fattat, asaad Harmouch, Hassan Neddeh, Khaled Dhaibi, Haitham Samad, Hachem Abdel Fattah Zreika, Abdel Baset Abdel Rahman Obeid, Ibrahim Khalil Ghrayeb, Mohamed Ahmed Abou Kanj, Walid Mohamed Masri, Abdel Salam Mohamed Deeb Kheir, Amer Mahmoud Alam eddine, Mohamed Mahmoud Hajj Ahmed, Hasan Abdel Kader Hallak, Mazhar Ahmed Othman, Abdel Kader Al Shami, Toufic Dhaibi.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
96,795	3	40	21,487,200,000

Koura Qada'a

Orthodox: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (15): George Burgi, Salim Saadeh, Fayeze Ghosn, Farid Habib, Jun Moferrej, George Wehbe, Suheil Khoury, Albert Indraous, Semman Lakkis, Farid Makari, Nicolas Ghosn, Gabriel Derrayk, George Atallah, Edgar Boulos, Phillip Fares Boulos.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
58,449	3	15	5,756,940,000

Batroun Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (11): Boutros Harb, Gebran Jirgi Basil, George Mrad, Nabil Hkayyem, Sayed Akel, antoine Zahra, Salim Michel Najm, Gebran Istphan Bassil, Faek youssef Gebrayel Younes, Jean Jamil Mrad, Roni Charbel Doumit.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
57,498	2	11	4,179,912,000

Zgharta Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (11): Fayeze Karam, Suleiman frenjiyeh, Istphan Dweihi, Salim Karam, Jawad Boulos, Michel Moawad, Youssef Dwaihi, Asaad Karam, Kaisar Farid Moawad, Romanos Touma Boulos, Youssef Obeid.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
71,328	3	11	4,788,432,000

Bcharri Qada'a

Maronites: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (8): Gebran Tawk, Elie Kairouz, Setrida Jaajaa, Rachid Rahme, Roy Issa El Khoury, Chahine Tawk, Mkhail Matta, Majid Abi Saab.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
45,920	2	8	2,669,440,000

Akkar Qada'a

Sunni: # of seats: (3), # of candidates (27): Ali Allouch, Bilal Mrad, Mohamed Yehia, Amer Tarraf, Wajih Baarini, Mohamed Naaman, Khaled Daher, Kamil Mrad, Maher Abdallah, Talal Merhbi, Mahmoud Al Hasan, Ali Tlais, Ahmed Aref Al Rajab, Hussein Merhi, Mohamed Suleiman, Mohamed Hawchar, Khaled Zahraman, Sheikh Hasan Ahmed Khateeb, Abdel Elah Wajih Zakaria, Omar Mohamed Al Ali, Khalil Mustapha Mustapha, Soud Ahmed Al youssef, Mouin Mohamed Tarek Merhbi, Jamal Omar al Omar, Mohamed Deeb Dandashi, Khaled Zakaria, Mahmoud Khaled.

Orthodox: # of seats: (2), # of candidates (14): Karim Al Rassi, Wehbi Katicha, Joseph Wehbe, Yaacoub Sarraf, Nehme Mahfouz, Riad Rahhal, Joseph Chahda, Nidal Tohme, Nafez Lutfallah Warrak, Miguel Yaacoub Yaacoub Chahda, George Elias Soud, Abdallah Raouf Hanna, Fawzi Amine Chalhoub, Afif Tohme.

Alawi: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (5): Haitham Hamdan, Mustapha Hussein, Mohamed Tamer, Khodr Habib, Abdel Rahman Mohamed Abdel Rahman.

Maronites: # of seats: (1), # of candidates (6): Rachid Michel Daher, Joseph Mekhaeil, Hadi Hobeich, Amine Iskandar Iskandar Ibrahim, Ziad Soud Bitar, Mkhail Daher.

# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
221,173	7	52	53,803,984,000

Total Number of voters & candidates and the expenditure ceiling

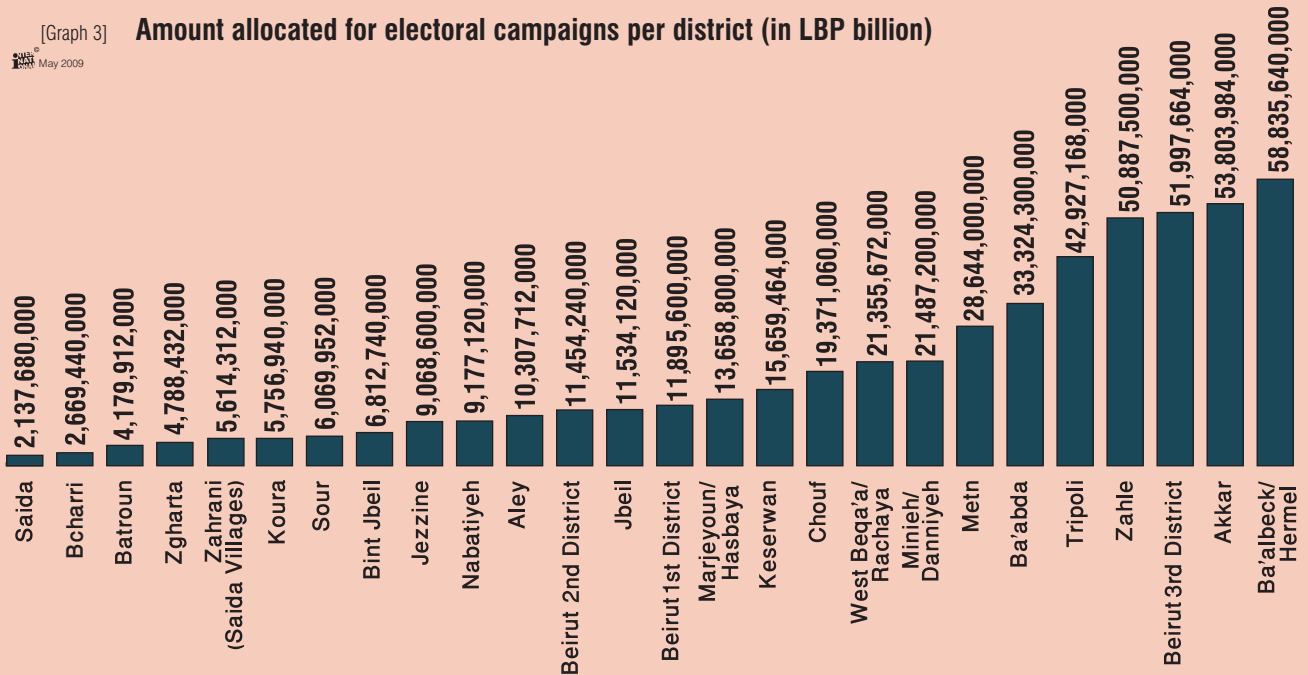
# of Voters	# of Seats	# of Candidates	Expenditures Ceiling in LBP
3,167,437	128	702	508,238,006,000



[Graph 3]

Amount allocated for electoral campaigns per district (in LBP billion)

Source: May 2009

**Clarifications and Conclusions:**

To calculate the financial expenses permitted in each district, we have referred to Parliamentary Elections Resolution # 25 issued on October 8, 2008. Article 57 stipulates the ceiling amount each candidate is allowed to spend during the electoral campaign in accordance with the following:

1. A fixed lump sum part of LBP 150 million.
2. A variable part related to the number of candidates and registered voters in each electoral district. This part is defined according to a decree issued by the government in compliance with a suggestion submitted by the Minister of Interior and Municipalities. The decree was issued and fixed the ceiling amount at LBP 4000 per register voter. For instance, in the Baalbak and Hermel district, the ceiling amount was defined as follows:

- ⊙ 51 (number of candidates) x LBP 150 million = LBP 7,650,000,000
- ⊙ 25,910 (number of voters) x LBP 4,000 x 51 (number candidates) = LBP 51,185,640,000
- ⊙ **i.e. a total of LBP 58,835,640,000**

Some candidates may withdraw from the elections, while others may spend amounts that far exceed the allowed expenses; using various means to breach the law that pertains to the electoral spending ceiling amount.

LBP 5.6 billion are the total fees paid by the candidates to the state (8 million for each candidate, 2 million for nomination fees, and 6 million for the electoral insurance. Half of this amount shall be returned back to the candidate if he wins or loses, provided that he obtains at least 20% of the votes or he withdraws 45 days before the Election Day).

The average number of candidates for each seat is 5.4. However, this general percentage varies according to electoral sects and districts as shown in the table. For instance, the number of candidates in Minieh and Daniya is 40 candidates for 3 seats followed by Zahle with 68 candidates for 7 seats, and the lowest in Saida with 6 candidates for two seats.

The current Election Law has sanctioned officially the expenditures of USD339 million for the Lebanese elections in 2009 representing 30.4% of Lebanese customs revenues annually (USD 1,114 million) or 58% of the Ministry of Education budget, in a country where the public debt represents more than 200% of its GDP.

Area	Number of Candidates and Seats by District and Confession													
	Sunni		Shia'a		Druze		Maronites		Orthodox		Catholics		Armenian Orthodox	
	# of													
	Seats	Candidates	Seats	Candidates	Seats	Candidates	Seats	Candidates	Seats	Candidates	Seats	Candidates	Seats	Candidates
Beirut 1st District							1	5	1	5	1	3	1	5
Beirut 2nd District	1	6	1	9									2	6
Beirut 3rd District	5	27	1	5	1	3			1	5				
Metn							4	19	2	6	1	8	1	2
Keserwan							5	31						
Jbeil			1	13			2	13						
Ba'abda			2	15	1	9	3	21						
A'aley					2	3	2	7	1	7				
Chouf	2	7			2	5	3	8			1	3		
West Beqaa/ Rachaya	2	19	1	7	1	2	1	2	1	4				
Zahle	1	22	1	14			1	7	1	8	2	10	1	8
Baalbeck/ Hermel	2	8	6	33			1	4			1	6		
Saida	2	6												
Zahrani (Saida Villages)			2	6							1	5		
Jezzine							2	14			1	11		
Sour			4	8										
Bint Jbeil			3	11										
Marjeyoun/ Hasbaya	1	8	2	8	1	2			1	2				
Nabatiyeh			3	15										
Tripoli	5	26					1	8	1	5				
Minieh/ Danniyeh	3	40												
Koura									3	15				
Batroun							2	11						
Zgharta							3	11						
Bcharri							2	8						
Akkar	3	27					1	6	2	14				
Total	27	196	27	144	8	24	34	175	14	71	8	46	5	21
Area	# of Seats		# of Candidates											
Beirut 1st District: Armenian Catholics	1		5											
Beirut 3rd District: Minorities	1		3											
Beirut 3rd District: Evangelical	1		3											
Tripoli: Alawi	1		9											
Akkar: Alawi	1		5											
Total # of Seats:			128											
Total # of Candidates:			702											

An Election Contested: 8th and 14th of March Slogans and Forces Signaling their End

While the election is now being contested under the slogans of 8th and 14th March, the Zu'ama of the main blocs are well cognizant of the changes that will take place and are prepared for new coalitions that will be formed after the elections, thus signaling the end of both 8th and 14th of March. Based on a survey that assessed the current political situation of the candidates who are running for parliament, the coalitions that have been formed or are being considered, as well as the confessional make up of the districts, it has become plausible to forecast the outcome of the elections. The result of the elections is expected to be very close, with the probability that the 8th of March and the Aoun coalition winning 61 seats versus 57 seats for the 14th of March coalition and the final 10 seats being too close to call.

Fierce Competition: seats too close to call...

Sunni seat in Tripoli:

The possibility that Omar Karame will be MP is dependent on whether Mohammed Safadi, Najib Mikati and Hariri will form a coalition and agree on Omar Karame. If not, Karame will lose to the 14th of March. (Candidate for 14th of March)

Orthodox seat in Koura:

It is expected that there will be an intense contest between candidates Fayaz Ghosn, Salim Saadeh and George Atallah versus Farid Habib and Nicola Ghosn, making this seat too close to call.

Maronite seat in Zgharata:

In this district, it is expected that the Frenjiyeh list will win three seats, however there is still a slight chance for Michel Moawad. (Candidate for 8th of March)

Druze seat in Ba'abda:

There is a probability that Ayman Chucair (part of the Walid Jumblatt bloc) might win this seat considering the recent rapprochement between Talal Arslan and Walid Jumblatt, in which Jumblatt is not contesting Arslan's seat in Al'ey. (Candidate for 14th of March)

Maronite seat in Metn:

This seat will depend on the level of participation from the Armenian community (especially since their candidate has already won his seat uncontested). In this case, there is the possibility that the 14th of March will win the Maronite seat. (Candidate for 14th of March)

Maronite seat in Beirut 1st District:

There is fierce competition between Nadim Gemeyal and Massoud al-Achkar. The outcome is also dependent on the level of participation from the Armenian community, which in this case will increase the chance of Nadim Gemeyal. (Candidate for 14th of March)

Sunni seat in Saida:

There is also fierce competition between Fouad Siniora and Usama Saad for the Saida seat, with the probability of Siniora winning. (Candidate for 14th of March)

Orthodox seat in West Beqa'a and Rachaya

There is a possibility that the 8th of March candidate Elie Ferzli will win. (Candidate for 8th of March)

Zahle (2 seats)

There is a slightly higher probability that the 14th of March will win three seats out of the five and the 8th of March the remaining two, yet the competition is too close to make a certain call.

From the above mentioned information, one can draw some conclusions that the outcome might be 63 for the opposition and 62 for the pro-government forces with three seats (2 in Zahle, 1 in Koura) too close to call.

To take the scenario further, let us assume that the elections have taken place and the outcome was declared on the evening of Sunday June, 2009 or the morning of Monday June 8, 2009. If none of the forces have a decisive majority, no one will control the political decisions.

The most likely outcome of the elections where signs are already pointing to is that these elections will signal the end of the 8th and 14th March coalitions, whereby new slogans and coalitions will be re-created with the same faces appearing. What Lebanon has witnessed for the last four years was not only the result of a complex socio-economic and political structure, but also the result of direct political and/or other forms of intervention by the US, France, Syria and Iran. This has led the 14th of March forces to align themselves with the US and France, while March 8th have aligned with Syria and Iran.

Currently, the international political climate, coupled with the intransigence and insecurity of the Lebanese Zu'ama during the last few years is bound to yield to a new reality. This is the reason we have been hearing a lot about the so-called 'wasitiyeh' (middle) or 'independents'. The Lebanese will soon discover that the 'wasitiyeh' and the 'independents' are going to come from both the 8th and 14th of March coalitions. The question then becomes how many from the 8th or 14th of March will declare that they have always been 'independents' or 'wasitiyeh'?

In light of this reality, Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the US can continue their dialogue and deliberations, while the Lebanese begin to learn the new slogans and political discourses.

The Monthly will reconsider the forecast of the probable results of the election pending on the current changes and possible shifts and alliances in the upcoming issue, which will be in libraries by the end of May 2009.

Lebanon MPs-2009 Elections																
#	Qada'a	14th	8th	NC	# of MPs											
		C	C		Tot.	Sunni	Shia'a	Druze	A'alawi	Maronite	Orthodox	Catholics	Evangelical	Minorities	Armen. Orthodox	Armen. Catholics
North																
1	Akkar	7			7	3			1	1	2					
2	Tripoli	7		1	8	5			1	1	1					
3	Minieh/Danniyeh	3			3	3										
4	Koura	1	1	1	3						3					
5	Bcharri	2			2					2						
6	Zgharta		2	1	3					3						
7	Batroun	1	1		2					2						
7	TOTAL North	21	4	3	28	11			2	9	6					
Mount Lebanon																
1	Baabda		5	1	6		2	1		3						
2	Jbeil		3		3		1			2						
3	Keserwan		5		5					5						
4	Metn	2	5	1	8					4	2	1			1	
5	Chouf	8			8	2		2		3		1				
6	A'aley	4	1		5			2		2	1					
6	TOTAL M. Lebanon	14	19	2	35	2	3	5		19	3	2			1	
Beirut																
1	1st District	2	2	1	5					1	1	1			1	1
2	2nd District	2	2		4	1	1								2	
3	3rd District	10			10	5	1	1			1		1	1		
3	TOTAL Beirut	14	4	1	19	6	2	1		1	2	1	1	1	3	1
South																
1	Saida	1		1	2	2										
2	Saida Villages		3		3		2					1				
3	Sour		4		4		4									
4	Nabatiyeh		3		3		3									
5	Bint Jbeil		3		3		3									
6	Marjeyoun/Hasbaya		5		5	1	2	1			1					
7	Jezzine		3		3					2		1				
7	TOTAL South	1	21	1	23	3	14	1		2	1	2				
Beqa'a																
1	West Beqa'a/Rachaya	4	1	1	6	2	1	1		1	1					
2	Zahle	3	2	2	7	1	1			1	1	2			1	
3	Ba'albeck/Hermel		10		10	2	6			1		1				
3	TOTAL Beqa'a	7	13	3	23	5	8	1		3	2	3			1	
26	Lebanon	57	61	10	128	27	27	8	2	34	14	8	1	1	5	1

* C: Confirmed

** NC: Not Confirmed

The Year 2008 in Review

Once again: No General Budget and Mounting Public Debt

Contrary to the beginning of 2008, the end of the year was relatively calm, witnessing some stability on political and security levels. In fact, the Doha Agreement in May 2008 paved the way towards the election of a new President after a lingering presidential vacancy from November 24, 2007. It also led to the formation of a National Unity Government that would prepare for the parliamentary elections in June 2009. Some positive indicators were also observed on the economic level while other issues, such as the administrative nominations and the statement of the general budget are still pending.

This article sheds light on some of the indicators and developments recorded in a number of sectors.

Law Ratification

While the year 2007 did not witness the ratification of any laws due to the political crisis that kept the parliament suspended, the parliament has resumed its legislative activity and passed 63 laws, which are the following:

- ⊙ Law # 25 dated October 8, 2008, the Parliamentary Elections
- ⊙ Law # 33 dated October 16, 2008, the ratification by Lebanon of the United Nations Convention against Corruption
- ⊙ Law # 43 dated November 3, 2008, amendment of the Constitutional Council Establishment Law
- ⊙ Law # 44 dated November 11, 2008, tax procedures
- ⊙ Law # 63 dated December 31, 2008, minimum salary increase and allowance for high living cost

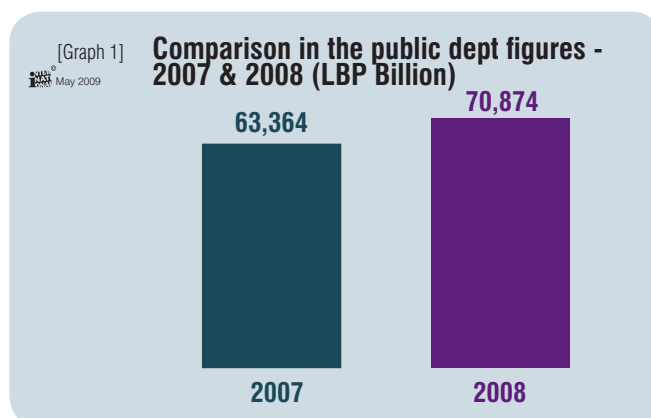
General Budget

For the third consecutive year (2006- 2007- 2008), the General Budget Law was not adopted. The draft budget law, submitted by the government (but not ratified by the parliament until mid-April 2009) included the following figures:

- ⊙ Budget expenses: LBP 11,475 billion, of which LBP 4,650 billion will be set aside for debt payments.
- ⊙ Budget revenues: LBP 8,368 billion, hence a deficit of 27% was registered. However, according to the corporeal results, the expenses soared up to LBP 15,007 billion, while revenues reached LBP 10,603 billion, making a deficit of 29.3%.

Public Debt

The public debt increased from LBP 63,364 billion in 2007 to LBP 70,874 billion (USD 47 billion) by the end of 2008. This is an increase of LBP 7,510 billion (USD 5 billion) within one year – Graph 1.



Economic Growth

The economic growth achieved by the Lebanese economy in 2008 is estimated at around 6%. According to this rate, the GDP attains LBP 35,558 billion (USD 23.7 billion). As for inflation, it has reached 7.5%.

Balance of Payments

The balance of payments achieved further positive results with a significant surplus that scored USD 3.5 billion in 2008. This is the best figure registered, compared to the USD 1.1 billion in 2007 and USD 2.8 billion dollars in 2006.

The Banking Sector

The deposits increased from LBP 102,598 billion in 2007 to LBP 118,584 (USD 78.7 billion) by the end of 2008, which shows an increase of LBP 15,986 billion (USD 10.6 billion) or 15.6%.

The credits reached LBP 70,064 billion (USD 46.5 billion) and were divided between the private sector (LBP 31,750 billion) and the public sector (LBP 38,314 billion).

The Banking Sector made a profit of USD 1,079 million compared to USD 845 million in 2007, which is an increase of 27.7%.

Foreign Trade

The import value reached USD 16,136 million (compared to USD 11,815 million in 2007), an increase of USD 4,321 million or 36.5%.

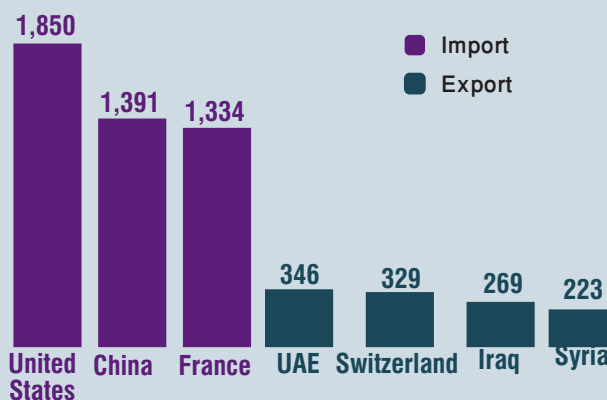
The export value climbed up to USD 3,478 million (compared to USD 2,816 million in 2007), an increase of USD 662 million or 23.5%.

These figures indicate an increasing deficit in the trade balance reaching USD12,658 million. The main exporting countries to Lebanon were the following: the United States of America (USD 1,850 million), China (USD 1,391 million), and France (USD 1,334 million). As for the countries importing from Lebanon: the United Arab Emirates (USD 346 million), Switzerland (USD 329 million), Iraq (USD 269 million) and Syria (USD 223 million) – Graph 2.

[Graph 2]

May 2009

The main exporting & importing countries to Lebanon in the year 2008 (USD Million)



Tourism

1,295,085 persons entered Lebanon compared to 1,017,072 in 2007, showing an increase in the number of visitors to Lebanon.

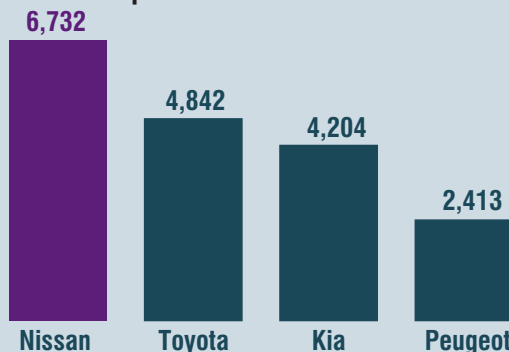
Car Sale

The new car sales witnessed an enormous increase in 2008 where 33,428 new cars were sold compared to the 18,687 cars sold in 2007, which is an increase of 79%. Nissan came first with 6,732 cars sold, followed by Toyota (4,842), Kia (4,204) and Peugeot (2,413) – Graph 3.

[Graph 3]

May 2009

Comparison in the number of cars sold in 2008 per model



Arab and Foreign Companies in Lebanon: July - December 2008

In the second half of 2008, 20 Arab and foreign companies were registered in the Commercial Registry. This brings the number of companies registered in 2008 to 38 companies, compared with 44 companies in the year 2007. The decline in the number of companies is partly due to the deteriorating global economic conditions and also the state of anticipation in Lebanon with the eminent date of the parliamentary elections getting closer and the consequences this might have on the political scene. Moreover, two companies were cancelled from the Registry, bringing the number of companies down to 6 in 2008. Tables 1 and 2 show these companies.

Companies that have been registered in the period between July - December 2008					Table 1
Company	Origin	Factual Certificate & date	Capital	Domain	Representative in Lebanon
Vimpex- Handelsges M.B.H	Austria	2468/14-7-2008	2.8 million Euro	Import, export and trading in papers, cards and cardboard	Sufian Adel / Mousa Amum
Harris Startex Networks	Singapore	2469/31-7-2008	-	Marketing of Harris products specialized in the manufacturing and sales of electronic equipment (representative office)	Pacale Bardawil
Arab Company for Press and Information	UAE	2470/2-7-2008	200,000 UAE dirhams	Trade, publication and distribution of Arab and foreign newspapers, magazines, and books and radio and television production	Sami Bassam Al-Ayyoubi
Middle East Distribution and Marketing Med Mark	Bahrain	2471/24-7-2008	1.2million USD	Sale and distribution of office equipment and information systems and to engage in the work of the Agency	Robert Naja Kikano
Nasco Karaoglan France	France	2472/4-8-2008	1.6million Euro	Insurance and reinsurance and representing insurance companies (representative office)	Francine Ghastin Mdawar
Al Hikma Pharmaceutical Company	Jordan	2473/4-9-2008	2.3million JD	Pharmaceutical industry and the human and veterinary pharmaceuticals (representative office)	Youssef Abdel-Ali
Al Maqdessya for satellite broadcasting	Britain	2474/18-8-2008	1000 Sterling pounds	Satellite and General Trade	Asaad Mahmoud Hussein Jaoudeh
Authors, Composers and Music Publishers	France	2475/3-9-2008	510,000 Euro	Cultural work through technical and financial committees	Samir Jean Tabet
Group Medmak for General trade	Iraq	2476/12-9-2008	100million IRQD	Capital investment in the commercial field	Ibrahim Jabbar Shalal Habib
Havana for Housing investment and real estate	Jordan	2477/ 9-9-2008	150,000 JD	Buy land and the establishment of residential apartments and commercial complexes and sold without the benefits of Riba	Shirwan Chawkat Mohamad Al-Qadi
Arab Investment Company	UAE	2478/29-10-2008	300,000 UAE dirhams	General trade, investment and manufacturing (representative office)	Ramzi Fayeze Wehbe
Levant real Estate	UAE	2479/29-10-2008	5 million UAE dirhams	Trade land and real estate (representative office)	Ramzi Fayeze Wehbe
Byblos Global	British Virgin Islands	2480/10-11-2008	50,000 USD	Industrial labor practice under the name of Unicap	Bassam Hajjar
Forum of the printing and publishing and information services	Libya	2481/7-11-2008	1 billion Libyan dinar	Publishing and media services in all subjects (representative office)	Ambia Omar Ambia
United Trademark and Patent Services Limited	British Virgin Islands	2482/17-11-2008	50,000 USD	Legal services, intellectual property and services	Mohammad Farukh / Irfan Khan
Bitasoft	France	2483/3-12-2008	16,000 Euro	Multilingual software (representative office)	Abdullah Bitar
Damas Real Estate	UAE	2484/1-12-2008	300,000 UAE dirhams	The purchase and sale of real estate and leasing of real estate brokerage	Hanna Jubran
Water and Sanitation Services South Africa	South Africa	2485/4-12-2008	4,000 Rand	Business through the construction of facilities for water and waste-water	Elie Sakht
The Associated Press	USA	2486/17-12-2008	3,500 USD	Collection of news and information group of neutral (representative office)	Sally Buzbee / Patrick Quinn
Arab International Company for Tourism and Hospitality Management	Egypt	2488/30-12-2008	20 million EGYPT	Organize tours and tourism marketing for hotels and apartments	Ashraf Hamdi Nahas

Source: Information International based on the Official Gazette

Two companies closed down and were canceled from the Commercial Register between July - December 2008 : Skanska Connection International limited & Tetra Pak (Near East) ●●

Government Squandering Public Money: Vehicle license plates and mobile numbers sold at high prices

Lebanon, among other countries in the world, has witnessed a phenomenon in the past two decades that has intensified during the past few years. A significant number of Lebanese people are seeking out unique and special vehicle license plates, fixed landlines, and mobile numbers.

Unique Numbers

Some individuals prefer to get a vehicle license plate where the number is the same as their phone number, while others prefer that their vehicle license plate or mobile number be the same as the date of their birthday.

Usually, easy-to-remember numbers are considered unique, such as three and four digit numbers. Numbers with more than four digits, on condition that one or two digits are repeated, or that the number includes several zeros are also considered as unique. The same applies to phone numbers.

Obtaining unique numbers

Unique license plate numbers can be obtained through several ways:

Cars

Some Lebanese who were in possession of cars for several decades had vehicle license plates that were not coded (without a region code) due to the absence of regional codes at that time. Those numbers were composed of 3 or 4 digits because of the small number of vehicles available at that time. Some of them have either kept those numbers or have sold them to interested clients at very high prices.

The Ministers of Interior and Municipalities, namely Elias Skaff, Abdallah El Rassi, Michel El Murr, Elias El Murr, and Suleiman Frajeh in the Department of Motor Vehicles, have kept these special numbers for politicians, supporters, and friends, who in some cases, sold those numbers to others. Officials and employees in the Department of Motor Vehicles in Beirut and the region were also able to get unique license plate numbers, which they have either kept or sold.

Mobile and landline numbers

When the mobile phone was first introduced to Lebanon, the operators kept unique numbers for certain clients. The latter kept those unique numbers to sell later at high prices according to the uniqueness of the number.

Regarding landline numbers, the government gave unique numbers at an increased cost and according to the client's demand.

Prices

There is no standard tariff for the prices of license plates or phone numbers; the rate depends on the willingness of the buyer and can range between hundreds of dollars up to USD15,000. Prices started to increase dramatically during the last two years.

Redressing the issue

The government did not benefit from the sales of unique numbers (license plates or phone numbers) except in the last few months and specifically on October 3, 2008 when the Ministry of Communications, headed by Minister Gebran Bassil, organized two auctions to sell mobile lines with such numbers. In these auctions, the ministry was able to raise around USD 3.2 million by selling 82 mobile lines.

The current prices for unique license plates and mobile numbers could be a significant income for the government. The government is seeking to impose additional tariffs on certain vehicle license plates to compensate for past losses. (Analysts think that revenues of this tariff can reach up to LBP 20 billion yearly.)

Does the government have the right to interfere, get back certain numbers and sell them at another time? Or is it considered a breach against personal property rights? Another issue is the factors prohibiting the government from adopting a new numbering system for vehicles as was done 10 years ago. This would result in the selling of these unique numbers, without giving the rights to keep the old number.

Numbers sold in two mobile auctions

70 70 70 70 = USD450,000

70 77 77 77 = USD400,000

70 33 33 33 = USD90,000

70 300 300 = USD37,000



Report of the Council of Civil Service

“It won’t change an iota in the facts as they stand.”

“I suffered no illusions as I gathered my thoughts to review the files for drafting this report about the qualities of this administration. Or that this, or any other report, issued by the monitoring agencies can change an iota in the state of affairs. This, in the absence of a serious political will that is keen to establish a strong and independent public administration or able to devise solutions and achieve new results, all in the view of new horizons marked by superior performance and pertinent thinking.”

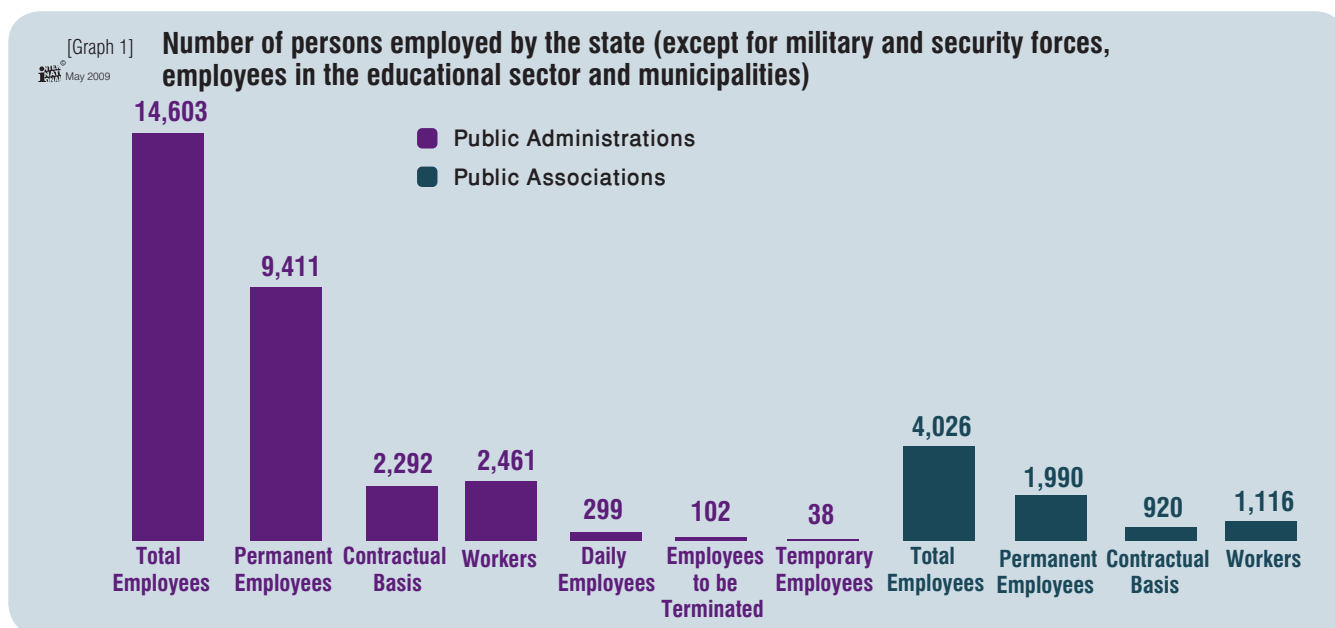
These were the introductory words of the President of the Civil Service Council, Munzir Khatib, in the report on the work of the Council during the year 2006. This report summarized the state of affairs in the administration and the inability of the regulatory and administrative agencies to perform their tasks. In the absence of serious political will, everything said or done was tantamount to maintaining the status quo in the best possible way.

Released in the beginning of 2009, these two reports were submitted by the Chairman of the Civil Service Council and summarized the work of the Council during the years 2006 and 2007. Even though they described some of the problems in the administration, they were essentially a repetition of previous reports, in terms of re-emphasizing the need to address the same issues (the entrance exam to government employment, the rental of state-owned buildings).

The following are some of the most important issues contained in **the 2006 report**:

Numbers of Employees

The number of persons employed by the state (except for military and security forces, employees in the educational sector, and municipalities) has reached 18,629 employees distributed as follows in Graph 1:



Entrance Exam and the Appointment of Employees

In 2006, the Employee Department of Civil Service Council held dozens of entrance exams to fill the vacancies in the old or newly created employment posts. The exams, like the previous ones, witnessed an onslaught of a large number of candidates. Even so, there was zero or a limited number of candidates who passed the exam as shown in table 1, which is a clear indicator of the low educational level of graduates in general. 8,027 candidates submitted their candidatures for the exam, 5,764 participated, 1,664 candidates passed, and most of the posts were in public hospitals.

Number of candidates who passed the exam for government employment				Table 1
Administration	Job	# of Candidates	# of Participants	# of Passers
Directorate-General for the Registrar of Real Estate	Head of Real Estate Registrar	699	402	11
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	Third category posts	1,062	739	21
Directorate General of Civil Aviation	Pilot	None	N/A	N/A
Directorate General of Civil Aviation	Legal Adviser	26	22	1
Ministry of Labor	Work Inspector	307	198	30
Ministry of Agriculture	Data entry	108	153	17
State Cooperative	Head of the Department of Financial Accounting	192	73	13
State Cooperative	Accountant and Treasurer	444	268	55
The National Department of the Litani River	Posts in the fields of Engineering, Information and Training	176	146	21

Source: Report of the President of the Council of Civil Service on the Council's work in 2006

Rental and the Vacation of Government Buildings

The law confers the Department of Management and Orientation in the Council of Civil Service the right to organize the lease of public buildings belonging either, to the administration, or public institutions. This includes deciding on the adequate price and terms relative to the location and area as well as determining the need to continue the lease or vacating the premises. This has led to saving about LBP1.4 billion in the 2006 fiscal year.

In this context, it is important to note that the Department of Management and Orientation has dealt with the vacation of these buildings from a pure administrative perspective and has not addressed the wider financial issues involved. True, that the vacation of these non-needed buildings after the construction of new ones or the requirement to move to bigger work spaces saves money financially, but most of these buildings enjoy old leases at low-cost, and the state could have asked owners for compensation claims in return for vacating. This is particularly beneficial in the case of the lease of new office buildings at very high costs, nearly ten times more than the old leases. An example is the approval given to vacate the Lebanese Tourism offices in Paris and Cairo, where the rental cost annually of the first was LBP 55 million and the second LBP 3 million.

The following in Table 2, are some of the buildings that the administration agreed to vacate, and their rent cost

Some of the buildings that were vacated and their rent cost	Table 2
Building	Rent Cost (millions LBP)
The courts of Baalbeck	3.7
Ghobeiry Post Office	2.4
Ministry of Public Works (Shayyah)	794
Tourist Office in Paris	55
Tourist Office in Cairo	3
Indirect Taxes Bureau (As-Sahnawi)	86
Faculty of Engineering at the Lebanese University	340
Special Education - Ministry of Education	82
Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Public Works – Tripoli	43.6

Source: Report of the Chairman of the Civil Service Council on the work of the Council in 2006

Opinion: the Requirement of Celibacy for the Foreign Service

The Civil Service Council has expressed its views on some of the issues presented by the administration, which included: competitive exams, external collaboration contracts, joint services, absenteeism from work, cases of salary cuts, the decease of staff members abroad, sick leave, maternity leave, mandates for foreign representation, and others. However, among all the issues related to employment in the administration, *The Monthly* has decided to voice its opinion on one fundamentally important issue; the condition of celibacy for women to enter the Foreign Service.

In the details of the condition, the Head of the Staff Department in the Civil Service Council issued Directive # 158 dated March 16, 2006, organizing a competitive exam for third category employment in the Foreign Service in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigration. One of the conditions for females to qualify was to be single.

The Commission for Cases and Consultation in the Ministry of Justice submitted a claim to suspend the above mentioned condition on the grounds that it is unconstitutional and contrary to the principle of equality before the law, in regard to the assumption of public office.

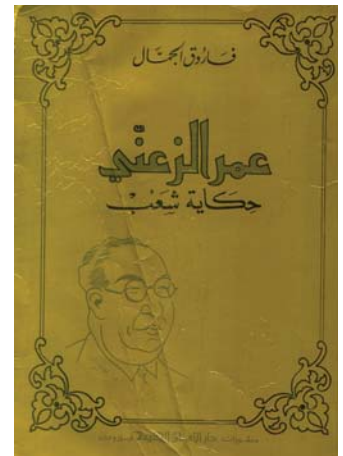
The Civil Service Council's response was to rebut the claim and adopt the condition of celibacy as is, on the grounds that this condition existed under article 12, paragraph 4 of the draft law Decree # 1306 dated June 18, 1971. Consequently, the Council concluded that this requirement has been in effect for more than 35 years and has been the basis of more than 20 exams to qualify for employment in the Foreign Service.

Between Yesterday and Today

The Monthly publishes on this page stories, poetry, and rhymes from the past that are still pertinent today and will continue to be so in the future.

We start with Omar al-Ze'ini (1898-1961), a popular folk poet from Beirut that wrote more than 1000 poems and whose rhymes are still fresh in the memories of Lebanese people. Omar al-Ze'ini was able to reach out to the people, to the extent that he became their mouthpiece and spokesperson. This was partly so because he wrote in colloquial Arabic, would sing his poetry in a rhythmical manner, and used simple everyday language to express himself, which was understandable to the masses. He left behind a great heritage and played an important role in the Lebanese political, cultural and artistic scene.

The below piece was written by him during the 1951 elections, which still remains as true today as it did during that time.



Elections

- ⊙ Hello guys
- ▽ Hello Sir, long time we haven't seen you.
- ⊙ Everything happens in time...
- ▽ Where have you been Sir?... Were you traveling?
- ⊙ Not really, I was running for parliament.
- ▽ What got you into it?
- ⊙ Oh, I didn't want to but my "brothers" forced me into it. Obedience reflects good breeding, I participated but did not make it; I lost my money.
- ▽ Hope you did not pay much.
- ⊙ Oh I paid what I had to, and lost the deposit as well. Had voters read my program, I wouldn't have lost, but what's the use, I had a program that no one read.
- ▽ Program? What was your program?
- ⊙ My program was great. It was a reform program that would have benefited every member of this nation.
- ▽ You care to read it to us?
- ⊙ Listen:

"My name is Joe Doe
From the most honorable family in Lebanon
Loved by everyone
And running for parliament
Your demands are well known
Your grievances are well known
The plan is designed
And memorized
Just vote for me

My past is honorable
All my life I lived decently
Clean heart, clean hands
No cheating, no disasters
Protecting the borders of Lebanon
Fighting for its independence

My first point of forty
Is to make the sky rain wheat
The land to yield oil
No taxes, no fees
Just vote for me

I am like no other MP
Never forget my admirers
I employ only youth
I push for early retirement

I will plant cotton, I will plant wool
In the land of Matn and the land of Chouf
You don't believe me? Tomorrow you will soon see
And witness the miracles
Just vote for me

I will enforce laws and discipline
And education and politeness
I will make the wolf and the sheep
Live together in peace.

I stand up high
And impose my program firmly
I shake the sky, I shake the land

I will bring religions together
And will uphold human rights" 🌈

Omar al-Ze'ini, May 1951

Beggary

Punished by the law, but...

Beggary or mendacity is the act of asking for money or food from people directly, in public places and on the streets, or indirectly, through performing shows to amuse people passing by. Direct beggary is punished by the law; however indirect beggary is not. Those who engage in indirect beggary maintain that people are paying money in return for a show and should therefore be legal unless the laws forbid particular kinds of performances in public places or in the streets.

Article 610 of the Lebanese Penal Code states that “whoever had or can have resources through work and begs in any public place, directly, or indirectly through commercial activities, shall be sentenced to prison for at least a month and a maximum of six months.”

The beggar who uses force or threats, shows a false poverty certificate, disguises in any way, carries a child who is not theirs, or any child under seven years old, uses arms or special tools for committing an infraction, or pretends to be wounded or handicapped shall be sentenced to prison from six months to two years with labor. He/she shall be put in a labor house if he/she is capable of working or in a simple prison if he/she is incapable. Organized beggary, led by one or more persons who push others to beg is mentioned in Article 618 of the Lebanese Penal Code that states “anyone who pushes a minor (under 18 years) to beg for their own profit shall be sentenced to prison for six months to two years.”

In Jordan, if anyone begs pretending they are injured or handicapped, whether sitting in a public place or wandering around, or if they carry a child under 16 years old or push him/her to beg, or ask for help and money by telling a lie, or jeopardize by their acts the general safety, or are found, in or next to a property or public place or street at a time and under circumstances that may lead to the assumption they are there for illegitimate purposes, shall be sentenced, for the first time, to prison for a maximum of three months. The court may decide to transfer them to any association specified by the Minister of Social Affairs that is in charge for the care of beggars for at least one year to a maximum of three years.

The Egyptian law penalizes the adult who begs. However, if a minor is found begging, or selling merchandise or simple services or performing shows or any other activity that is not a real source of living, the General Attorney warns his guardian to watch over his behavior. If he/she

carries on with his/her activity, he/she shall be transferred to a technical school, or would have to be committed to special obligations, or pass a judicial test, or would be sent to one of the associations for social care, or to one of the specialized hospitals.

In France, beggary itself is not punished; however, the law penalizes the organizers and beneficiaries of beggary. Anyone who pushes others to beg shall be under three years of prison and shall pay a fine of EURO 45,000. Anyone who pushes a minor to beg shall be sentenced to ten years of prison and pay a fine of EURO 75,000. Anyone who organizes a group of beggars shall be sentenced to ten years of prison and pay a fine of EURO 1,500,000.

Beggary in Lebanon and some Arab countries is considered a crime even though beggars are still numerous in the streets. The application of Article 610 of the Penal Code is selective since the legislator can not find alternative solutions for the rehabilitation of the beggars and his/her acceptance in society. The Penal Judge issued a verdict on April 25, 2007 to send beggar Ibrahim Hamadi to prison for one month according to Article 610 of the Penal Code. Hamadi said to the press before he was freed that he was going to do the impossible to come back to jail again because jail guarantees him food and a place to sleep. The case of this person is mentioned in Article 614 of the Penal Code that states that anyone who truly does not have a place to stay and a job for at least one month and does not prove to be seriously trying to find a job shall be sentenced to prison with labor from one to six months.

The main question remains whether prisons and fines are the only solution for beggary? Or, is it necessary to find new legislations to deal with this issue through more civilized ways that will put an end to this phenomenon? 🍷

Four Lebanese soldiers killed

Is it an act of revenge and a reason for celebration?

The perilous terrorist attack against a Lebanese military vehicle filled front page headlines of all Lebanese newspapers published on Tuesday, being the main subject in all news media outlets. The attack took place near the town of Riyak in the Bekaa region on Monday April 13, 2009, killing four soldiers and injuring an officer.

Each of the Lebanese newspapers published the news story according to its point of view. Even though they unanimously condemned the act and paid tribute to the army, they diverged when it came to the incident's background and the reactions that followed. Al Safir declared that "the army was paying the price of blood," linking the incident to reconciliation talks between the Jaafar family and the army, after a drug dealer from the Jaafar family had been killed in the previous month by soldiers of the Lebanese army.

An-Nahar emphasized the sense of joy that followed the death of the four Lebanese soldiers killed in the ambush. This joy is believed to have come from the Al Charawani neighborhood, where members of the Jaafar family live.

It is important to note that even before investigations began, all newspapers and media identified the criminals to be members of the Jaafar family, alleging that the act was committed for revengeful purposes.

An-Nahar: "more than half an hour of celebratory gunfire at Al Charawana"

An-Nahar said that "the first impressions that followed the incident were that the act was committed to avenge the army for having killed drug dealer Ali Abbas Jaafar on March 27...the aggression against the army on April 13, the 34th commemoration of the beginning of the war in Lebanon in 1975, was accompanied by many questions on whether the timing of the attack had more than a revenge aspect and symbolized attacking the pillar of the state, which is the army..."

The newspaper emphasized the celebrations that accompanied the death of the soldiers, "...Al Charwana vicinity in Baalbeck opened fire and launched missiles as an expression of joy that lasted for more than half an hour after the attack. The fire injured one and left many damages. The joyful neighborhood looked like a fief provoking the government and pushing the army towards a decisive action."



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المستقبل

AL-MUSTAQBAL

AL-MUSTAQBAL - Tuesday 14 April 2009 Issue No. 5276

المستقبل - العدد 5276 - الثلاثاء 14 نيسان 2009 - صفحة 1

لإخلاء البترون .. 4 آذار تُعلن السبت والجمعة الإسلامية، تأمل التفاهم قريباً مع "المستقبل" و"كسروان" قد تشهد 3 لوائح الاعتداء على الجيش يصدّم لبنان .. ورفضاً انتباهاج في جبلبك

[illegible][illegible]

As-Safir: negotiations between the army and the Jaafar family

Contrary to An-Nahar's coverage of the story, As-Safir gave details of the incident without highlighting the celebratory gunfire that followed. Instead, As-Safir focused on the background of what had happened as well as the meetings between the Lebanese army, represented by the First Deputy of the Head of the Security Services, Brigadier General Abbas Ibrahim, and the leaders of the Jaafar family that occurred following the assassination of one of the family's convicts. The newspaper added that the efforts had almost reached an agreement, however, the fact that no date had been fixed for a meeting between the army's delegation and the Jaafar family led the army to take security measures and doubt the possibility of attaining reconciliation.

Al Akhbar newspaper: denial of the expression of joy

It considered that the fugitives and drug dealers declared war against the army after the assassination by the latter of one of their leaders. Al Akhbar published the news on its front page but did not leave any space inside for the crime and reactions as other newspapers did. It did however include the denial of the Jaafar clan to what has been said in the media about the unleashing of gunfire in Al Charwana as an expression of joy for the death of the soldiers.

Al Mustaqbal: fire of joy in Baalbeck

Similar to An-Nahar, Al Mustaqbal stressed the opening of gunfire as an expression of joy in Baalbeck after the murder of the soldiers, linking the incident to the April 13 commemoration.



صفحة 88
عدد 1000

مفقود الحرن بين «خطوط النصارى»
حيث ثلاث بطالة بالحقبة

الطائرة 14 نيسان 2009
العدد 1000 السنة الثالثة
مؤيد: 12 ايار 2009 - 700 سعر العدد

الخبـار

al-akhbar
www.al-akhbar.com

قوف، عميد متقاعد مستبـه بعامله مع إسرائيل

شهاب لنصر الله: لو طلبت نخوض البحر معك

محضر التحقيق مع الموقوفين في مصر [5.2]



14 <
الدرسة العسكرية لإسرائيل
% 13.4
بمستوى التعليم

18 <
الحرب ففقت بيروت عمارات
«شاهدين» الجرافة المدمرة ماذا
كشفت يوم 12 نيسان

20 <
الدماء المصونة حبيب لخبيل
على الشابات الخفيفة «دع
أمر الإحسان الشاعرة والتركيب

26 <
أولها بعد الخسوف على
تدنيها وهو ساسي مكشاة بالبحر
البحري

حرب الطفاـر
على الجيش

Myth #23

10,452 km², 10,200 km², or 10,415 km²?

Before 1978, Lebanon was referred to in books and references as a 10,200 km² country and sometimes 10,215 km². After 1978, President Bashir El Gemayel (leader of the Lebanese Forces at that time) declared through his "10,452 km²" slogan that this was in fact Lebanon's area and should be liberated from Syrian occupation. The Lebanese people were divided; the allies of Bashir El Gemayel and the Lebanese Forces endorsed this slogan while his opponents adopted the 10,200 km² figure.

Myth

Nonetheless, today the slogan of 10,452 km² has been adopted and became Lebanon's recognized area both by the former opponents of President Bashir El Gemayel and even those who were not his contemporaries and remain his antagonists (i.e Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Hezbollah, is said to have adopted this area because it includes Sheba'a farms and Kfarshouba). Therefore, the Lebanese people have unanimously come to agree that the area of Lebanon is 10,452 km².

Fact

There is not any official and final area for Lebanon. The French High Commissioner, General Gouraud issued the Resolution 299 on August 3, 1920 separating the four provinces of "Hasbayya, Rachayya, Al Mouallaka (Beqaa) and Baalbeck from Damascus and rallying them to the autonomous Lebanese territories according to their administrative system." He then issued Resolution 318 on August 31, 1920 declaring the State of Great Lebanon, which encompassed the administrative circumscription of the actual country, the provinces of Baalbeck, Rachayya and Hasbayya that were in agreement with Resolution 299, as well as parts in the province of Beirut. The same resolution defined the borders of this state as follows:

- From the North, a line extending from Al Kabir River outfall along the river until its connection point with Wadi Khaled in the area of Jisr Al Kamar (the Moon Bridge).
- From the East, the hills line separating Wadi Khaled from the Orontes Valley. This line crosses the villages of Herbaana farms, Hayt Abej in the area of Brifa and Moutriba villages and follows the northern borders of Baalbeck province towards the north-western and south-eastern side and then the eastern borders of the Baalbeck province, the Beqaa, Rachayya and Hasbayya.

- From the South, the Palestinian borders as defined by the International Conventions.
- From the West, the Mediterranean Sea.

The French Army specialists defined these borders between Lebanon and Syria based on old maps dating back to 1860, however the works were not completed despite ongoing activities to draw the borders for years, which created a problem since at that time. This is how the issue of whether the Sheba'a farms are Lebanese or Syrian began. In fact, the defined borders contradicted Resolution 318 since a 15-20 kilometer long and 5-10 kilometer large region had been removed as well as seven Lebanese villages considered by Israel as Lebanese and by Lebanon as Israeli.

In the case that Sheba'a and the seven villages are considered Lebanese, Lebanon's area would be 10,415 km², and if not, the area would be 10,250 km². Therefore, 10,452 km² is an area that only exists as a political slogan and imagination that was possibly based on past geographic information not currently at our disposal. 🌍

Note: the aim behind this article is to shed light on the area size and not to tackle the borders issue, define the border or draw concepts. Such issues will require books and volumes that were previously dealt with by many authors. Among these authors is Issam Khalife's book: "The Lebanese-Syrian borders; attempts to define and draw 1920-2000."

General Aoun and Syria

From “breaking Al Assad’s head” and the Liberation War to an “open heart operation”

The positions and actions of General Michel Aoun towards Syria (as well as Syria’s positions towards Aoun) were marked with animosity and hatred for more than 17 years (1988-2005). This led Aoun to declare the War of Liberation on March 14, 1989 in order to force the Syrian army to leave Lebanon; even threatening to “break Hafez Al Assad’s head” when the Syrian army bombarded the Presidential Palace in Baabda where Aoun lived while heading the government between 1988 and 1990. Aoun visited many western capitals in the framework of his efforts to cast Syria out of Lebanon and impose sanctions on the Syrian regime. One of the main results of these efforts was the Syrian Accountability Act adopted by the American Congress in 2004.

Ironically, by the end of 2005, this animosity has turned into friendship, and Syria became a neighbor and sister state. Syria considered Aoun an honorable enemy, while Aoun has justified his transformation by saying that his previous positions were a result of the Syrian occupation in Lebanon. Accordingly, when the Syrian army withdrew from Lebanon in April 2005, there were no more reasons for such positions; Syria became a friend and neighbor. This new stance reached its peak with Aoun’s visit to Syria in December 2008, where he met with the son of Hafez Al Assad, Bashar Al Assad, and greeted him with kisses. This article presents Aoun’s positions in both cases: animosity and friendship.

Friendship between Aoun and Syria

Some of the pro-Syrian statements:

- ⊙ Aoun declared that “Al Assad’s vision for the amelioration of the Lebanese-Syrian relations is based on Lebanon’s sovereignty and independence, and Syria doesn’t interfere in the legislative elections.”
- ⊙ We used to feel that a big distance separated Mount Lebanon from Syria, however, after the visit we found that the distance was very small and has become even smaller...today is a historical day and the coming days will witness more visits by the Maronites to St. Maron’s Mausoleum, now after President Al Assad called for its reconstruction and donated the land for that purpose.”
- ⊙ “My visit to Syria is like an “open heart” surgery since it aims at purifying both the Lebanese and Syrian hearts from the past. What was thought to be prohibited became allowed and even very allowed.”
- ⊙ There was no enmity between myself and Syria; there was dispute.

(All the above declarations were made by Aoun during his visit to Syria in December 2008).

Animosity between Aoun and Syria

Some statements Aoun declared against Syria:

- ⊙ Syria is trying to dissolve the Lebanese state and rally it. That is its primary objective (2000).
- ⊙ For more than 27 years, the Syrian regime was the pyromaniac who instigated the fire and profited to give itself a justification for putting it out later on. This is how it justifies its occupation of Lebanon. Any Lebanese daring to oppose or resist against the Syrian hegemony is executed... Syria is a safe haven for many terrorist organizations.” (Excerpts from his testimony in front of the American Congress during the session of ratification of the Syrian Accountability Act and the Lebanese Sovereignty Recovery Act in September 2003).
- ⊙ We do not want withdrawal from one place and deployment 200 meters away. Every year there is redeployment in the same centers; it is more like replacement. What we want is non-intervention and full political, intelligence and security withdrawal from all government institutions. The political decision in Baabda and Koreitem is seized. (“Al Chark Al Awsat” newspaper on February 9, 2004)
- ⊙ I want friendship with the Syrian people not with the regime.
- ⊙ “...the common destiny does not mean taking over sovereignty. Lebanon’s sovereignty and independence are seized, and this is what we refuse. We do not refuse cooperation with Syria in choosing peace and in the peace project with Israel. What I refuse is to take over Lebanon’s sovereignty in order to resolve the Middle East conflict. Why isn’t Jordan’s or Syria’s sovereignty seized then? Why is Lebanon the hostage? Who confiscates in the name of brotherhood?
- ⊙ All the sufferings witnessed by the Lebanese people were caused by the Syrians. The occupation of Lebanon has always come from the Syrian borders.
- ⊙ We were under the French mandate for 25 years but France helped us create institutions...and today, after 27 years of Syrian occupation, our institutions are gone. What advantages of the Syrian presence are we talking about?
- ⊙ The best for the Syrian is rejected by us. What will the Syrian give us? His regime? His liberalism? His freedoms, his economic system?
- ⊙ We were bombarded with Syrian 188 and 155-artillery. When Hitler occupied Warsaw, the German artillery ceased fire, and when Stalin’s tanks crushed Budapest, the artillery ceased fire...don’t tell us that thanks to them the artillery ceased fire; the occupant achieved his objectives, why would he keep bombarding us? (General Aoun on April 9, 2002 during “Sajjil Mawkaif” talk show on MTV)

Families from Lebanon

Domani Families

Originally from Houran



The origins**

The family is originally from Houran. They are the descendants of the Arab tribes that were converted to Christianity in accordance with the Roman Catholic doctrine and later divided into both Roman Catholic and Orthodox. They moved to the town of Duma near Damascus, and were nicknamed “Al-Domani.” Moussa Al-Domani is the founder of the family and had two children Joseph and Ibrahim.

In the early nineteenth century, Ibrahim, the son of Moussa moved to Deir-el-Qamar, set up a textile factory, and worked in trading fabric and silk. He became known as the Roman Catholic Al-Domani from Deir Al-Qamar. The other branch, the sons of Joseph, son of Moussa, stayed in Damascus and followed the Greek Orthodox faith.

The social status of the family grew in Deir-Al-Qamar, and Nicola bin Moussa bin Ibrahim bin Moussa Al-Domani married Rose the daughter of Master Boutros Karame, Assistant of Emir Bashir al-Shihab II. This brought him influence and status and the Consul of Russia in Beirut appointed him his honorary translator, which won him the protection of this great nation.

Number and Religious affiliation

The Domani (Al-Domani) family is one of the small families in Lebanon. Their number does not exceed 250 members, spread across the region and communities as follows:

- ⦿ Roman Catholics: They are the majority and present in the regions of Deir Al-Qamar their first bastion; Beit Chama (Baalbeck); Ain-Annoub (A'aley), Achrafieh; Zalka (Matn); Jezzine; Zahle; Zgharta; and Baabda.
- ⦿ Greek Orthodox, present in Al-Zahiriyah (Tripoli); Al-Boushriye (Matn); Manyara (Akkar); Al-Bashoura (Beirut); Batroun; al-Mina (Tripoli).
- ⦿ Muslim Sunni: They are a minority and present in Mazra'a and Msaitbeh in Beirut, and Tripoli.

Unlike their forefathers, no Doumani has worked in politics in the contemporary history of Lebanon. There are also no members registered in the Bar Association, the Engineers Association, or The Doctors Syndicate. 🇅🇸

** Information on the origins of the family is derived from Dictionary of Family Names and People and Brief History of Families by Dr. Ahmad Abu Saad, Dar El Ilm Lilmaalayin 1997 (title translated from Arabic)

Real Estate Index: March 2009

The prices of real estate have been on the rise since March 2009 and are expected to keep on rising in the next few months. In the summer season, and in light of the upcoming Parliamentary Elections scheduled in June 2009, it is expected to be a positive turnout for the country.

Table no.1 and 2 show the average price of land and construction sold during March 2009.

Some of the prices of land sold in the month of March 2009

Table 1

Location	Area (m ²)	Price (USD)	USD/m ²
Beirut			
Achrafieh	450	1,507,500	3,350
Adlieh	1,150	3,565,000	3,100
Baabda			
Hazmieh	700	950,000	1,357
Mar Taqla	630	409,500	650
Yarzeh	1,600	2,720,000	1,700
Matn			
Dbayeh	2,000	900,000	450
Baabdat	1,100	330,000	300
Broumana	980	392,000	400
A'aley			
Bshamoun	930	223,200	240
Khaldeh	1,750	682,500	390
Keserwan			
A'ajaltoun	1,950	390,000	200
Adman	1,150	632,500	550
Zouk Mosbeh	910	400,400	440
Ballouneh	2,100	483,000	230
Kfar Zebian	125	12,500	100

Source: Information International – March 2009

Average cost of construction (apartments) sold in March 2009

Table 2

Location	Area (m ²)	Price (USD)	USD/m ²
Beirut			
Ras Nabieh	165	310,000	1,879
Mazra'a	280	310,000	1,107
Nweiry	100	125,000	1,250
Musaitbeh	190	215,000	1,132
Koreitem	180	480,000	2,667
Sanayeh	200	450,000	2,250
Talet Al-Khayat	185	420,000	2,270
A'aisha Bakkar	130	165,000	1,269
Verdun	200	550,000	2,750
Zqaq El-Blat	160	180,000	1,125
Baabda			
Hazmieh	160	160,000	1,000
Hazmieh	170	230,000	1,353
Hazmieh	200	310,000	1,550
Ghobeiry	210	180,000	857
Antonie - Baabda	115	315,000	2,739
Kafaat	100	90,000	900
Baabda	300	580,000	1,933
A'aley			
Dohat A'aramoun	170	140,000	824
Chouifat	110	75,000	682
Dohat El-Hoss	180	170,000	944
Khaldeh	200	150,000	750
Bshamoun	235	100,000	426
A'aramoun	100	50,000	500
Matn			
Antellias	135	125,000	926
Sin El-Fil (Housh Tabet)	200	335,000	1,675
Broumana	100	110,000	1,100
Mansourieh	100	90,000	900
Mansourieh	200	130,000	650
Jal El-Dib	155	150,000	968
Keserwan			
Adma	150	140,000	933
Adma	230	250,000	1,087
Sahel Alma	300	320,000	1,067
Ballouneh	200	200,000	1,000
Adonis	180	110,000	611
Kaslik	150	175,000	1,167

Source: Information International – March 2009

Consumer Price Index: March 2009

More than half of the goods and food products quoted in Information International's index maintained the same prices during the month of March 2009. A slight tendency towards price decreases was recognized due to the increasing complaints by the owners of large supermarkets about the stagnancy in selling these goods. This stagnancy caused a decrease of 10%-15% in purchasing these goods, compared to the same time one year ago.

During the month of March 2009, the prices of 32 products decreased, the prices of 15 others increased, while 53 products maintained the same price. But the ratio of increase and decrease in prices was minimal as shown in table no. 1.

The prices of goods and food products during March 2009				Table 1
Item and brand		Prices beginning of March 2009	Prices beginning of April 2009	% of price change
Oil				
Afia corn oil	(3.5 liters)	12,350	12,000	-2.8
Mazola corn oil	(3.5 liters)	13,750	13,250	-3.6
Mazola corn oil	(2 liters)	9,500	9,500	0
Slim corn oil	(2 liters)	9,000	9,000	0
Wesson corn oil	(2 liters)	9,000	9,000	0
Ghandour soya oil	(3.8 liters)	11,000	10,850	-1.3
Alfa corn oil	(4 liters)	14,220	14,100	-0.8
Al-Wadi olive oil	(1/2 liter)	8,600	8,600	0
Ketchup and Sauces				
Libby's Ketchup	(567 g)	2,000	2,000	0
Extra Ketchup	(340 g)	1,230	1,230	0
Extra Ketchup	(2.2 kg)	6,000	5,650	-5.8
Dolly's Mayonnaise	(500 ml)	3,600	3,900	+8.3
Al-Wadi Mayonnaise	(500 ml)	3,800	3,800	0
Al-Bsat Tahina	(900 g)	8,150	7,750	-4.9
Al-Bsat Tahina	(450 g)	4,350	4,100	-5.7
Taous tomato sauce	(70 g)	525	525	0
Taous tomato sauce	(425 g)	2,750	2,750	0
Tala tomato sauce	(675 g)	2,500	2,500	0

Dairy Products				
Candia full cream milk	(1 liter)	2,450	2,450	0
Candia full cream yoghurt	(2 kg)	5,250	5,000	-4.7
Bonjus labneh	(1 kg)	3,750	3,750	0
Taanayel labneh	(500 g)	5,000	5,000	0
Candia labneh	(500 g)	5,250	5,000	-4.7
Taanayel yoghurt	(1 kg)	3,000	3,000	0
Smeds cheese	(400 g)	3,800	4,000	+5.2
Picon cheese	(400 g)	3,400	3,400	0
Picon cheese	(170 g)	1,700	1,750	+2.9
Double-crème cheese	(1 kg)	6,750	6,100	-9.6
Fresh country cheese	(1 kg)	8,700	8,000	-8
Khashkawan cheese	(1 kg)	13,450	12,750	-5.2
Lurpak butter	(200 g)	2,000	2,250	+12.5
Tatra butter	(200 g)	2,000	2,100	+5
Al-Maalaqtain margarine	(2 kg)	10,200	10,000	-1.9
Al-Baqara al-Haloub margarine	(2kg)	22,720	21,550	-5.1
Vegetaline margarine	(2 kg)	17,000	16,750	-1.4
Nido full cream milk	(bag)	19,000	19,000	0
Nido full cream milk	(2,500 g)	23,150	22,100	-4.5
Tatra full cream milk	(1,800 g)	15,250	15,250	0



Cereals

Khater white lentils (1 kg)	2,600	2,600	0
Khater chick-peas fahli (1 kg)	2,350	2,700	+15
Khater beans (1 kg)	1,550	1,550	0
Peeled wheat (1 kg)	950	900	-5.2
Pineal Lima Bean (1 kg)	2,750	2,750	0
Brown Fine Burgul (1 kg)	1,500	1,100	-26.6
Egyptian rice (1 kg)	2,600	2,000	-23
American rice (1 kg)	2,830	2,600	-8.1
Italian rice (1 kg)	2,950	2,730	-7.4
Al-Wadi Hommos Tahina (380 g)	1,125	1,125	0
Chtaura Hommos Tahina (380 g)	1,450	1,450	0
California Gardens beans (450 g)	980	1,100	+12.2
Al-Wadi beans (450 g)	1,150	1,150	0
Chtaura beans (480 g)	1,250	1,250	0
Libby's corn (340 g)	1,400	1,500	+7.1

Pasta

Barilla spaghetti (500 g)	2,050	2,050	0
Antonio Amato spaghetti (500 g)	2,500	2,500	0
Monte spaghetti (500 g)	2,250	2,250	0

Sugar and Salt

Sugar (2 kg)	1,950	1,870	-4.1
Al-Ousra Sugar (5 kg)	5,050	5,100	+0.9
Salt (700 g)	500	500	0
Box of salt (738 g)	1,450	1,420	-2

Meat, Fish and Eggs

Luncheon meat beef (198 g)	1,420	1,420	0
Zwan chicken (200 g)	2,450	2,450	0
Zwan beef (200 g)	2,300	2,300	0
Al-Mona chicken (200 g)	1,800	1,900	+5.5
Al-Taghzia beef (200 g)	1,750	1,750	0
Al-Taghzia chicken (200 g)	1,750	1,750	0
Geisha sardine (125 g)	1,150	1,075	-6.5
Deli sardine (125 g)	1,000	1,000	0
Milo sardine (125 g)	1,000	1,000	0
Geisha tuna (200 g)	2,000	2,050	+2.5
White Bell tuna (200 g)	2,000	2,000	0
White Diamond tuna (200 g)	1,250	1,400	+12
Skipper tuna (185 g)	1,750	1,750	0
Eggs (30 eggs)	7,000	6,500	-7.1
Beef (1 kg)	13,200	13,500	+2.2
Sheep (1 kg)	20,000	22,000	+10

Coffee and Tea

Najjar coffee (1kg)	13,000	13,000	0
Brazil coffee (1 kg)	11,500	12,000	+4.3
Al-Hisan tea (180 g)	2,500	2,500	0
Nastle (250g)	1,720	1,720	0

Halvah and Jam

Al-Wadi halvah (454 g)	4,000	4,000	0
Al-Bsat halvah (450 g)	4,100	4,100	0
Chtaura apricot jam (1 kg)	6,100	6,100	0
Al-Wadi apricot jam (1 kg)	5,630	5,630	0

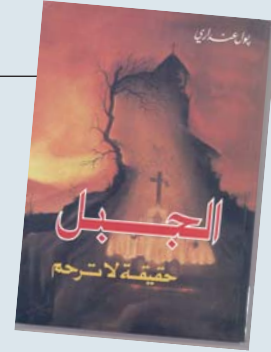
Tissues and detergents

Mimosa tissues (500 g)	2,550	2,500	-2
Fine tissues (200 tissues)	1,100	1,100	0
Primo tissues (200 tissues)	1,100	1,100	0
Gipsy tissues (300 tissues)	2,275	2,275	0
Mimosa toilet papers (4 rolls)	2,320	2,320	0
Yes detergent (900 g)	1,940	1,900	-2
Clorox (1 liter)	1,400	1,400	0
Persil (4 kg)	17,830	17,830	0
Ariel (4 kg)	18,000	18,000	0

Fruits and Vegetables

Orange (1 kg)	1,250	1,250	0
Tomatoes (1kg)	1,250	1,000	-20
Cucumbers (1kg)	1,250	1,000	-20
Bananas (1kg)	1,250	1,250	0
Lemons (1 kg)	750	600	-20
Apples (1 kg)	2,500	2,250	-10
Potatoes (1 kg)	1,250	900	-28

The Mountain, a Truth that has no Mercy* by Paul Indari



"The Mountain, a Truth that has no Mercy" by Paul Indari covers the Mountain War that took place in 1983 and the battles of the Lebanese Forces in meticulous detail and insight.

The book sheds light upon the growing Maronite community in the 17th and 18th centuries in Lebanon. Many Maronites resided in Druze regions and surpassed the Druze community in statistics. In light of the successful relationship between Druze and Maronite communities in the mountains, Al Ma'en considered the unification of the country under their rule. This era witnessed great Druze migration trends in the aftermath of the Kais and Right Conflict. The Right wing affiliates fled to Houran, a deserted mountain. The second migration trend from Lebanon to Houran occurred after Emir Youssef had imposed tax fees on white turbans in 1772. The third migration trend was after the battles between Al-Aouar and Al-Abi Hussein which led to the exodus of the Abu Hussein families to Arman village in the Druze mountains. In 1858, religious tension came to the surface with the revolution of the farmers, led by Tanios Chahine, who expelled the Al-Khazan family from Kesrouan. This was followed by the events of 1860 that led to the death of 30,000 Christians, the devastation of 360 villages, the destruction of 560 churches, and the burning of 42 monasteries.

According to the author, after the incidents of 1860, Lebanon looked like a unilateral federal regime. It remained as such until 1916 with the Arab Revolution in Hijaz. The Druze community backed it and Patriarch Hoayek stated the position of the Maronite community, "Death in our country is better than joining Damascus." In 1925, the English manipulated the Druze mountain community through the Sultan.

Indari estimates that the Druze population remained silent until they had the opportunity to exterminate the Christians. On April 13th 1975, the Christian-Palestinian conflict broke out. Kamal Jumblat declared war on the Christian population under the banner of Islam. In his book "This is my Legacy" he states, "Isolated Maronites assaulted Muslim believers more fiercely than the Jews did against Arabs." The Druze used the assassination of Kamal Jumblat to massacre 200 Christians in the mountains. Subsequently, the Druze rushed to make an alliance with Syrians who then opened fire against the eastern regions and especially Ashrafieh.

The Druze canton met all the requirements of self-sufficiency in the social aspect, infrastructure and even the army. Palestinians and Syrian deterrent forces were fighting for the benefit of this canton.

In 1982, the Palestinian presence in Lebanon became a terrifying fact, and the Israeli army invaded Lebanon from the south to Beirut and the surrounding mountains.

Walid Jumblat met with Shimon Peres on June 19th and declared after the meeting that, "Mr. Jumblat is free to go anywhere he desires." On the other hand, Israeli statements confirmed not accepting the extermination of Christians. Israelis started sending vehicles with weapons and ammunition to the Christian resistance and training military groups, which were affiliated to the Lebanese Forces.


In 1982, the Druze community and the Israelis met 26 times, including the supervision of trainings to the Socialists in the mountains.

This book also covers the life of Samir Geagea as a fighter in the Phalanges Party until he took the position of the leader of the mountains on January 7, 1983. Geagea conducted his first on-field visit to the mountains on January 9, 1983 and his headquarters was in Ein Trez village. He made great efforts to push people to go back to the mountains and he called each individual separately and distributed activities and tasks. The population gained confidence again.

Geagea is described as a person who enjoyed the respect of the Israeli officers and leaders. However, his relation with the Israeli Contact Officer was not good and worsened in the aftermath of the Kfarhim-Deir Dourit massacre on May 21, 1983.

Many phases of the Christian-Israeli relationship during the presidency of Amin Gemayel and before the Mountain War were described. Sharon used to warn Pierre Gemayel that the continuous involvement of Riyadh, Damascus and Tunis in the decision making process makes him doubt that his son, Amin Gemayel, will remain President of the Republic. On August 6th, Sharon said; "this visit may be my last chance to visit: I came to warn you that we will soon withdraw from the Chouf, I cannot tell you when exactly but it will happen soon."

Withdrawing orders were given to the Israelis based in the Rouss Hill, south of Btater, then Alam Hill and Rada. As soon as the mountain was free from Israelis, the battle was launched. An exhaustive picture of the battles, particularly in Bhamdoun and Chanay Hill is described in this book. Orders were issued to the attackers to kill each and every living species, even poultry. On December 15, 1983, during the 100 day siege of Deir Al-Qamar, the mountain inhabitants started evacuating Deir Al-Qamar and heading to Beirut.

On February 1st 1984, Indari sent a letter to Geagea stating, "We do not have any cause to fight for because the Lebanese Forces Party is a dead body, thus a population with no cause is at risk of physical extermination at any time." Geagea replied, "The war against the Lebanese Forces was launched from all parties and I can say that my greatest achievement is keeping the institution of the Lebanese Forces alive, which means that I successfully saved it from extinction." 

* Fifth edition 1999- all rights reserved for the author.

Walt Disney Stories

"Dumbo" and "The Lady and the Tramp"

Dumbo*

The story is part of the Walt Disney series that follows the adventures of animals that are turned into the natural participants of daily activities. The story takes place in the circus between the baby elephant Dumbo and other animals. They are later joined by horses with wagons pulled by unicorns. The animals talk to each other throughout the events of the circus in a manner that is attractive to children. The beautiful illustrations reflect the movements of the elephants and in particular, Dumbo, who causes the collapse of the elephant pyramid. What happens next?

The Lady and the Tramp *

It is a story that uses animal characters for the purpose of attracting children to read. It tells the tale of a beautiful dog named Lady, who lives in a comfortable home and a small stray dog living on the streets and the relationship that is formed between the both of them. It is brilliantly written and full of comical events. The author describes the adventures of the dogs in the chicken pen which ends with the farmer catching Lady. What happens next?

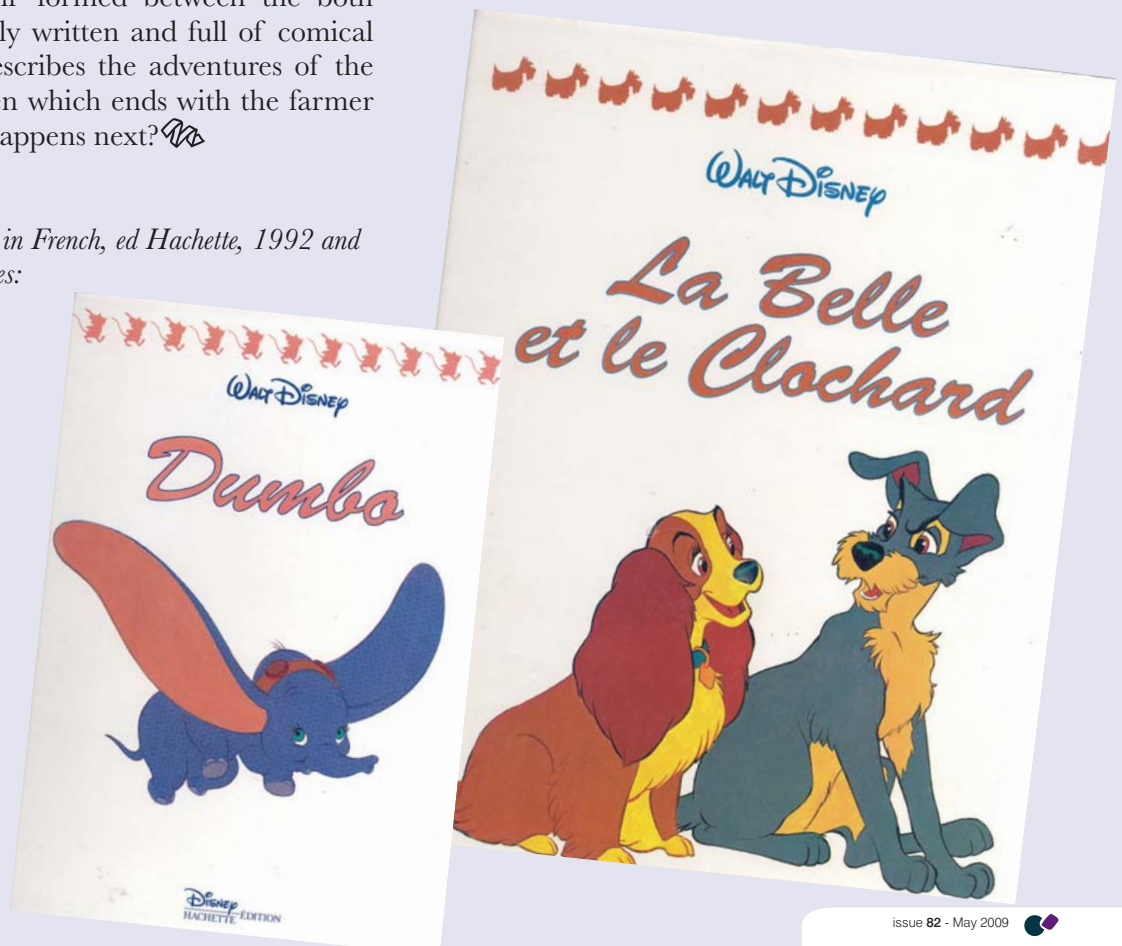
* A series of Walt Disney in French, ed Hachette, 1992 and includes the following stories:

Bambi

Snow White

Little Mermaid

Beauty and the Beast



Obama & Turkey & Islam

Obama in Turkey: Winning Hearts, Healing Rifts

Time Magazine, By Pelin Turgut / Istanbul, Tuesday, April 7, 2009

“The something-for-everyone approach appears to have worked. While anti-American sentiments among Turks rose to historic highs under President George W. Bush, polls show Obama with an approval rating in Turkey above 50%. Even the typically antagonistic Turkish press — left, right, secularist and Islamist — were united in their praise on Tuesday. “He won our hearts,” read the banner headline on the mainstream daily Vatan. More important, all referred to Obama’s message as advocating democratic progress. “We must all change,” said the top-selling Hurriyet.

Obama also used his first visit to a Muslim country to send a message of reconciliation to the greater Islamic world. “America is not, and will never be, at war with Islam,” he declared in his address to Turkish MPs. Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem said Obama’s speech “reflects a clear attention toward the two-state solution” for Israel and the Palestinians and described Obama’s words as “important” and “positive.”

It may have helped that Obama introduced a personal tone to his appeal. Introduced as “Barack Hussein Obama” before his parliamentary speech, he referred to his own identity as the son of a Kenyan Muslim and his upbringing in Indonesia...”



Obama reaches out to Muslim world: President says US 'will never be at war with Islam'

The Independent, By Patrick Cockburn / Istanbul, Tuesday, April 7, 2009

“Turkish leaders were surprised that Mr. Obama, who had shown little interest in Turkey previously, should have chosen to visit their country at the end of his European tour.

The decisive factor was probably Turkey’s geographical position, since it has common borders with Iraq, Iran, Syria and Georgia. About 70 per cent of US supplies to Iraq go through Turkish ports or airspace, or travel via Turkish roads. With the American military’s supply routes to Afghanistan through Pakistan increasingly under threat, the use of Turkish airspace and airbases is again important.

One of George Bush’s key failures when he invaded Iraq was not persuading Turkey to allow him to base an American invasion force in the country. Over the proceeding five years, Turkey increasingly pursued friendlier policies towards Iran, Russia, Sudan and Hamas.

The Turks are now delighted to discover that their policies are very similar to those adopted by Mr. Obama...”



Barack Obama woos Muslims from Secular Turkey

The Guardian, By Robert Tait in Istanbul, Tuesday, April 7, 2009

"Barack Obama extended an olive branch to the Muslim world from the floor of Turkey's parliament yesterday by declaring the US was not "at war with Islam" but instead sought its partnership to pursue common goals.

In his first visit to a predominantly Muslim country, he praised Islam's contribution to civilisation and said America's relationship with it must extend beyond fighting terrorism.

The remarks were applauded by Turkish MPs during a 25-minute speech that was also witnessed by the top brass of the country's military. While Obama's visit to Turkey - the last stop of his week-long European tour - had been intended primarily to demonstrate Washington's commitment to a strategic ally, the sentiments were clearly designed to resonate beyond the chamber.

Turkish television channels emphasised Obama's supposed links to Islam throughout the day yesterday by repeatedly referring to his middle name, Hussein.

That reflected a more positive attitude held by Turks generally towards the president compared with his predecessor, George Bush, who was deeply unpopular...



Obama's trip to Ankara promises to be a genuine meeting of minds.

Newsweek Web Exclusive, By Grenville Byford, April 4, 2009

President Obama's visit this week to Turkey will also be unusual because, for once, America wants more from Turkey than Turkey wants from America. Turkey will respond generously because Barack Obama is likely to be around for a long time, and he will certainly remember anyone who helped make his first major foreign trip a success.

Heading up America's agenda are two items on which there is much common ground. First, Iran. Obama has indicated he wants to open wide-ranging negotiations, but he will not rush into them without first testing the waters. Similarly, Obama is serious about making progress on Mideast peace. Like Tony Blair and Tayyip Erdogan, Obama is thought to recognize that Hamas can no longer be ignored, though he cannot possibly say so publicly...

Obama would also like to get more help on Afghanistan, principally more Turkish soldiers...

Another item is Iraq. What needs to be agreed upon is already in place (except Turkey's relatively uncontroversial agreement that it will act as a corridor for U.S. withdrawal)...

Then there is Cyprus, but the real problem here is between Turkey and the European Union...

A final item is the Nabucco pipeline bringing Central Asian gas to Europe via Turkey...

And will Obama choose his Turkey visit to give a much anticipated speech of reconciliation to the world's Muslims? Of course not. Obama has to speak from the center of the Muslim World. Egypt must be the favorite, but a speech in Saudi Arabia would carry enormous symbolism, though I doubt the Saudis would go along. A good outside bet is Jordan. King Abdullah, remember, is a descendent of the Prophet—and a U.S. ally...



Diabetes

by Dr. Hanna Saadah



Diabetes begins as a silent disease and may take several years before it is discovered.

Diabetes starves the body by holding the sugar in the blood and thus keeping it away from getting to the tissues that need it. It is similar to what happens when the UN cannot get food to a starving population because the roads are blocked by war. In both situations, the food is plentiful but cannot be transported to where it is needed.

Type I diabetes begins in childhood as a viral illness which causes the rapid and total failure of the pancreas to produce insulin. Children with diabetes do not respond to oral medications and will need insulin treatment from the outset.

Type II diabetes begins in adulthood, progresses slowly over time, and is an inherited autoimmune disease whereby the immune system of the person attacks the person's pancreas. There are two defects in adult or Type II diabetes that collaborate to produce the high blood sugar:

- a) The pancreas produces insulin slower than normal and in insufficient amounts (Insulin Insufficiency).
- b) The body becomes resistant to the actions of insulin (Insulin Resistance).

Adult or Type II diabetes begins when the fasting blood sugar rises above 100 mg/100cc. At that stage it is called pre-diabetes. If no action is taken to delay its progression, it will be called diabetes when the fasting blood sugar reaches 126.

At the pre-diabetes stage, the progression to diabetes can be reversed by increasing exercise and decreasing weight. That is why it is important to make an early diagnosis because it allows the patient to act promptly and quickly control it before the diabetes causes irreversible tissue damage. Most diabetics are overweight or obese in which the global epidemic of obesity is increasing the incidence of diabetes to alarming levels.

The treatment of adult Type II diabetes should always include exercise, weight control, and a low carbohydrate diet. The main carbohydrates that should be minimized are: bread, rice, potato, corn, sugar and sweets. When these measures fail to bring the person back to normal, then medicines become necessary.

The first and most important oral medicine is Metformin. It reduces insulin resistance, decreases liver production of sugar, does not cause low blood sugar, and does not cause weight gain, which is a major problem in adult diabetes. It is used alone as the primary treatment as long as it can control the blood sugar. When the disease progresses in spite of the use of Metformin, then other medicines that increase the secretion of insulin by the pancreas are added. These types of medicines may cause the blood sugar to drop to

dangerously low levels if meals are skipped or delayed. When these insulin-secreting medicines are no longer able to control the blood sugar, then insulin is added. However, both insulin and the medicines that increase insulin secretion cause weight gain, which increases insulin resistance and defeats the person's weight reduction efforts.

Moving from Metformin to insulin—without using the medicines that increase insulin secretion—is becoming the preferred approach by diabetes experts because of better results produced. There are some new, very safe, long-range insulins that can control diabetes with only one injection per day. Perfect control of diabetes aims at having a fasting blood sugar between 90 and 110 mg/100cc and the blood sugar two after a meal at no more than 140 mg/100cc. The patient can help achieve these goals by increasing exercise and decreasing weight.

A measure of diabetes control that reflects the blood-sugar state over the past three months is a test called the Glycosylated Hemoglobin or Hemoglobin A1C. Normal people have an A1C below 6. A well-controlled diabetic will have an A1C between 6 and 7 and that should be the goal of treatment because the higher the A1C, the higher the complication rates.

The complications of diabetes are numerous. Essentially, diabetes damages the arteries, nerves, kidneys, and eyes, also causing heart attacks, strokes, kidney failure, blindness, and loss of sensation in the feet leading to foot ulcers. Diabetic complications not only shorten life; they also ruin life's quality and are a major cause of disability and amputations.

Any person who is overweight and does not exercise is at an increased risk of developing diabetes. Teaching children to eat properly and to make exercise a daily habit is one way to combat the rising global epidemic of adult diabetes. Treating high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and tobacco addiction will help reduce the complications of diabetes. These three risk factors, when they coexist with diabetes, portend a very bad prognosis and should be aggressively treated.



The Credit of Relocating Man's Position in the Universe?

by Antoine Boutros*

This year is the "International Year of Astronomy", because it marks the 400th anniversary since Galileo invented his telescope and its aftermath. But this year marks also the bicentennial of the birth of Darwin, the father of evolution, hence it is also called "Darwin's year."

Prior to Galileo and Darwin there was a deep religious creed, consecrated in the church that both Humans and the Earth were unique in the universe. God created man in His form and image, just like He created the Earth as the center of the universe, with the earth revolving around the sun and the planets and celestial bodies. Those two principles reflect the concept of the uniqueness and privilege of man and his environment, both considered as exceptional and unprecedented among creatures and celestial bodies. Any transgression of this faith was punished with ex-communication or burning at the stake. That is why Galileo's statement about the sun being the center of the universe created such a large shock and he was brought to trial, forced to renege on his theory and retirement. A visitor of Florence will find in its museum the first telescope lens Galileo made and through which he peered at the sky. It is worthy to note, everything that Galileo saw was seen before him by Arab and Moslem astronomers through sheer eye observation and mathematics. But that is another story. Darwin, in turn, raised a storm when he said that humans evolved and passed through such development, animal stages and does not differ anatomically from other primates. This theory was a mind and eye opener to a new world, revolutionizing concepts, and challenging the heart of the beliefs and traditions. It also led to a better understanding of humans, his temperament and instincts. More importantly, however, Darwin spoke of the continuing process of evolution according to the process of survival and the survival of the fittest; as to the "in His Image" prototype, it did not exist. Galapagos Island was the inspiration of Darwin's theory of evolution, and maintains its diversity till this day as a unique natural reserve where some giant reptiles, Darwin observed still live.

Rarely have such a great coincidence between two great scientists, each of whom changed the course of science and civilization. In both cases, man was "downsized" and his uniqueness was ripped off him. "New Scientist" magazine put forth an interesting question: Who was more important Darwin or Galileo? The one who demonstrated that man evolved from a long line of primates? Or the one that showed that the earth was not the center of the universe?

If it was up to Darwin or Galileo to discuss the issue, The latter would consider himself the most important because he defended his convictions before one of the most formidable authorities in Europe: the Catholic church's inquisition in 1633 and suffered a lot to prove his point. Whereas Darwin would say that the atmosphere surrounding his case was no less

difficult and he was subjected to cruel irony, but he succeeded in escaping the differences, leaving others to argue about the theory. He did not promote his idea, but was left to reflect on the work itself. He also did not ask anyone to abandon the foundations of their convictions, as he did not sow doubt in the minds of others. "New Scientist" has polled a group of scientists and intellectuals to decide who served humanity more?

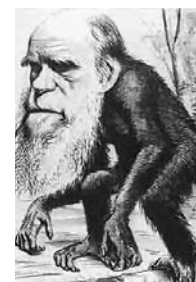
Lawrence Krauss, a professor of theoretical physics at the University of Arizona, thinks that humans knew before Darwin that man shared a lot of animal traits, but discovered with Darwin the continuous evolutionary chain linking man to his predecessors, showing how the laws of nature operate without coordinating to produce the diversity that surrounds us. In return, Galileo has taken us out of the realm of center of the Universe, and thus man fell from an incomparable position. In addition, Galileo has replaced the gift of divine knowledge by empirical knowledge. Paul Davis, a physicist, at the University of Arizona, sees that both scientists have made discoveries that have shaken confidence to the core,. Galileo said that the earth revolves around the sun, but what of its impact on everyday life? When the church rejected his views, Galileo did not lift a finger; whereas Darwin's call shook humanity and the American society is still divided in that regard.

Philosopher Daniel Dennet, from Tufts University, feels that Darwin revealed human beings to be animals, without reference to the touch of the Creator. As for Galileo, he demonstrated to people that they live among billions of patches in one galaxy. Both examined the meaning of our lives.

Steve Jones, a geneticist at the University of Florida, says that despite the external similarity between humans and primates, everything in us is unique.. Darwin made us more human than we think. Galileo on the other hand, explained to us why the sun rises every morning. The advantage goes to him. Matt Ridley, writer on evolutionary biology has voted to Darwin, without hesitation, because humanity is today still deliberating on his theory. The majority of scientists believed that what distinguished the brain were genes. Today, we recognize that our brains are no bigger than a mouse's. On the other hand, who cares which rock revolves around another! It is clear that the dominant trend among the respondents tended to prefer the legacy of Darwin to Galileo's, as if knowledge of human nature is more important than knowledge of his place in the universe. 🌈

Words in pictures: Galileo's telescope lens kept in the Florence Museum of Science; Darwin in sarcastic Cartoons

* Writer and Editor-in-chief, AI Computer magazine



The Syndicate of Taxi Drivers and Public Transport Vehicle Owners in Beirut

The Syndicate of taxi drivers and public transport vehicle owners in Beirut, was founded by virtue of decree # 45, issued by the Minister of Labor on April 7, 1954. The objective was to preserve the interests of the members, defend their rights and raise the standards of their profession. The Syndicate launched to a good start, but was then neglected by the founders in 1962. It was later revived in 1969 by some members (Assad Raad - Abdel-Amir Najdi - Ramez Merhi - Nassib Abu Chakra) who succeeded in electing a new Syndicate Board with Abdel-Amir Najdi as President.



Affiliation to the Syndicate

He who wishes to join the Syndicate must be a Lebanese with full civil rights, 21 years of age, working in the profession at the time of submission of the request and holder of a valid driving license. Ownership of the public transport vehicle is not a requirement for Syndicate affiliation. It is therefore a union for drivers of public transport vehicles, and accepts drivers with public driving licenses and not owners only.

Membership fee is LBP20,000 with the same amount in annual fees. In return, the Syndicate offers the drivers an aid fund for drivers to pay any difference in hospitalization bills, not covered by the social security, and in hospitals under contract with the Syndicate.

Social Security

The Syndicate's dealings with social security started in 1973, when it asked the government to adopt a law allowing public drivers to benefit from its services. In a first step, Article 9 of the social security by-laws was amended allowing special categories to benefit from it. This was confirmed in paragraph "e" of the by-laws which states that "the decrees adopted in the Council of Ministers, upon the proposal of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs and the Managing Board of the Fund and the conditions set therein, will determine the specific categories of drivers of public vehicles and artisans and other categories of Lebanese persons not-mentioned in this article, that need to be included at this stage, in all or some branches of the Social Security".

Indeed, decree # 4886 issued in the year 1982, included drivers of public vehicles in the provisions of the Social Security Act. The decree stipulated that the driver of the vehicles that can qualify to benefit from the general provisions of the Social Security Act, has to be:

- ⦿ Holder of a valid public transport vehicle driver's license;
- ⦿ Actually exercising this profession;
- ⦿ Driving as owner of the car, for a fee he pays the owner, or in return for a share or percentage of the proceeds made by the car.

The drivers were paying their subscriptions in full until 1989 when law # 1/89 was issued, which stipulated the contribution of the State Treasury in the monthly subscription fee paid by drivers to the Social Security. The driver and owner of the public registration plate pay LBP60,000 per month to social security; whereas the lease-plate driver pays LBP144,000.

The Organization of the Syndicate

The Syndicate consists of a General Assembly, a Syndicate Board and a President.

1 - General Assembly

It includes all affiliated members and holds its periodic meetings on a yearly basis. Within its prerogatives is the election of the Syndicate Board, reviewing its reports, discussing the work accomplished and the projects prepared for implementation, as well as giving their opinion on all its activities. The General Assembly also discusses any amendment made to the Syndicate's budget and rules of procedure. The number of members affiliated to the Syndicate was 31,877 drivers, as of February 1, 2008.

2 - The Syndicate Board

The Board consists of 12 members elected by the General Assembly for a term of four years. The mandate of half the members' ends after two years when they are either replaced through election or re-elected. Included in the purview of the Board's authority is the preparation of the budget, determination of the annual subscription fees, appointment and payment of Syndicate employees, and outlining their duties and salaries. The current Board is composed of: Abdel-Amir Najdi as President, Nizar Ghaoui as Vice-President, Ali Mohieddin as Secretary, Ghassan Khalil as Treasurer, and Board Members Zakaria Masri, Chafiq Jurdi, Suleiman Barakat, Yehia Anan, Jacque Aswad, Abdel Karim Hjaire and Habib El-Helou.

3 - The President

The president is elected by the Syndicate's Board for a term of four years, but can leave after two years with the members whose mandate end, and can therefore be re-elected. He represents the Syndicate with the government and the judiciary, calls the Board for meetings, implements its decisions; and refers petitions and questions to the concerned parties. Only two persons acceded to the position of president since the inception of the Syndicate: Emile Nada, who was elected in 1954 and lasted until the beginning of the sixties when the Syndicate stopped functioning, and Abdel-Amir Najdi, who along with other members later revived the Syndicate and was elected in 1969 and remains president until today. What distinguishes this Syndicate is Article 26 of its rules of procedure which stipulates the right of the President to receive a monthly salary determined by the Board. President Najdi states that the last salary he received, LBP 1,000,000, was in the year 2000, and that he has not received any amount since, due to the paucity in the Syndicate's budget.

Public Vehicles

Public transportation in Lebanon depends on both the public and private sectors. In the private transport sector, owners of vehicles with public license plates use cars, as well as small vans and buses. The owners of public registration plates faced strong competition from owners of private car plates during the war because they used their cars for public transport. In order to preserve the rights of some, the Ministry of Interior through decree # 384, dated November 10, 1994, released 12,000 new registration car plates for public transport. This raised the number of this type of plates to 32,498 cars in all of Lebanon. The Syndicate opposed the above mentioned law because it led to chaos and created unfair competition for working drivers. Its protests however, fell on deaf ears.

The Syndicate and Strikes

The transport sector is vital for Lebanon, and its discontinuation can disrupt the interests of people. This is why strikes organized by this sector generally yield results. One of the most important strikes called by the Syndicate was on April 1, 1970, where the drivers literally paralyzed the country in protest against the fines being imposed on public transport drivers if caught stopping for a passenger in the town's center. The protests succeeded with the police turning a blind eye.

President Najdi states that the strike conducted on May 27, 2004 was one of the most important strikes organized by the Syndicate. The most successful strike was done on January 24, 2008, in which all public transport Car Syndicates joined forces. The consequences were felt all over the country, reflecting a strong commitment from all drivers.

The Syndicate embodies the concepts of a real union, and has become a competent authority for drivers to resort to with their indignations, problems and concerns, and leads them in a real democratic movement of advocacy.

The Syndicate also seeks to ensure public transport as a right for citizens to enjoy and the state to provide. This is why it calls on the state to adopt a unified policy that regulates public transport for citizens and provide a decent living for workers in this sector. It supports the suppression of all public transport vehicles that do not meet the conditions set by the exercise of the profession, and the cars with false or green plates that are used to transport passengers. ●●

Schools in Lebanon

Religiously affiliated schools in Lebanon account for 58% of the student body in private schools, the Maronites having the largest share

In the eight previous issues, The Monthly reported on both Christian and Muslim religiously affiliated private-free and private schools, in terms of their number and the number of students in each of them. In this last article on the subject, we present a summary of all the schools, their numbers, and the numbers of students in a comparative table (Table 1).

The following conclusions can be made from Table 1:

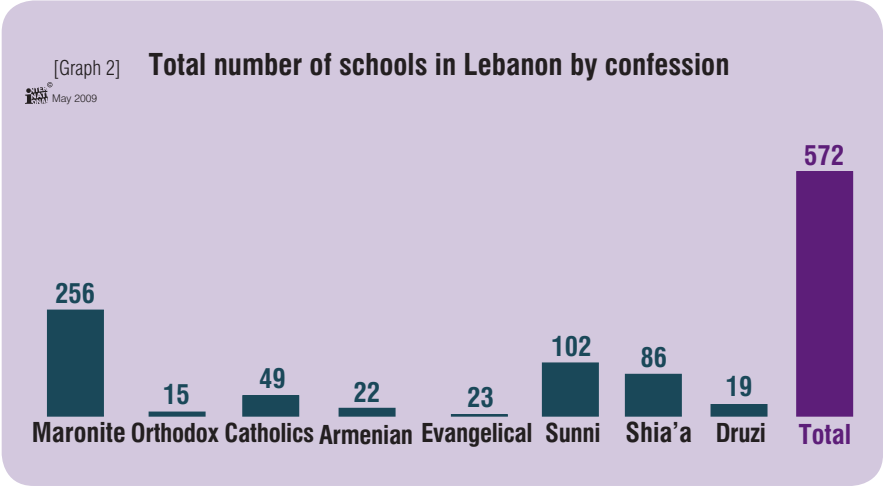
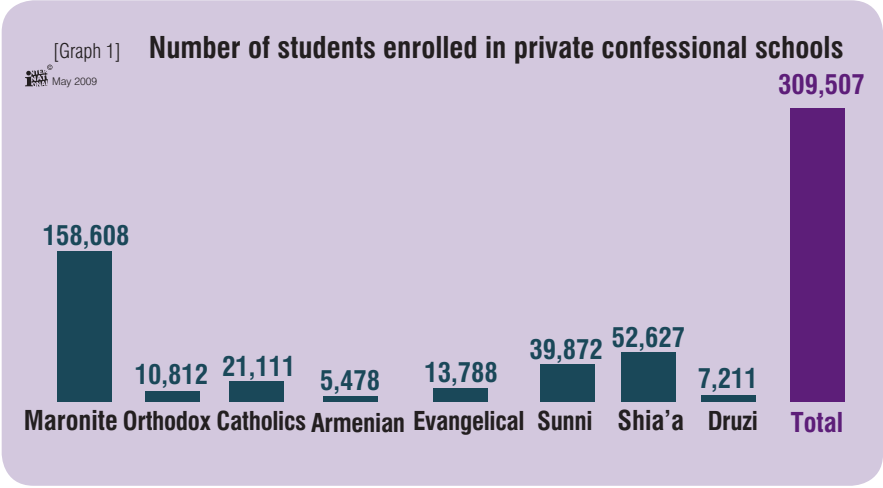
- ⊙ The Maronite community has the largest number of schools in Lebanon, and the largest number of students compared to other Christian and Islamic confessions. Their schools make up 18.4% of private schools in Lebanon, and their students 30% of all students in private schools.
- ⊙ In second place comes the Sunni confession in terms of the number of schools (102), whereas the Shia'a confession comes in second place in terms of its number of students (52,627).
- ⊙ A comparison between the confessions shows that the Maronite confessions owns 44% of religiously affiliated schools and have 51.2% of students.
- ⊙ Religiously affiliated schools account for 41.1% of private schools, 58.1% of all students in private schools, and 34% of school students in Lebanon (the number of students is 911,314).



Confession	# of private-free schools	# of students in private-free schools	# of private schools	# of students in private schools	% of schools compared to total number of private-free schools	% of students compared to total number of students in private-free schools	% of schools compared to total number of private schools	% of students compared to total number of students in private schools	Total # of religiously affiliated schools	Total # of students in religiously affiliated schools
Maronites	84	28,821	172	129,787	23	25	16.80	31	256	158,608
Orthodox	3	365	12	10,447	0.82	0.31	1.20	2.50	15	10,812
Catholics	16	4,761	33	16,350	4.40	4.10	3.20	3.90	49	21,111
Armenian	6	1,253	16	4,225	1.60	1	1.50	1	22	5,478
Evangelical	1	151	22	13,637	0.27	0.13	2.10	3.20	23	13,788
Sunni	42	11,651	60	28,221	11.50	10.10	5.80	6.70	102	39,872
Shia'a	33	16,466	53	36,161	9	14.20	5.10	7.60	86	52,627
Druze	9	2,889	10	4,322	2.40	2.50	0.97	1	19	7,211
Total	194	66,357	378	243,150	53.30	57.60	36.90	58.20	572	309,507

Source: International Information based on the statistical bulletin issued by the Center for Education Research and Development 2005-2006

Note: According to the statistics of the year 2005-2006, the number of private-free schools was 364 with a total number of 115,254 students and the number of private schools 1,025, with 417,409 students.



Business and Computer University College – BCU (Hawai University)

A rise in the number of students and new faculties awaiting licenses

Continuing the series of articles on institutions for higher education in Lebanon, in this issue, The Monthly focuses on the Business and Computer University College – BCU (Hawai University).

The Founding of BCU

The Center for Education and Computer Studies, headed by Mr. Hamza Mustafa acquired its license to establish the Business and Computer College in the year 2000, under decree #3585 on August 7, 2000. In 2003, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education issued decrees 50/46/2003, 51/46/2003, 52/46/2003, and 53/46/2003, granting accreditation to the degrees given by the Institute. These include: Bachelor of Science in Information and Communications, Bachelor in Computer Science, Bachelor in Arts in Painting, Photography and Decorative Arts, and Business Administration, including all its sub-divisions like Hotel Management and Tourism.

BCU includes two faculties: the Faculty of Computer Science with 4 specialties and the College of Business Administration with 8 specialties. It also offers its students a Masters degree in Business Administration (MBA), which is still awaiting official accreditation. The Institute's administration has also submitted a request for the establishment of two new faculties, one for Basic and another for Human Sciences, which will allow it to apply for accreditation as a university if the request is accepted.

Characteristics of BCU

BCU is located on Hamra Street in Beirut. It consists of a 11-storey building that includes a cafeteria, 18 computer labs, 5 studio workshop areas for decorative art, 4 kitchen labs for the Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, a central library, and 5 level under-ground parking areas.

The college has opened 5 branches across Lebanon, mainly in Jadra, which has the largest green campus and student housing, Sin-el-Fil branch in the Beqaa region of Chtoura, a northern branch in Qalamoun, and one in A'aley, Mount Lebanon.

Academically, BCU adopts the American system for education, which is based on credit courses and the

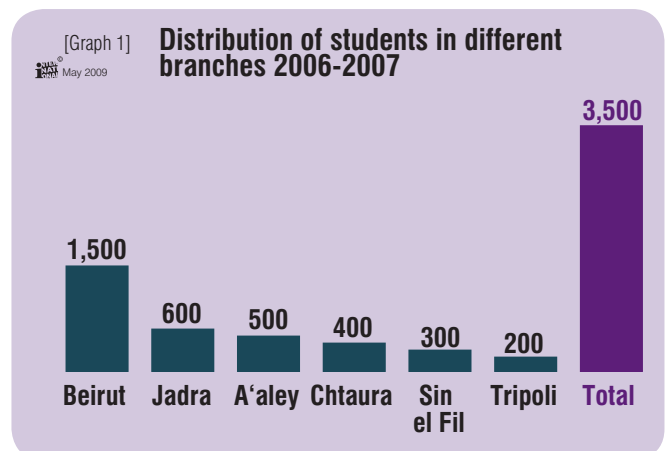


division of the academic year into three trimesters with two obligatory and an optional third. English is the language of instruction, in addition to the choice of French in some sections and specialties.

Number of students

In recent years, BCU has attracted a large numbers of students. Nearly 3,500 students were enrolled in the academic year of 2006-2007 compared to 3,091 students in 2004-2005, and 508 students in 2000-2001. The rise of 2,992 students over a seven year period was mainly due to the opening of 5 additional branches.

Regarding human resources, the teaching and the administrative staff reached approximately 320 members in 2004-2005, 220 who are professors.



Tuition Fees and Financial Aid

BCU has set what is considered acceptable fees for enrollment and tuition. Table 1 shows the average tuition fees at BCU.

Average Tuition Fees at the BCU			Table 1	
	# of credits necessary for a degree	# of years necessary to obtain a degree	Cost/credit (USD)	Average cost for a degree (USD)
Faculty of Computer Sciences	105	3	125	13,125
Faculty of Business Administration	97	3	125	12,125
Faculty of Computer Science - Department of Computer Engineering & Communication	163	5	125	20,375
Masters of Business Administration	Around 50	2	200	10,000

Source: Information International based on BCU Administration

According to Table 1, a student can obtain a recognized degree in BCU for USD12, 125.

Orphans, children of martyrs or disabled students benefit from financial assistance up to 40%. The college allocates 38% of its budget to fund scholarships and financial aid.

Unique Characteristics of BCU

The college has a number of elements that distinguishes it from other institutions of higher education in Lebanon, most notably the following:

- ⊙ In March 2006, it recognized by the Ministry of Education to be homologous with the “American Academy of Free Education.” This signifies its recognition as equivalent to a college in the United States of America.
- ⊙ The college signed cooperation and exchanges agreements with a number of international institutions of higher education in order to provide more academic options for students. These institutions are: Amboreia State University in the United States, Leeds Metropolitan University in England, Wolow Ngogng University in Australia, University of Cesar Ritz in Switzerland, Birenyan University in France and the University of Cobán in Russia.
- ⊙ In terms of activities, BCU’s administration seeks to encourage students to participate in numerous exhibitions to familiarize themselves with the markets. In the year 2005–2006, BCU organized the first Global Math Research Conference in Lebanon and first Employment Fair, in addition to the fourth annual Exhibition of Computer and Telecommunications Engineering.

⊙ BCU offers specialized courses in management, accounting and communication in collaboration with Microsoft, Sun and Cisco. It also organizes training courses in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

⊙ BCU founded a Research Center for Math and Statistics, concerned with scientific research, which won both global and local awards.

Students Talk

In order to draw a more objective picture of BCU, The Monthly sought the views of some students and heard their suggestions on how to improve the college.

⊙ Students suffer from the lack of green spaces and fields. The only place they can spend their breaks in is the courtyard in the center of the building.

⊙ Students suffer from the problem of the elevators.

⊙ The students complained about the existing cafeteria. Many of them stated that they “go to nearby restaurants if they want to buy food rather than stay in the cafeteria.”

⊙ Students wished for more social and cultural activities. The college has currently formed some sports clubs, a football and basketball team, and an environmental club.

⊙ The students pointed that the college helps them find work and that the administration is always seeking ways to help improve their situation, such as seeking special housing offers for students as well as membership offers from sports club.

⊙ The students praised the educational level of their teachers, pointing out that some teach at the Lebanese American University (LAU), and most felt they were getting one of the best education in Lebanon.

⊙ The students were divided with regard to the chances of finding work, but they were unanimous in their desire to work abroad. Some emphasized that “they have more opportunities in finding work compared to other university students especially in Lebanon. They would also accept lesser salaries than students of other prestigious universities in Lebanon. Other students did not agree with that saying that “their chances of finding employment opportunities is less than for students from other well known universities.”

⊙ The students stressed that although their administration has prevented the elections of student councils, “the political parties are present in the college.”

Under the “surge” of universities and university institutes, the Business and Computer College is trying to maintain a high level in the quality of education it offers, focusing on the need to prepare and equip students with all the means and expertise necessary to engage in the labor market. ●●

The Monthly meets with Mr. Hameed A. Opeloyeru, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Lebanon

When did the Nigerian Embassy first open its doors in Lebanon?

How many staff members do you have in the Embassy?

As a resident embassy, we first opened in 1973. We used to have a non-resident accreditation in the 1960's through our Embassy in Cairo. The resident Embassy was temporarily closed down during the period of the Lebanese civil war and re-opened in 2000 and we have since been operating to date. The Embassy has two categories of staff. The first type is called Home-Based Staff, who are posted directly from Nigeria. There are 6 of us in total, including myself, the Minister in charge of Administration and Political Affairs, the Minister in charge of Immigration and Trade, and three Administrative and Financial Attachés. The other category is the locally recruited staff, of which 3 of them are Lebanese and 5 of them are Nigerians. They perform such duties as translation, interpretation, social secretaryship, telephonist, receptionist, website maintenance, visa and information, etc.

When did the diplomatic relations between Lebanon and Nigeria start? What are the milestones that enhanced its development?

When you talk of diplomatic relations, you are talking about when we established official contacts with Lebanon. This was long before Nigeria gained its Independence in 1960. Consular contacts had been established between Nigeria and Lebanon, featuring visits of senior Lebanese officials to Nigeria. There was a delegation that went from here in 1958 to Nigeria because there were so many Lebanese living there at that time (the first Lebanese came to Nigeria in 1890). By 1945, we had about 5,000 Lebanese in Nigeria and this number increased to 70,000 in the 1970's. We can say that people-to-people relation started in 1890 and the official relations started in 1960 when Nigeria became independent. In the wake of the first official visit, in 1964, by the then Premier of Northern Nigeria, similar official visits have been recorded between senior officials of both countries.

On bilateral agreements, Nigeria and Lebanon have an existing Bilateral Air Services Agreement, whereby the Middle East Airlines travels to Nigeria three times a week. We are now working on two other bilateral agreements: one is on the Promotion and Protection of Investment and another on the Avoidance of Double Taxation. In fact, we were recently discussing a delegation to visit Nigeria in April of this year to continue the discussion on the agreement.



Are there any specific initiatives undertaken by the Embassy to foster the cooperation between Lebanon and Nigeria?

Last year we established the Lebanese Nigerian Friendship Association (LENIFRA). It has been officially registered in Lebanon and we are working on how to register the Lebanese Nigerian Joint Business Council in Nigeria. The former promotes a cultural, economic and educational relationship between both countries. It is envisaged that honored programs such as student exchanges and cultural cooperation programs between Nigerian Universities and Lebanese Universities, (including AUB, University of Lebanon, etc) would be revisited. LENIFRA was able to sponsor the visit of a multi-sectoral delegation from Nigeria to Lebanon in July 2008. This delegation included members of the Nigerian Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, the industrialists, the intelligentsia, and cultural groups. LENIFRA was established by members of the Lebanese Diaspora in Nigeria, who have since returned to Lebanon after handing over their businesses to their off-springs in Nigeria. On our part, we in the Embassy tried to facilitate this endeavor. The Ambassador is the Patron of this association, while it provides a temporary seat for the fledgling association, pending its eventual procurement of a separate location. During the mentioned visit, two agreements were signed to foster cooperation between the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce and the Lebanese Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. Another agreement was signed between the manufacturer association of Nigeria and the association of Lebanese Industrialists. These enabling instruments are paving the way for the proposed formation of the Nigerian-Lebanese Joint Business Council. By the time the business council is established, we will have the signing of the Protection of Investment Agreement and other issues as well. Once we have those ready, we would have taken a giant step in the consolidation of the excellent and historical relations between both countries.

How big is the Lebanese community in Nigeria?

There are about 30,000 Lebanese in Nigeria, following the return of the first generation of Lebanese immigrants. Nigeria recorded three generations of Lebanese Diaspora movements. The first generation returned to Lebanon upon retirement, the second generation is involved in telecoms, services, and construction businesses, as opposed to the first generation who were engaged in labour-intensive agricultural businesses. There are also a host of Lebanese engaged in oil and gas and downstream petroleum enterprises.

How big is the Nigerian community in Lebanon?

There are about 2,000 Nigerians in Lebanon. They are mostly people who accompanied their Lebanese principals from Nigeria and work in the domestic field. We have some Nigerian expatriates working in the UN offices and other multilateral organizations in Lebanon. We used to have a Nigerian contingent in UNIFIL in the 1970's along with the contingents from Ghana. We were around three battalions (around 650 troops). Now we have only civilians (doctors and engineers in UNIFIL).

How do you view the relationship between Lebanon and Nigeria?

We are comfortable with this perpetually developing relationship. Some relations take the form of a top-bottom, but ours is from the bottom-up. It was people based as could be seen from the establishment of LENIFRA in 2007, owing to the goodwill existing among the people towards Nigeria. We didn't have to re-invent the wheel. There were many Lebanese that didn't have telephone numbers of people when they come to Lebanon because all of them are only familiar with Nigeria. In Jweyya, Southern Lebanon, for example, it is fashionable for the Lebanese inhabitants to cook Nigerian traditional dishes every Sunday. The same applies to Miziara in Northern Lebanon. Therefore, when I came here from London, I felt more comfortable here, notwithstanding the considerable number of Nigerians in London.

Nigerian-Lebanese relations are strongest at the people-to-people level. There are many Lebanese investors in Nigeria and the Nigerian economy is heavily dependent on the huge foreign direct investment generated by the Lebanese investors. When I was growing up as a young child in Lagos, I never knew that some of the things we used to see for example something like a "Big Ben" (The Tower in Idumota, Lagos) was donated by the Lebanese community to the then British colonial government at that time. Nigerians have grown to know the Lebanese businessman and have remained very fond of them. They call them "Cora" meaning coral beads because during their early travels aboard the Portuguese ships from Marseille through Senegal and Lagos, they used to buy coral beads from the ship and sell them to people to raise their initial business capitals. In the same vein, the Lebanese brazed the trail in such sectors as tourism and leisure. The hotel industry, restaurants and cinemas among others were those important areas where the Lebanese made their significant debuts.

Therefore, what the government is doing now is encouraging these initial efforts by executing bilateral agreements to smoothen any observed rough edges. We are now trying to make sure that the ministers come together. Speaker Nabih Berri has proposed a Lebanese Parliamentary Friendship Association, which is trying to forge the relationship between the parliament in Lebanon and the parliament in Nigeria. We are also trying to bring the executives together where Ministers from the two governments would exchange visits and compare notes on issues of bilateral and multilateral interests of their two peoples. President Olusegun Obasanjo was to visit Lebanon in 2006 just after the last Lebanon-Israel War, but this was cancelled at the last minute for security reasons. A rescheduling of this presidential visit would represent a major landmark in the burgeoning bilateral relations between Nigeria and Lebanon.

When did you arrive to Lebanon? What positions did you occupy during your diplomatic career?

I came to Lebanon in 2007 from London. I was the Minister in charge of Administration in London from 2003 - 2007. My first diplomatic postings began as a First Secretary in the Nigerian Embassy in Baghdad, and later served as a Counselor in the Nigerian Embassy in Tripoli, Libya. I later worked as a Minister Counselor in Riyadh in 1992 until 1998. My postings in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took me to the Administration, Legal Treaties, African Affairs, and Middle East departments respectively.

What do you like most about Lebanon?


The food and the hospitality of the people are fantastic. I got used to so many Lebanese dishes like fattouch and tabouleh. The people are naturally hospitable. No wonder the hospitality industry in Nigeria received a boost at their hands. I have gained weight since I came to Lebanon.

What do you like least about Lebanon?

Actually, nothing personally. It's just that my family is back in Nigeria and always worried each time there is any media news of security breaches in Lebanon. The fact that they are away makes them worry about the security in the country. Otherwise, everything is fine.

Lebanon is a country where you would not feel you are a stranger. In some countries, it takes a while to get used to the people and get acquainted, but it's not the like this here.

What are your hobbies?

Generally, I engage in political and cultural discussions, reading, play squash, and do some walking. I participated in the last Beirut Marathon. When I am in foreign land, I like to mix with people and socialize. 

Fashion in Lebanon

The majority of fashion designers in Lebanon seem to share a common trait; their interest in fashion began as a hobby they enjoyed practicing at a very young age. From sketching on paper and canvas', to making dresses from tablecloth and curtains, today's Lebanese designers have managed to conquer the world of glamour with their luxurious, sophisticated, and elegant sense of fashion. As acclaimed couturiers, Lebanese fashion designers have become regional and international icons, presenting designs that combine Eastern and Western fashion through the use of the best fashion fabrics and decorations, resulting in original and elegant art pieces. However, living in such a globalized world, competition has become fierce, and thus to achieve fame one has to be on the top of their game, producing unique, stylish and chic garments.



Today's renowned Lebanese fashion designers, such as George Chakra, Zuhair Murad, and Elie Saab began to emerge in the 1980s after having traveled to Europe, the USA, or Canada to study and specialize in fashion design. However, their breakthrough into the world of international fashion occurred in the post war years of the country, mainly in the mid-1990s. Those that began as amateurs are today sought by top celebrities and royal members, with showrooms in the fashion cities of the world, mainly Paris, Milan, London, and most recently, Dubai. Whereby fashion designers specialize in haute couture, many nowadays are expanding their line of work to include ready-to-wear and even complimentary accessories, such as shoes and bags. Young designers are emerging quickly and fervently in the Lebanese and even Arab or foreign market. What makes such young designers special is their incorporation of a young and trendy fashion or fresh style to the traditional haute couture or ready-to-wear, which is inevitably attracting a younger customer base.

Designers usually present two fashion shows annually. In the first show, they present the fall/winter collection, and in the second, the spring/summer collection of the year. Preparations for the show can start several months ahead, whereas other times, it can start only several weeks ahead, depending on the designer, his/her team and schedule. Before initiating work on a collection, designers usually undergo a planning phase whereby a theme is chosen based on a personal mood, inspirations, research, and market demands concerning trends. As such, every piece in a collection usually complements the others in terms of design, colors, and style. The next step is the sketching of the garments, which is done by the designer, as well as his/her team of in-house designers. The designers draw garments that complement the theme, but present them to the designer for adjustments before the tailoring starts. Even during the tailoring process, adjustments are constant, in terms of color combinations, style lines, trim details, as well as the choice of beads or crystals. It should be noted that not all designers initiate by sketching, some display fabric on a stand, and work on it directly.

Design houses and designers that are renowned usually work with a team that includes in-house designers that draw or sketch the collection, pattern makers, tailors, people specialized in embroidery, as well as a marketing department. In general, Lebanese designers that have made it internationally exhibit their seasonal collection in fashion shows that are held twice a year in Paris and Milan. Elie Saab for example shows his collection in both countries, while George Chakra's usually takes place in the Paris fashion week. In these fashion shows, designers display their Haute Couture collection that usually includes evening and wedding dresses, where the norm is to conclude the show with one wedding dress. The collection is made to fit the models wearing them, and each piece is replicated only upon request from a client, whereby she can ask for some adjustments to the original design. As such, no two dresses of the same design look alike since customers differ in tastes and likes.

Fashion fabrics used by all designers in Lebanon are usually imported from Switzerland, Italy, France, Germany, or the Far East. Textile companies usually send templates of the year's colors, from which designers choose those that suit the theme of the collection. To create a dress, designers use an array of fabrics, each to send a specific message. For example, silk dresses are perceived as luxurious, elegant, and sensuous, while wool is associated with comfort. The main silk fabrics and weaves that are used by Lebanese designers include brocade, canton crepe, chiffon, china silk, doupioni, georgette, organza, peau de soie, silk shantung, silk broadcloth, silk linen, and silk satin. As for wool fibers, designers resort to alpaca fleece, mohair, angora wool, camel hair, cashmere, vicuna, beaver cloth, broadcloth, challis, cheviot, chinchilla cloth, felt fabric, flannel wool, merino wool, gabardine, oatmeal cloth, panama cloth, tweed, to name a few. The most common cotton fibers used include muslin, organdy, poplin, sateen, and gauze, while linen is another popular choice among designers. To decorate the dresses, designers also choose a variety of decorations such as swarovski, pearls, sequins, lace, flowers, and floral prints. Nowadays, swarovski is very popular among clients, regardless of the country. These popular and exquisite crystals are mainly imported from Austria.

No matter how chic and stylish a dress is, a designer's ability to penetrate a market successfully can only be achieved through proper marketing. Relying mainly on word of mouth, many designers also resort to advertising and exhibitions, but assertiveness is the key. Most designers acquire customers through a bride. When she comes to design her dress, her immediate family members come with her as well and end up designing their evening dresses too. In the end, the manner with which a customer wears the dress either brings out its beauty and elegance, showing the skillfulness and talent of the designer, or simply destroys it. This justifies why sometimes, designers decline creating a dress for a customer who they see as unfit for their style. This selectivity has allowed success and fame for the Lebanese fashion designers and pioneers of today. 🍇

The Monthly held a meeting with the designers, Mr. George Chakra and Ms. Jocelyn Abed Almalek.



George Chakra design
2008



George Chakra design
2008



George Chakra design
2008

Khyara

It Boasts a University

Etymology

Researchers provide two possibilities to explain the name of the town:

First, to the connotation of the word in Arabic “Khyara,” meaning a choice based on the best quality.

Second, in reference to a Yemeni group of the Khyara family “Bani Khyara.” This however is unsubstantiated.

Location

The village of Khyara is situated west of the Beqaa Valley, in the Muhafaza of the Beqaa, at an altitude of 870 meters above sea level. It lies at a 58 kilometer distance from the capital city Beirut and 23 kilometers from the provincial capital of Zahle, covering an area of 903 hectares.

Khyara can be reached via Chtoura – Hawsh el Harimi- Jeb Jenin - or through Chtaura – Qob Elias – el Marj.

Population

The estimated number of people registered in the Civil Status Records of the town is around 1,230. The majority belongs to the Sunni community, many of whom are from the Mazloun family, and a small Greek Orthodox community. There are about 130 houses in the town, with 14 commercial enterprises.

Voters

The number of voters in the town of Khyara in the year 2000 was 721 (of whom 350 voted). The number increased to 838 voters in 2005 (of whom 442 voted). In the year 2009, the number has reached 885 voters, among them 428 females and 457 males. Voters are distributed among the following families:

Sunni

Mazloun	256 voters	Abbas	40 voters
Samili	56 voters	Abu Murad	36 voters
Ghazzawi	46 voters	Abu-Orabi	30 voters
Dush	46 voters	Chamseddine	22 voters
Rajab	45 voters	Hassan	20 voters
Kurdy	45 voters		

The above is in addition to the following families:

Kanbour, Ghandour, Smidi, Mawla, Malt, Mustafa, Aziz, Aref, Darwish, Abu Eid, Samra, Uday, Mahmoud, Ali, Khelif, Tarboosh, Chamye, Kshat, Jassim, and the Orthodox family of Abou Ani.

Local Authorities

The municipality of Khyara was established by decree number 219 dated September 20, 1973. Its Municipal Council, now disbanded, included 9 members. Its municipal share of the proceeds of the Independent



Municipal Fund reached LBP46.1 million in 2005 and rose to LBP54 million in 2006. The town has a mayor and a Mayoral Body consisting of 3 members

Educational Institutions

There is a public school in the town of Khyara, “The Khyara Intermediate Public School,” which was comprised of 145 students in the academic year 2005-2006 compared to 148 students in 2006-2007. There are 17 members in the teaching staff, including 16 contractual teachers.

There is also a private school in the town, “The Omar Al-Mukhtar Educational Center,” which included 2,059 students in the academic year 2005-2006 compared to 1,882 students in 2006-2007. It has 104 members in its teaching staff, including 26 contractual teachers.

The town of Khyara is home to the Lebanese International University (LIU), which has about 3,000 enrolled students. In addition is the Beqaa Vocational Institute, which includes the Beqaa Vocational School that both have around 3,000 students.

There is also a Union Youth Club in town that was founded in 2005, in addition to the Beqaa Sports City, which includes tennis courts, football and basketball playing grounds.

Economic Activities

The residents of Khyara depend on their living mainly from agriculture, particularly the cultivation of vegetables of all kinds and wheat. In addition to this is local trade and money sent from expatriates overseas.

Problems

Residents of the town suffer from water scarcity and problems from the sewerage network, as well as from the absence of a Local Council to deal with the local affairs of the town.

Lala

There are Archaeological Troves on their Land

Etymology

Researchers give several explanations for the name, one of which is “lala” meaning the ignorant, stupid and primitive. There is however, no verification for this interpretation.

A second explanation is a reference made by Anis Freiha, in his book “The Names of Lebanese Villages and Towns,” to the root of this word, which is made up of two parts: “la” preposition, and “ila” meaning God, making it an area dedicated to the “God.”

A third possibility to its name is a reference to an ancient monastery high on a hill in the town with its glass windows that “ylali,” which in Arabic means ‘reflect the light.’ Every time the sun rose, the people used to say the “Lala Ad-Deir” meaning the monastery lit and with time the phrase was shortened to the use of the word “lala.”

Location

Lala is situated in western Beqaa, in the Muhafaza of the Beqaa, at an altitude of 1,120 meters above sea level. It lies at about 70 kilometers from the capital Beirut, and 36 kilometers from the provincial capital of Zahle, covering an area of 1,278 hectares.

Lala can be reached via Chtoura – Qob Elias – Kefraya and Lala.

Population

The estimated number of people registered in the Civil Status Records of the town is about 4,800 people, mostly belonging to the Sunni confession. The number of houses in the town is around 450 with about 50 commercial and trade enterprises.

Voters

The number of voters in Lala reached 2,767 voters (689 of whom voted), in the year 2000. This number increased to 2,866 voters in the year 2005 (962 of whom voted), and to 3,416 voters in 2009, among them 1640 females and 1776 males.

Voters are distributed among the following families:

(Tarbin) Tarbey	310 voters	Najmuddin	115 voters
Suleiman	300 voters	Hamdan	115 voters
Omeiri	290 voters	ssaf	110 voters
Rahal	250 voters	Safa	105 voters
Jumaa	240 voters	Qarut	66 voters
Safadi	180 voters	Younes	65 voters
Abu Ghosh	180 voters	Fayyad	60 voters
Hndos	150 voters	Moussa	55 voters
Ghutmi	130 voters	Awada	55 voters
Kadri	120 voters		

The above is in addition to the following families:

Ghazzawi, Abu Orabi, Himor, Wani, Hashem, Saleh, Salameh, Ezzedine, Bou Shehadi, Mahfouz, Qarajih, Tahibi, Baalbaki, Ayoub and Zolfo.

Local Authorities

The municipality was established under decree number 406 dated May 18, 1963. The Municipal Council is currently composed of 15 members and is headed by Abdel-Rahman Samadi. The municipal share of the proceeds of the Independent Municipal Fund was LBP165 million in the year 2005 and rose to about LBP200 million in the year 2006. There are also two mayors in the town, Mr. Mohammad Qasim and Mr. Ibrahim Ali Tarbey, and a Mayoral Body composed of 3 members.

Educational Institutions

There is an official public school called “The Intermediate Public School of Lala,” which comprised of 108 students in the academic year of 2005-2006. The number fell to 65 students in 2006-2007. The teaching staff consists of 13 members, including 4 on a contractual basis. Three years ago, the public secondary school of “Jub-Jenin” was founded as the Lala branch, and included 120 students and 18 teachers.

There is also a private-free school in town, “The Makassed Islamic Charitable Organization – Lala Intermediate,” which had 153 students in the 2005 –2006 academic year and up to 182 students in 2006-2007. There are 12 members on the teaching staff, including 2 on contracts.

AI –Makassed Organization also had a free private school in Lala, which included 43 students in the 2005-2006 academic year, but it closed at the end of that same year.

The town holds a Cultural and Sports Club that was founded in 1971 and the Muslim Scouts that was founded in 1988.

Economic Activities

The inhabitants of Lala depend mainly on the money sent by ex-patriots, in addition to agriculture, especially the cultivation of olives, wheat and fruits. The farmers of the town also benefit from the Litani River Project, even though they suffer from problems of land and irrigation of the crops.

Archaeological Sites

The excavations in the town of Lala unearthed the remnants of a Roman city dating back to more than 4,500 years. An 8m2 of mosaics was also uncovered, with coded drawings, a map of a roman palace and Roman inscriptions. According to well-informed sources and to the reports of the Directorate of Antiquities and the German team, all the data indicated the presence of unimaginable archeological remains.

Problems

The residents of the town, like all other Lebanese villages, suffer from problems of electricity and sanitation.

Lebanese Banks In Syria: What Role Do They Play?

Syria has been undergoing transformations in its economic and financial sectors since the year 2000, with the most significant changes being the establishment of private banks by virtue of Law number 28 issued in 2000, as well as Law number 35/2005 for establishing Islamic banks. Another important law was issued in June of 2008, which was a historic decision that allowed both residents and non-residents to open foreign currency accounts in banks operating in Syria.

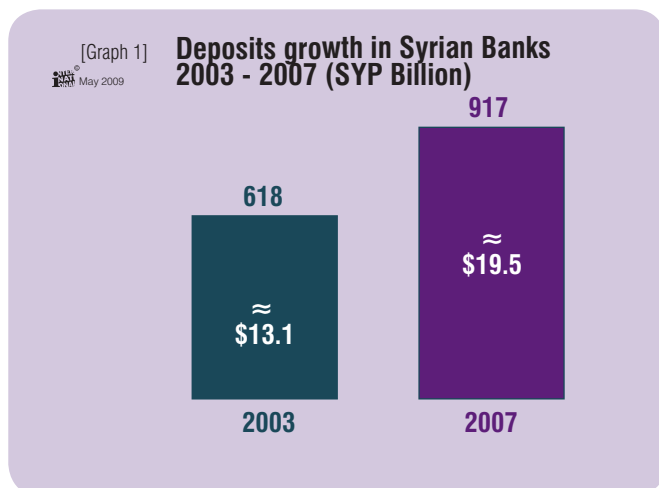
The Syrian Banking Sector

Until the year 2005, the Syrian banking sector was limited to 6 banks, most notably the general Commercial Bank of Syria, which accounted for most of the deposits and banking operations. After allowing private banks, 15 private and Islamic banks were licensed (3 of which will start operation in the up-coming months). This has started a competition between the public and private sectors. Among the banks, 6 of the 15 are Lebanese, namely:

- ⦿ Bank Audi Syria
- ⦿ Byblos Bank
- ⦿ Banque de la Syrie et d'Outre Mer
- ⦿ Bimo Saudi - French Bank
- ⦿ Societe Generale Bank
- ⦿ FransaBank

Deposits

This new flexibility in banking transactions has prompted Syrians to deposit their money in banks (previously it was either kept in homes or with merchants). The deposits increased from SYP618 billion Syrian pounds (about USD 13.1 billion) in 2003 to SYP917 billion in 2007 (about USD19.5 billion) – Graph 1. There was also a substantial rise in foreign currency deposits (from SYP39 billion – around USD 824 million - to SYP 184 billion, which is equivalent to around USD 3.9 billion). The unstable situation in Lebanon, along with the Syrian army withdrawal had a significant impact on the transfer of Syrian deposits in Lebanon to Syrian banks, as well as Lebanese banks in Syria. The transfers were estimated at about USD3-5 billion, with some skeptics estimating it at a far smaller amount, one not exceeding a few million dollars.



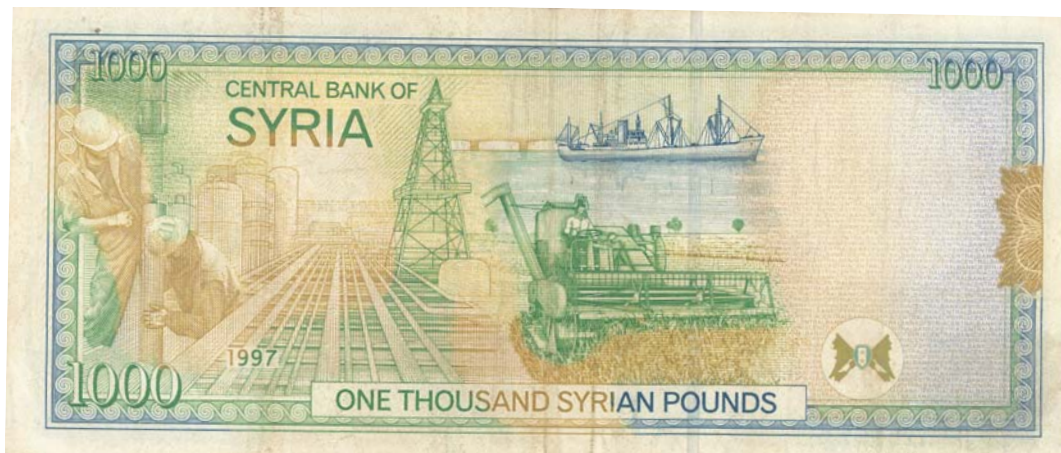
“This new flexibility in banking transactions has prompted Syrians to deposit their money in banks”



“Lebanese banks have played an important role in the establishment of a modern banking sector in Syria, taking advantage of their professional expertise and bringing many Lebanese experienced cadres to train Syrian bank employees”

The role of Lebanese banks

Lebanese banks have played an important role in the establishment of a modern banking sector in Syria, taking advantage of their professional expertise and bringing many Lebanese experienced cadres to train Syrian bank employees. Lately however, Lebanese banks in Syria started engaging in operations that allow them to make astronomical profits, by infringing on some norms and standards or bending the rules. For example, the banks take advantage of the low interest rates in Syria (1.5%), which makes them lure customers to open accounts in their Lebanese branches and then transfer funds in exchange for high returns on investment due to the very high interest rates adopted in Lebanon (7% - 8%). This led to the transfer of large Syrian deposits into Lebanese banks. Although this is sure to be denied by the banks, the fact remains that there was a large amount of Syrian deposits transferred into Lebanese Banks in the course of the last year, regardless why and how they were made. One thing for sure is that the Lebanese banks operating in Syria have a significant role to play. 🍇



Stats around the World

- ◎ **3 billion** people — almost half the world — live on less than \$2.50 a day.
- ◎ **80%** of humanity lives on less than \$10 a day.
- ◎ **40%** of the world's poorest population accounts for 5% of global income. The richest 20% accounts for three-quarters of world income.
- ◎ **1 billion** people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names.
- ◎ **1%** of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000, yet it did not happen.
- ◎ **121 million** children are out of education worldwide.
- ◎ **1.6 billion** people — a quarter of humanity — live without electricity.
- ◎ **12%** of the world's population uses 85% of its water, and these 12% do not live in the Third World.

Source: UNICEF, Global Issues, Human Development Report and State of the World

Beirut Rafic Hariri International Airport

8.6% increase in passengers

Air traffic in the Beirut Hariri International Airport, has witnessed a slight increase during the month of March 2009, compared with the results of traffic recorded in the previous month. The increase in air traffic meant an increase in the number of passengers, around 23,964 passengers (8.6%) while aircraft movements increased by 506 flights (14.5%).

A comparison with the results achieved during the month of March 2008, shows passenger traffic increased by 32,521, (12%).

Airport traffic in the month of March 2009 compared to the previous month of February and the month of March 2008

Table 1

	February 2009	March 2009	% of change February – March 09	March 2008	% of change March 08 – March 09
Arriving airplanes	1,784	2,002	+14.5	1,605	+24.7
Departing airplanes	1,743	1,995	+14.5	1,606	+24.2
Total # of airplanes	3,491	3,997	+14.5	3,211	+24.5
Arriving crews	14,182	16,092	+13.5	12,900	+24.7
Departing crews	14,235	16,030	+12.6	12,900	+24.3
Total # of crews	28,417	32,122	+13	25,800	+24.5
Arriving passengers	139,412	152,281	+9.2	133,879	+13.7
Departing passengers	137,011	147,558	+7.7	132,526	+11.3
Transit passengers	2,322	2,870	+23.6	3,783	-24.1
Total # of passengers	278,745	302,709	+8.6	270,188	+12
Imported goods (per ton)	2,998	3,937	+31.3	3,041	+29.5
Exported goods (per ton)	2,230	2,283	+2.4	2,423	-5.8
Total size of goods (per ton)	5,228	6,220	+19	5,464	+13.8

Source: Directorate General of Civil Aviation – March 2009

Stats & Numbers

LBP 425 million is the expense that the Lebanese government will incur in order to evacuate the Arabs and foreigners arrested by the General Directorate of Public Security and the General Directorate of Internal Security Forces. These are people who had illegally entered Lebanon or committed crimes and infractions, and their countries refuse to pay for their evacuation and return after they had been incarcerated.

EURO 30 million (around USD 40 million) is the amount donated by the European Union to Lebanon last April (2008). The aim behind this donation is to endorse the financial empowerment efforts seeking to reduce public debts to sustainable levels, aware that public debt had reached around USD 47.2 billion by the beginning of 2009. This donation constitutes 0.084% of the public debt.

LBP 1.5 billion is the expense that Lebanon will incur for hosting the 26th session of the Arab Ministers of Interior held in Beirut at the end of March.

LBP 22 billion is the financial advance set aside by the Lebanese government for the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities to ensure the expenses of the preparation and proceeding of the June 2, 2009 parliamentary elections.



Beirut: The World Book Capital
Photo by Waddah Joma'a - 2008

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- Lebanon in Figures 2005-2006
- 8- "I am Responsible, All of Us are Responsible"
- 9- "Our Environment is Our Home"
- 10- "My Society is My Responsibility"
- 11- "My Society is My Responsibility" Workbook
- 12- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building"
- 13- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building" Workbook
- 14- "Lebanon Wars, why?"
- 15- Discrimination in Lebanon

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Lebanon Parliamentary Elections

A book by Information International in cooperation with Dar an-Nahar soon in major bookstores

Information International SAL is publishing a book in Arabic on the Lebanese parliamentary elections, its history from 1960 until 2005, the number of electors in each Qada'a, and some expectations on the upcoming Parliamentary Elections in June 2009.

The book is divided into six chapters as follows:

- 1- Names of Speakers and members of Parliament (1920 – 2009)
- 2- Number of electors in each Qada'a
- 3- Results of parliamentary elections from 1960 until 2005 in all electoral districts
- 4- Bi-elections
- 5- Parliamentary appeals
- 6- Appendices and electoral laws from April 1960 up to Law # 25 in 2008

The book also provides names and photos of previous Members of Parliament from 1960 until 2005, in the hope that the information presented will be beneficial for researchers in their analysis and anticipations. 🇅🇪



Soon in major bookstores