



HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS IN A WEEK

09 - 15 January, 2023



Human Rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of the nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language or any other status without discrimination. These rights are all universal, inalienable, interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.

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LEBANON

Tuesday
10 Jan 2023

Lebanon – Teaching suspended for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon's public schools

The Ministry of Education decided on Tuesday to suspend afternoon classes attended by Syrian refugee students in Lebanon's public schools, after teachers had earlier ended morning sessions allocated to Lebanese students in such establishments. Albert Chamoun, an adviser at the ministry, told Arab News that the decision was taken "because the administrative and educational authority cannot suspend morning classes attended by Lebanese students, while maintaining the afternoon shifts allocated to Syrian refugee students." He added that "Teachers rejected a proposal by the minister of education to receive \$5 for every working day, which would amount to \$70 per month, but they insist on receiving \$100. This is why the situation is a mess now." The decision to end teaching for Syrian students was announced by Imad Achkar, director general of education, who said, "We receive everyone and our hearts are open to everybody, but it's unacceptable for non-Lebanese children to receive an education, while our Lebanese children are deprived of it." Administrators and teachers of Syrian students receive their salaries in dollars from donors, according to prior agreements.

Wednesday
11 Jan 2023

Lebanon – Lebanon lifts subsidies on all infant formula

The Lebanese government has lifted subsidies on all infant formula milk, said Public Health Minister Firas Abiad. Abiad told reporters the decision is due to the absence of a plan to end the smuggling and selling of subsidized formula on the black market. He said that the ministry aims to secure the provision of milk for babies, not for merchants who exploit the subsidies. Abiad explained that the ministry noticed that large quantities of subsidized milk, which is imported, disappears from the market shortly after its arrival, prompting them to conclude that a portion of subsidized formula milk was being smuggled to Syria.

Lebanon – Lebanon's public school teachers ask for 'very basic' improvements in latest strike

Lebanon's public school teachers entered their third day of strike action with a protest outside the Education Ministry on Wednesday. Hundreds gathered to express their discontent over devalued salaries and the dire work conditions under which they have been operating since the start of Lebanon's prolonged economic crisis. While most goods and services in the financially struggling nation are now priced either in US dollars or their equivalent in local currency, teachers do not receive a salary commensurate with the rate of inflation. A public school teacher's monthly wage is about 3,000,000 Lebanese pounds a month, or almost \$70. Public school teachers were on strike sporadically throughout 2022, with the most recent strike lasting more than a month. It ended with promises from the Education Ministry that salaries would be tripled and each teacher would receive another monthly incentive of \$130, paid in Lebanese lira at the set Central Bank's Sayrafa rate. They would also receive a transport allowance of 95,000 lira for each working day. But the \$130 monthly incentive did not arrive.

Thursday
12 Jan 2023

Lebanon – [Relatives of Beirut port blast victims summoned over protest violence](#)

Lebanese authorities have summoned relatives of the victims of the deadly Beirut port explosion after clashes with security forces outside the Justice Palace on Tuesday. The relatives were protesting over the lack of progress in the investigation, which is currently stalled. Some demonstrators broke through one of the Justice Palace gates and clashed with security personnel. The National also witnessed projectiles, including rocks and a traffic cone, being thrown at the building and smashing windows. Family members of the victims of the blast demonstrated outside the Justice Palace again on Thursday. An investigation by Judge Tarek Bitar, the second official to take on the case, has been on hold for more than a year due to legal challenges from former Cabinet ministers he sought to question. Lebanese judicial officials, including Justice Minister Henry Khoury, have looked into the possibility of appointing a secondary judge while Mr. Bitar's investigation is blocked. But this has been seen by some as yet another way for top officials to evade justice in Lebanon's politically charged judiciary.

Friday
13 Jan 2023

Lebanon – [World Bank discusses new financial assistance to Lebanon](#)

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati met with the World Bank Country Director for the Middle East Department, Jean-Christophe Carret, on Friday to discuss World Bank's projects in Lebanon. The meeting dealt with many issues, including assisting the education sector with 25 million dollars allocated to teachers in public education and related to productivity and the attendance of teachers at schools. Both Mikati and Carret talked about assistance amounting to about one million dollars that will be allocated to the electricity sector to conduct a financial audit in Electricité du Liban to re-examine the tariff and economic situation and the establishment of the regulatory authority, in addition to providing the "Aman" network with a second World Bank loan. They also discussed obtaining a grant from the trust fund amounting to about 6 million dollars to help the Ministry of Finance with the information system, tax reforms, the new law on public accounting, and auditing the assets of 14 Lebanese banks representing 85 percent of the banking sector, especially since the start of the audit process by international companies is one of the prerequisites for the agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Saturday and Sunday
14 and 15 Jan 2023

Lebanon – [Lebanese protest arrest of Beirut blast victim's brother](#)

Activists gathered in front of a police station in the Lebanese capital Saturday to protest the arrest of the brother of a victim of a deadly 2020 blast, witnesses said. William Noun – whose brother, a fireman, was killed in the August 2020 Beirut port blast – was arrested over remarks made during a television program, a judiciary source told AFP. Noun's arrest sparked protests Friday night, as his relatives and other victims' families, along with activists, cut off roads in the capital. Known for his outspokenness, the young man had threatened during televised remarks to "blow up the palace of justice" to protest moves to replace the judge investigating the blast. On Friday, relatives of the victims threw stones at the palace of justice in Beirut, breaking some windows, in a protest over Noun's arrest. Demonstrations resumed again on Saturday in front of the police station where Noun was being held, according to witnesses. "This is an attempt to intimidate but it won't work," Noun's lawyer, Ralph Tannous, told Lebanese television. "This is a political move, not a judicial one."