

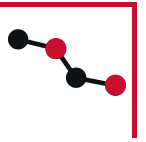
# Lebanon Crisis Update

May 2026 ■ ■



Source: REUTERS

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The Monthly Lebanon Crisis Update provides an overview of economic and political developments to alert the international aid response to new and emerging challenges that could impact the humanitarian situation in Lebanon. In the context of the multiple crises affecting Lebanon, the update tracks the impact of political developments on the economy, relevant international developments, updates on service delivery and governance issues, and analysis of the drivers of humanitarian need as they develop. The report also aims to provide nuanced forecasting on contextual shifts relevant to shifting needs and the implementation of humanitarian programming. The report draws upon a desk review of currently available literature, analysis of relevant quantitative data, and key informant interviews with a range of experts and individuals with knowledge of Lebanon's economy.

The Lebanon Crisis Analytics Team (LCAT) provides reactive and in-depth context analysis to inform the aid community in Lebanon. The information and analysis contained in this report is therefore strictly to inform humanitarian and development actors and associated policymaking on Lebanon.

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## Key Takeaways:

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- On June 3, following the fourth high-level trilateral meeting between Israeli, Lebanese, and US representatives, the US State Department released a statement declaring that “Israel and Lebanon agreed to the implementation of a ceasefire.” According to the statement, the Israeli and Lebanese sides discussed a security framework that would stipulate the disarmament of non-state groups and that “the ceasefire is contingent on a complete cessation of Hizbollah [sic] fire and the evacuation of all Hizbollah [sic] operatives from the South Litani Sector”. The situation remains fluid. Following the announcement, the Israeli military launched several attacks across southern Lebanon and in the Bekaa, and Hezbollah targeted Israeli forces in southern Lebanon. On June 4, Hezbollah Secretary-General Naim Qassem likened the Lebanese government’s adoption of the US announcement to “surrender”.
- In late May, Israel announced an intensification of its military operations in Lebanon. Since May 25, Israel has conducted an average of 112 airstrikes per day, killing an average of 33 people daily, with most strikes targeting southern Lebanon and more limited targeting in Baalbek-Hermel and Western Bekaa. Israeli forces also renewed their ground offensive, with their troops advancing beyond the Litani River into the district of Nabatieh.
- Lebanon’s Foreign Ministry sent letters to the UN Secretary-General and President of the UN Security Council accusing Iran of violating Lebanese sovereignty by conducting joint operations with Hezbollah and of violating the Vienna Convention. The move was initially read as an assertive foreign policy stance, before being downplayed by the ministry as routine diplomatic correspondence, reflecting political caution over tensions with Tehran and their domestic implications.
- On May 9, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam led a ministerial delegation to Damascus for bilateral talks on border security, trade, and other areas of cooperation. Lebanon and Syria agreed to establish a Lebanese-Syrian Supreme Business Council and expedite the repatriation of Syrian inmates held in Lebanese prisons. Movement on these and other matters of mutual concern signals a gradual shift away from asymmetrical bilateral relations during the Assad regime era.
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 3.04% in April, driven by higher fuel and shipping costs that are now affecting items like clothing, footwear, and accommodations. From January to May 2026, the price of 20 liters of petrol increased by 85.3%, food prices rose 7.9% nationally, and the overall CPI climbed by 10.1%.



- The conflict has displaced over 95% of agricultural households in southern Lebanon and similarly high shares of workers in local marketplaces. Outside areas directly targeted by Israeli fire and/or subject to forced evacuation orders, economic activity is also deteriorating: over three-quarters of businesses in these regions reported declining revenues, more than half reported losses, and many firms face higher operating costs, labor shortages, and transport and cash-flow constraints. Around one third of these businesses expect recovery will take more than six months.
- The government awarded a contract to Sky Lounge Services to refurbish and operate President René Moawad Airport in Qleiat, which has been closed for nearly a decade. This marks a step forward in reopening Lebanon's second civilian airport and in efforts to diversify national transport infrastructure beyond Beirut.
- In deciding to cancel intermediate certificate examinations and adopt a flexible baccalaureate framework, the Ministry of Education is seeking to preserve a certain continuity despite disruptions caused by war and displacement. However, student protests and criticism from educators have highlighted the challenge of applying uniform national examination policies amid increasingly unequal learning and security conditions across the country.



Source: Stringer

# Conflict Updates :

## Security

**The US-facilitated Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) serves as a basis for diplomacy between Beirut and Tel Aviv, leaving core points of conflict unresolved. Diplomatic engagement between the US and Iran could be a key determinant of hostilities in Lebanon, with potential for rapid escalation or de-escalation.**

- The April 17, 2026 CoH was formally implemented between Israel and Lebanon, although the Lebanese state is not a direct participant in the conflict. Hezbollah was excluded as a party to the CoH<sup>1</sup> and has explicitly rejected the agreement and the ensuing direct negotiations between Beirut and Tel Aviv.<sup>2</sup> According to a June 3 US State Department announcement, Lebanon and Israel agreed to make the CoH contingent on Hezbollah ceasing its fire on Israel and withdrawing its fighters from south of the Litani.<sup>3</sup>
- Unlike the 2024 CoH, the 2026 CoH<sup>4</sup> has yet to yield a specific framework for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon or the disarming of Hezbollah – fundamental issues driving the conflict. The State Department’s announcement calls for the creation of “pilot zones” where the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) take exclusive control from non-state actors, although the terms of this vague proposal remain undefined.<sup>5</sup> Previously, on March 2, the Lebanese government ordered the disbanding of Hezbollah’s military apparatus,<sup>6</sup> but efforts to disarm the group have not moved forward.

<sup>1</sup> US Department of State, [Ten Day Cessation of Hostilities to Enable Peace Negotiations Between Israel and Lebanon](#) April 16, 2026

<sup>2</sup> National News Agency, [حزب الله: استمرار العدو في خرقه وقف إطلاق النار وفي اعتدائه سيقابل بالرد والمقاومة الحاضرة والجاهزة للدفاع عن أرضها وشعبها](#) April 26, 2026;

National News Agency, [النائب فياض: كل وقف لإطلاق النار دون انسحاب إسرائيل يؤكد حق اللبنانيين في مقاومة الاحتلال واستعادة السيادة](#) April 24, 2026;

National News Agency, [رعد: على السلطة أن تخل من شعبها وتنسحب مما سمي مفاوضات مباشرة مع العدو الصهيوني](#) April 24, 2026

<sup>3</sup> US State Department, [Joint Statement of the United States of America, Republic of Lebanon, and State of Israel on the Latest High-Level Trilateral Meeting](#) June 3, 2026

<sup>4</sup> The National, [Revealed: Full text of the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire agreement](#) November 27, 2024

<sup>5</sup> US State Department, [Joint Statement of the United States of America, Republic of Lebanon, and State of Israel on the Latest High-Level Trilateral Meeting](#) June 3, 2026

<sup>6</sup> National News Agency, [سلام بعد انتهاء جلسة مجلس الوزراء: حظر فوري لنشاطات حزب الله الأمنية والعسكرية والزامه بتسليم سلاحه وخصر عمله في المجال السياسي](#) March 2, 2026



- Israel insists on maintaining troops in southern Lebanon and continuing its strikes until Hezbollah is disarmed and is no longer perceived as a threat to northern Israeli communities.<sup>7</sup> As part of its coercive strategy, Israel has established a depopulated “security strip” up to the so-called “Yellow Line” extending several kilometers inside Lebanese territory,<sup>8</sup> where it has carried out a systematic demolition campaign.<sup>9</sup>
- Hezbollah demands that Israel withdraw and cease its attacks on Lebanese territory before it will engage in a national dialogue over disarmament,<sup>10</sup> which Israel rejects. The State Department’s announcement does not mention whether Israel will continue to have “freedom of action” to conduct strikes against perceived Hezbollah threats – a key element of Tel Aviv’s policy that has previously been backed by the US.
- With no concrete framework to address the key drivers of the Israel-Hezbollah conflict, hostilities have persisted during the CoH. Iran-US talks appear to play a key role on the severity of the conflict, with the US so far restricting Israel from conducting regular strikes in the greater Beirut area during regional diplomatic efforts.<sup>11</sup>
- Amid a significant escalation in fighting and on the eve of new Lebanon–Israel talks, US President Donald Trump announced on June 1 that Israel and Hezbollah had agreed to halt attacks against each other.<sup>12</sup> Afterward, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that Tel Aviv would continue its military operations in southern Lebanon and would retaliate to Hezbollah attacks on Israel with strikes on Beirut.<sup>13</sup>
- Hezbollah, meanwhile, rejected a limited ceasefire whereby Israel would not strike the Lebanese capital if the group did not target northern Israel.<sup>14</sup> Instead, the party insists on a comprehensive ceasefire. Iran, for its part, warned on June 1 that it would conduct strikes on Israel if Tel Aviv bombed the greater Beirut area.<sup>15</sup>
- The situation remains highly volatile, with the potential for rapid escalation or de-escalation, contingent on US–Iran negotiations and the political calculations of Israel’s leadership. It is unclear whether the nascent Israel-Lebanon diplomatic and security framework brokered by the US can on its own lead to a durable ceasefire.

<sup>7</sup> Times of Israel, [Katz: Ceasefire with Hezbollah is temporary, IDF not withdrawing from positions in Lebanon](#) April 17, 2026

<sup>8</sup> Times of Israel, [Katz: Ceasefire with Hezbollah is temporary, IDF not withdrawing from positions in Lebanon](#) April 17, 2026;

Israeli military via Telegram, [@IDFOfficial](#) April 18, 2026;

Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee, [@AvichayAdraee](#) April 19, 2026

<sup>9</sup> Associated Press, [Lebanon decries Israeli demolition of homes in areas occupied after ceasefire](#) April 23, 2026

<sup>10</sup> National News Agency, [نعيم قاسم: لم تهزمتنا إسرائيل ومنفتحون لأقصى تعاون مع السلطة في لبنان بصفحة جديدة مبنية على تحقيق سيادة وطننا](#) April 18, 2026

<sup>11</sup> US President Donald Trump via TruthSocial, [@realDonaldTrump](#) June 2, 2026;

Israeli Channel 12, [«האיסור האמריקני על תקיפות בכיירות: «לא רוצים לראות בניינים נופלים»](#) May 27, 2026;

Israeli Channel 13, [«גורם צבאי מודה: «הרחבת הפעולה בלבנון לא תסיר את איום הרחפנים»](#) May 26, 2026;

Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation, [«מתאפקים מלפעול כראוי בלבנון בשל הגבלות אמריקניות, «תסכול בצבא»: «מתאפקים מלפעול כראוי בלבנון בשל הגבלות אמריקניות»](#) May 26, 2026

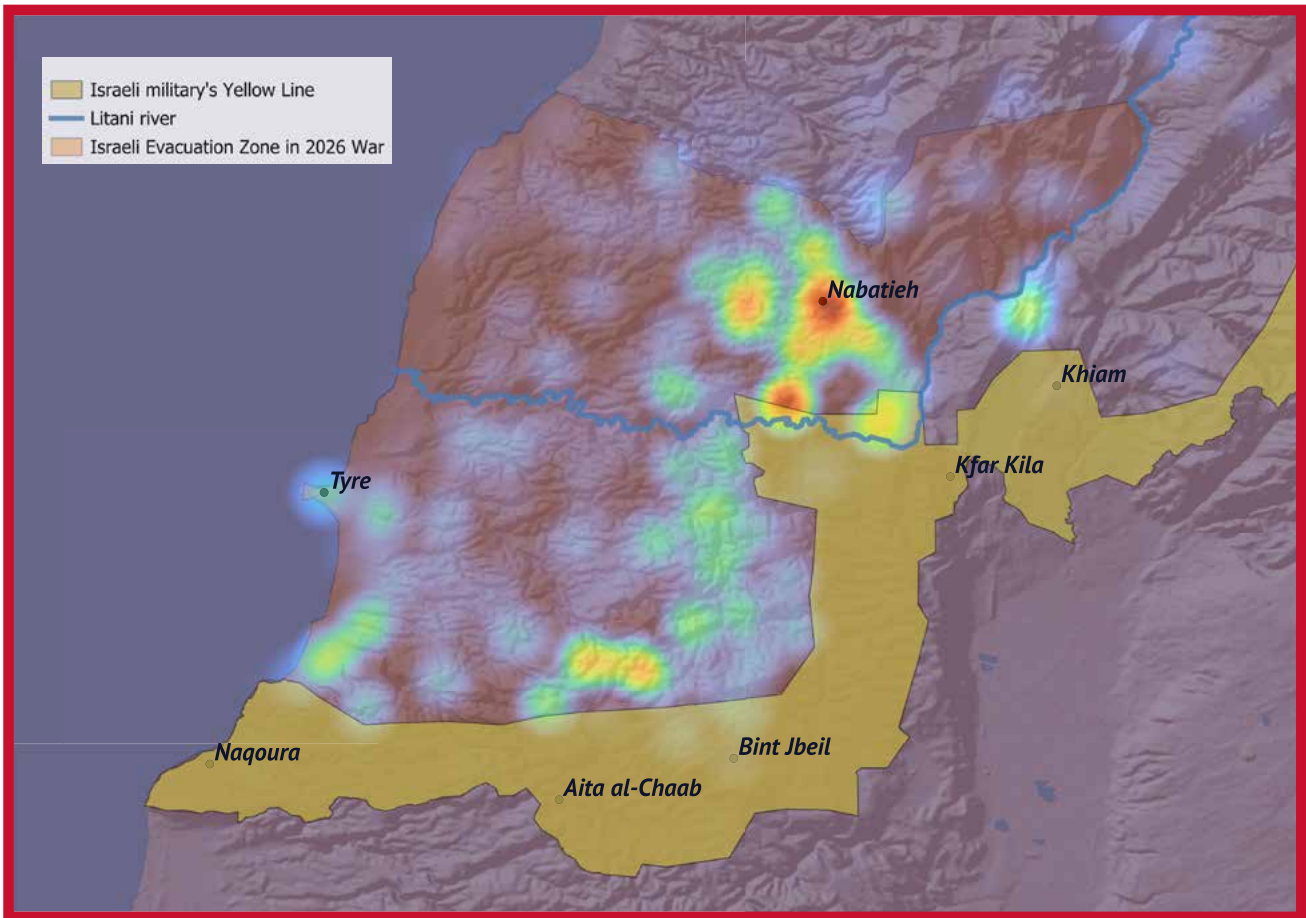
<sup>12</sup> US President Donald Trump via TruthSocial, [@realDonaldTrump](#) June 1, 2026

<sup>13</sup> Israeli Prime Minister via X, [@netanyahu](#) June 1, 2026

<sup>14</sup> Al-Mayadeen via X, [@mayadeenlebanon](#) June 1, 2026;

AFP, [Hezbollah will not accept «partial ceasefire» with Israel: Senior group official to AFP](#) June 2, 2026

<sup>15</sup> PressTV, [Iran warns northern Israeli settlers to flee if Beirut suburbs come under attack](#) June 1, 2026



**Figure 1.** Heatmap of Israeli airstrikes in southern Lebanon since the start of the 2026 CoH.  
Source: LCAT analysis

**The intensity of Israeli military operations in southern Lebanon since the start of the CoH has surpassed that of the 66-Day War in 2024 and the March-April 2026 War. This poses significant humanitarian risks.**

- Following steady military escalation between Israel and Hezbollah during the CoH, Tel Aviv in late May announced a new stage in its military campaign in Lebanon.<sup>16</sup> Since May 25, Israel has conducted an average of 112 airstrikes a day,<sup>17</sup> higher than its daily rate of 79 in the March-April 2026 War.<sup>18</sup> Throughout the CoH, Israel has concentrated 97% of its total fire in southern Lebanon.<sup>19</sup>

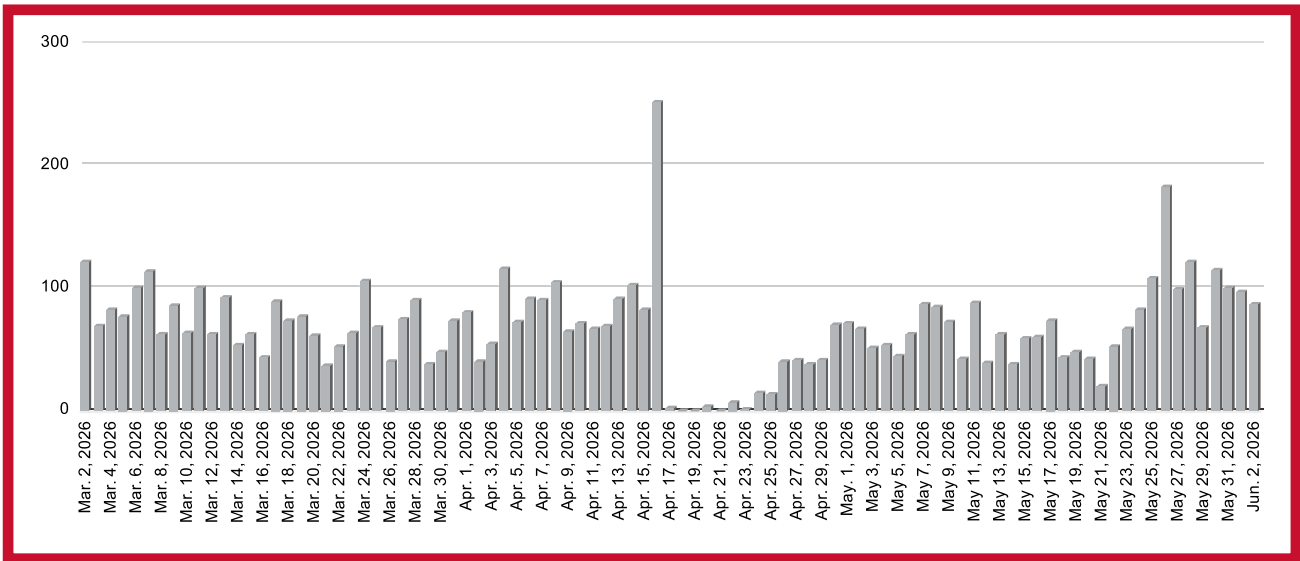
<sup>16</sup> Jerusalem Post, [Netanyahu orders IDF to 'hit the gas' on Hezbollah strikes amid drone strikes in northern Israel](#) May 25, 2026;

Times of Israel, [IDF pushes north of Lebanon security zone; Netanyahu says Israel seizing 'strategic positions'](#) May 26, 2026

<sup>17</sup> LCAT logs all Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire across Lebanon reported by the National News Agency, *L'Orient Today*, and *Al-Mayadeen*. Between May 25 and June 1, 2026, Israel conducted 892 airstrikes.

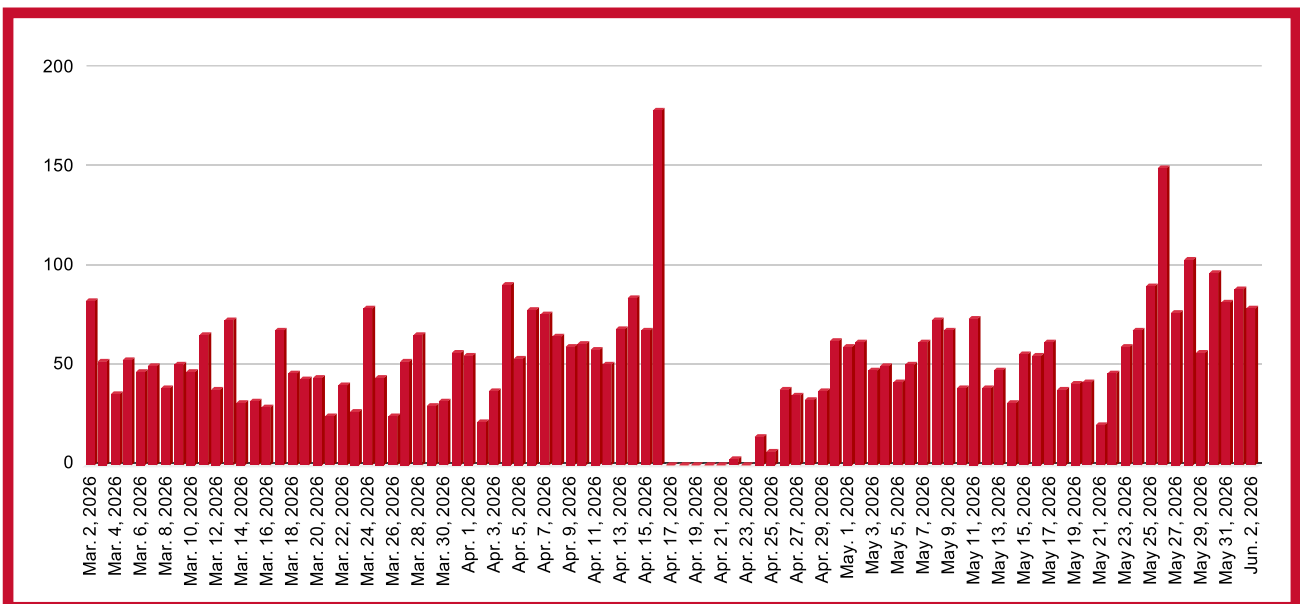
<sup>18</sup> According to LCAT analysis, between March 2 and April 16, 2026, Israel conducted 3,636 airstrikes.

<sup>19</sup> According to LCAT analysis, between April 17 and June 2, 2026, Israel conducted 2,581 airstrikes in the Tyre, Nabatieh, Bint Jbeil, Hasbaya, Jezzine, Marjayoun, Rachaya and Saida districts. The other 82 airstrikes in this period were conducted outside southern Lebanon.



**Figure 2.** Daily rate of Israeli airstrikes across Lebanon (March 2–June 2, 2026).  
Source: LCAT analysis

- Over time, such attritional bombardment will incur increasingly steep infrastructure losses. Already, Israel has concentrated heavy fire in southern Lebanon throughout the CoH period, conducting an average of 38.5 strikes from April 17 up to the start of the latest escalation.<sup>20</sup> From May 25 to June 2, Israel averaged 91.6 daily strikes in southern Lebanon up to the Zahrani River, nearly double the rate recorded during the March-April 2026 war.<sup>21</sup>



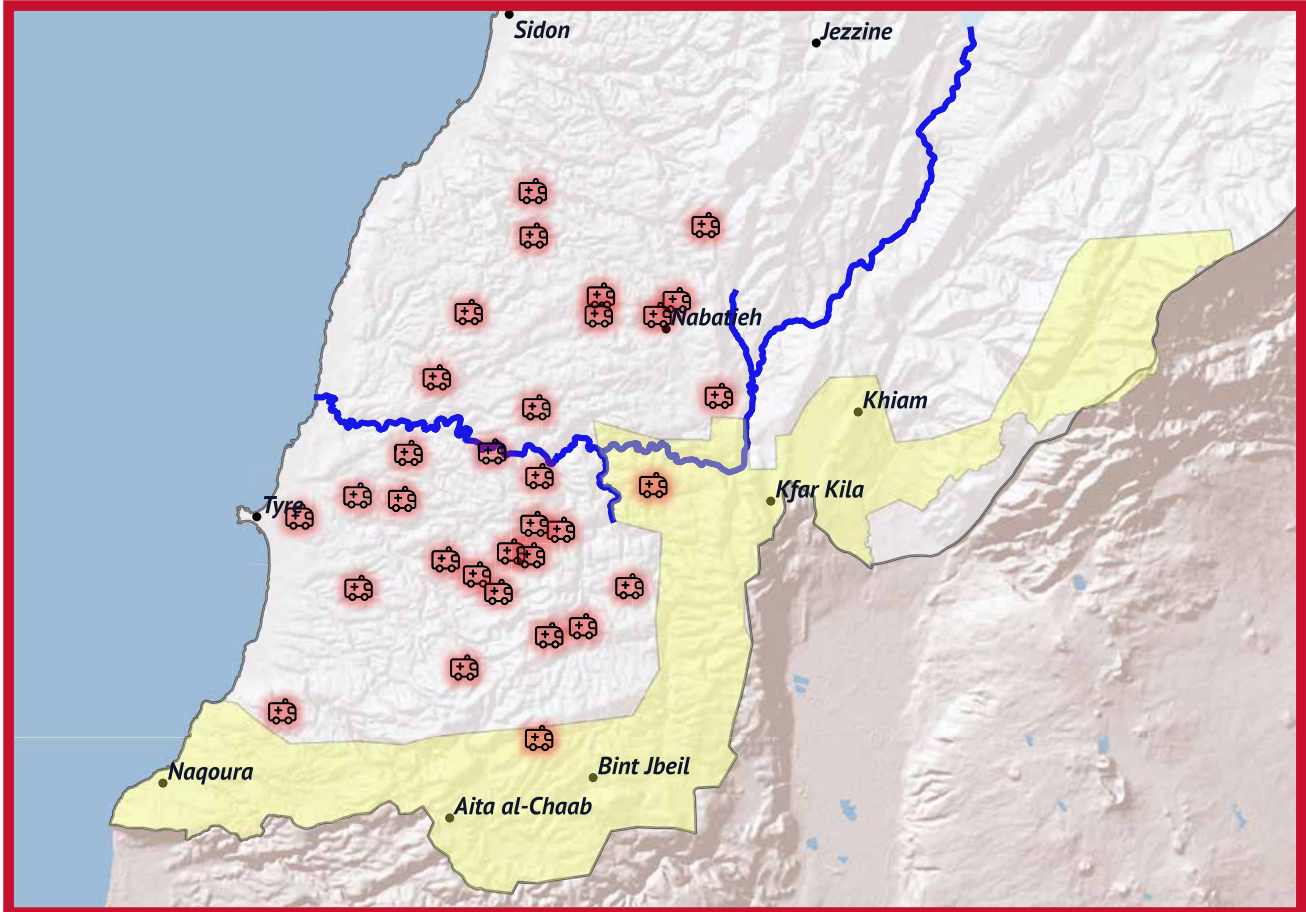
**Figure 3.** Daily rate of Israeli airstrikes between the Yellow Line and the Zahrani River (March 2–June 2, 2026).  
Source: LCAT analysis

<sup>20</sup> According to LCAT analysis, between April 17 and May 24, 2026, Israel conducted 1,465 airstrikes from the “Yellow Line” to the Zahrani river, an area encompassed in its blanket evacuation orders.

<sup>21</sup> According to LCAT analysis, between March 2 and April 16, 2026, Israel conducted 2,513 airstrikes, or an average of 54.6 a day, from the “Yellow Line” to the Zahrani river, an area encompassed in its blanket evacuation orders. From May 25 through June 2, 2026, Israel conducted 825 strikes in this area.



- Wartime dynamics have persisted in southern Lebanon, including widespread property damage, localized electricity cuts, temporary disruption of roadways, targeting of paramedics, and damage to health care centers. At least four hospitals have sustained damage.<sup>22</sup>



**Figure 4.** Map of Israeli strikes against emergency medical technician crews.  
Source: LCAT analysis

- An average of 33 people a day have been killed since the start of Israel's latest escalation on May 25,<sup>23</sup> a third less than the fatality rate during the March-April 2026 War.<sup>24</sup> Over 1,157 people have been killed since the start of the nominal truce.<sup>25</sup>
- Israel has also renewed its ground offensive beyond the Yellow Line, with heavy fighting north of the Litani River in the vicinity of Nabatieh. Amid intense shelling, the governorate capital, a key city in southern Lebanon, is now reportedly fully depopulated.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> LCAT logs all Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire across Lebanon reported by the National News Agency, *L'Orient Today*, and *Al-Mayadeen*, noting instances of damage to infrastructure.

<sup>23</sup> Lebanon's Ministry of Public Health registered 301 conflict-related deaths between May 25 and June 2, 2026.

National News Agency, [الحصيلة الإجمالية للعدوان: 3468 شهيدا و 10577 جريحا](#) June 2, 2026;

National News Agency, [الحصيلة الإجمالية للعدوان: 3185 شهيدا و 9633 جريحا](#) May 25, 2026

<sup>24</sup> Lebanon's Ministry of Public Health registered 2,491 conflict-related deaths between March 2 and April 24, 2026. According to LCAT's cross-referencing of fatality data, most conflict-related deaths recorded by the Ministry of Public Health between April 17 and 24 likely occurred during the war, which lasted through April 16, indicating a lag either in data gathering or in the publication of that data.

National News Agency, [طوارئ الصحة عن الحصيلة الإجمالية للعدوان: 2491 شهيدا و 7719 جريحا](#) April 25, 2026

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> National News reporter Nada Homsia via X, [@NadaOfHomsj](#) June 1, 2026



- The dangerous situation for humanitarian operations was underscored in a May 19 statement by the Nabatieh Ambulance Association. The group announced the suspension of its services in the town – one of southern Lebanon’s main population centers – and urged residents to seek safety elsewhere.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Lebanon’s state-run Civil Defense emergency service on May 31 evacuated from Sour due to escalating shelling of the city.<sup>28</sup>
- Israel’s bombing campaign during the CoH has been expanded to the western Bekaa, where starting from May 6 it has conducted 49 strikes across eight municipalities.<sup>29</sup> On June 2, Israeli troops advanced toward the village of Blat, about 5 kilometers south of Bekaa governorate,<sup>30</sup> raising the possibility that ground fighting could extend to the area. If the conflict persists, Israel is likely to intensify strikes in the remote region, which was a focal point of bombing during the March-April 2026 War.
- In the Baalbek-Hermel governorate, Israel has conducted 19 strikes across 8 municipalities since the start of the CoH.<sup>31</sup> These strikes have largely been limited to rural outskirts of population centers, with the exception of a May 18 targeted assassination in Baalbek, the region’s largest town.<sup>32</sup> Israel has so far not issued an evacuation notice in the district, suggesting that Tel Aviv is subject to restrictions from conducting widescale bombing.
- Elsewhere in Lebanon, Israel’s campaign of targeted assassinations has hit vehicles on roadways in areas normally considered safe. These include a May 13 strike in the city of Saida and five attacks on the coastal highway in Saadiyat and Jiyeh, approximately 20 kilometers south of Beirut. Humanitarian actors should expect further attacks if current dynamics continue. Israel has conducted two targeted assassinations in Beirut’s southern suburbs since the start of the CoH, with further strikes likely dependent on US restrictions on targeting the densely populated area.

**Hezbollah has concentrated most of its strikes within Lebanese-territory occupied by Israeli troops. However, it has recently escalated its attacks in northern Israel, which Tel Aviv has used to justify expanding its military campaign in Lebanon.**

- Hezbollah has claimed responsibility for 722 attacks against Israel since the start of the CoH, 109 of which targeted northern Israel.<sup>33</sup> The overall pace of these attacks, including those in Israel, has increased alongside Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon.

<sup>27</sup> An-Nahar, «إسعاف النبطية» يعلّق أعماله داخل المناطق الخطرة ويدعو الأهالي إلى الإخلاء» May 19, 2026

<sup>28</sup> Lebanon Debate, «صور تحت النار... إخلاء مركز للدفاع المدني وغارات متلاحقة» May 31, 2026

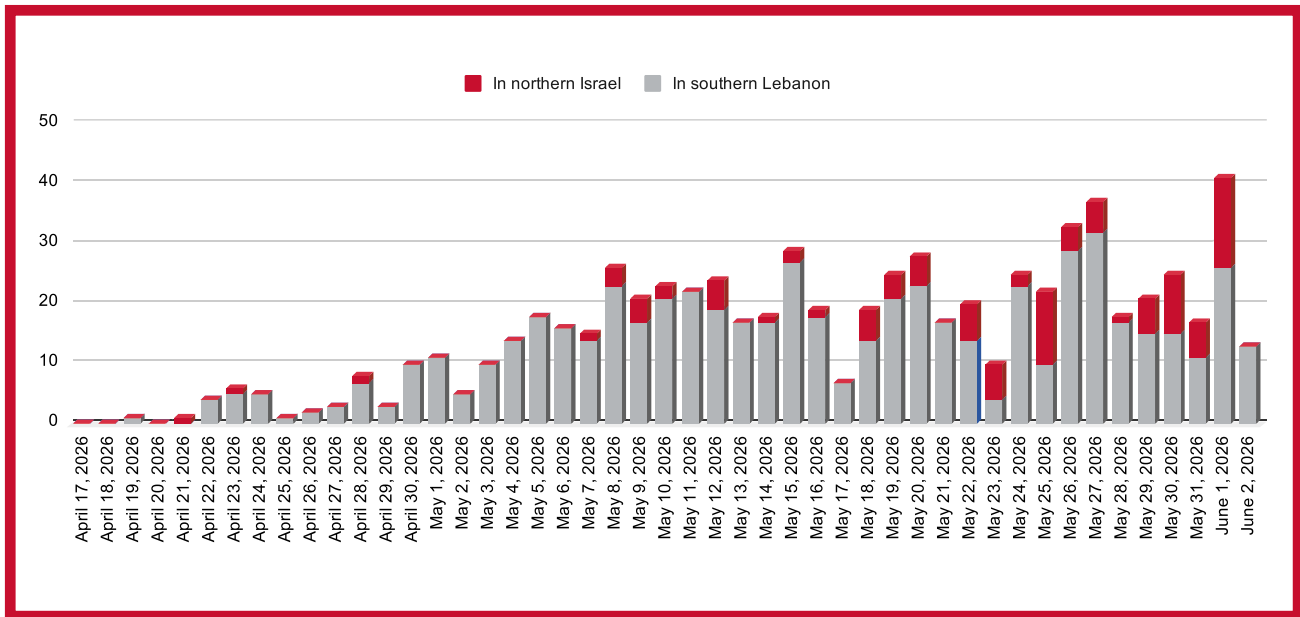
<sup>29</sup> LCAT analysis of Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire across Lebanon.

<sup>30</sup> National News Agency, «عمليات تمشيط مكثفة بالأسلحة الرشاشة ونسف وقصف مدفعي في دبين ومحيطها وتقدم القوات الإسرائيلية في اتجاه بلاط» June 2, 2026

<sup>31</sup> LCAT analysis of Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire across Lebanon.

<sup>32</sup> National News Agency, «شهيدان في استهداف شقة بصاروخ عند مدخل مدينة بعلبك الجنوبي» May 18, 2026

<sup>33</sup> LCAT logs all Hezbollah claims of responsibility for attacks against Israel, analyzing them for geographic location and type of weapons used.



**Figure 5.** Daily rate of Hezbollah attacks since the start of the April 17, 2026 CoH.  
Source: LCAT analysis of Hezbollah claims of responsibility of attacks.

- If Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon intensify, humanitarian actors should anticipate that Hezbollah will escalate attacks either by increasing frequency or by expanding geographic scope into Israel. If this comes to pass, Israel would likely escalate in retaliation.
- Hezbollah has escalated its attacks during Israel–Lebanon talks in Washington,<sup>34</sup> underscoring the group’s opposition to the diplomatic track. As such, while Beirut-Tel Aviv diplomacy might progress in the near term, it could also fuel tit-for-tat military escalation between Israel and Hezbollah.
- Since the start of Israel’s escalating bombardment on May 25, Hezbollah has conducted longer-range strikes on Safed, Tiberias, and Nahariya, which could also lead to Israeli escalations.

## Displacement

**Hezbollah has concentrated most of its strikes within Lebanese-territory occupied by Israeli troops. However, it has recently escalated its attacks in northern Israel, which Tel Aviv has used to justify expanding its military campaign in Lebanon.**

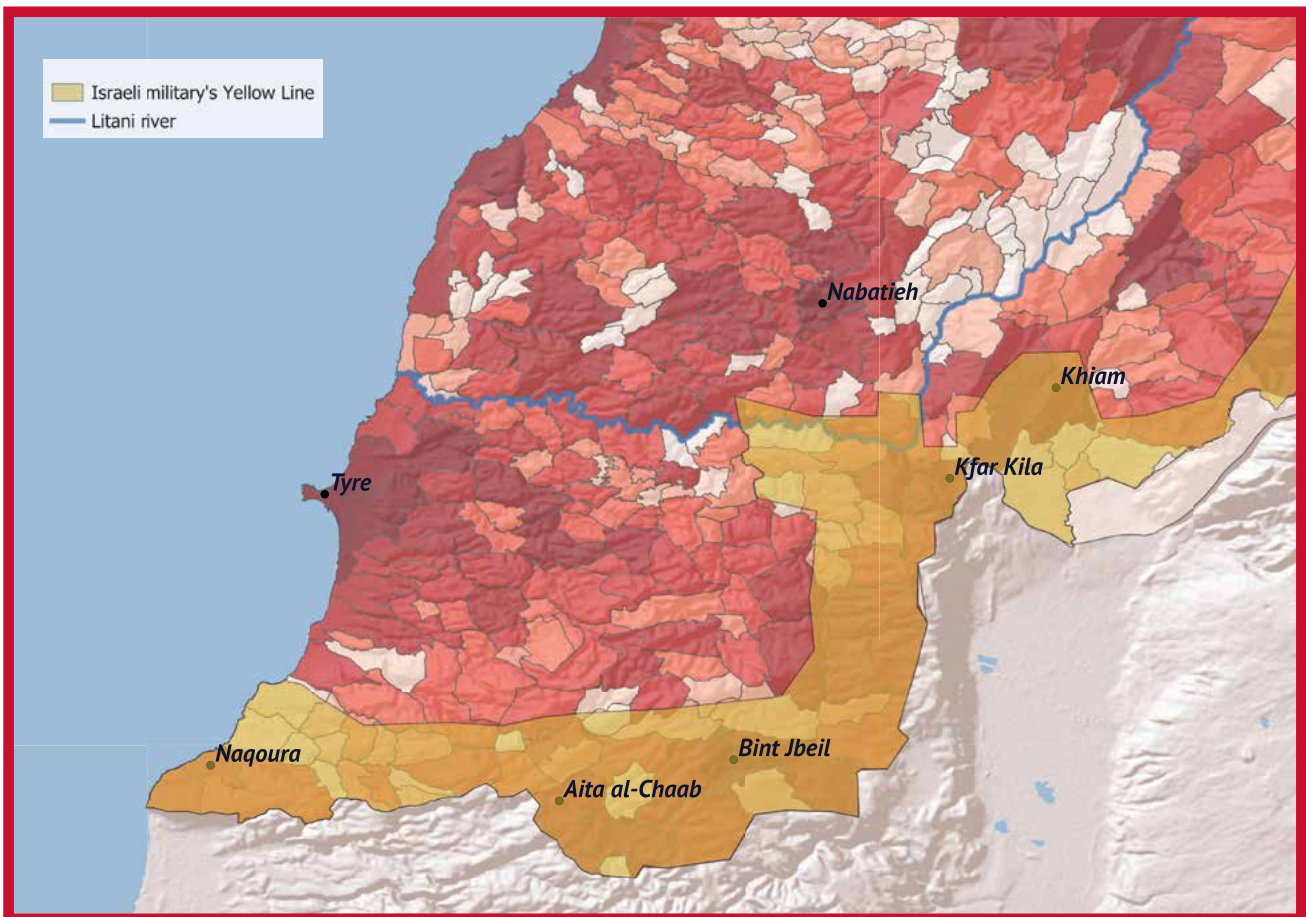
- Unlike in the wake of the November 27, 2024 CoH, escalating hostilities are preventing the return of residents. More than 1 million people remain displaced a month after the April 17 truce, with 127,714 IDPs in collective shelters.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> On April 23, 2026, when Israeli and Lebanese envoys met at the White House, Hezbollah fired a barrage of rockets toward Shtula, its first such attack since the start of the CoH. On May 15, when Israeli and Lebanese envoys met at the US State Department, Hezbollah conducted 29 attacks, the highest number to date since the start of the CoH.

<sup>35</sup> OCHA, [Lebanon: Flash Update #30 - Escalation of hostilities in Lebanon](#) May 28, 2026



- The number of IDPs in collective shelters has decreased by only 9.3% since the March-April 2026 War,<sup>36</sup> highlighting the continuing displacement crisis, especially among the most vulnerable.
- In southern Lebanon, **LCAT estimates that**, since the start of the CoH, **at least a half million people are unable to return** due to Israeli shelling, with the actual figure likely higher. Heavy property damage from recent conflicts, including the 2024 66-Day War, has been an added driver of continued displacement.
- Israel occupies around 570 square kilometers of Lebanese territory along the border – some 5.5% of the country – preventing the return of residents. According to an analysis of WorldPop Global Demographic Data, the population of this zone is approximately 122,758. **LCAT estimates that nearly all these residents, with the exception of those from Christian-populated villages, are unable to return, with an estimate of 108,800 displaced.**<sup>37</sup>



**Figure 6.** The Israeli military's Yellow Line laid over a population density map of southern Lebanon (darker shades of red indicate higher population levels).

Sources: LCAT analysis, [WorldPop](#)

<sup>36</sup> OCHA, [Lebanon: Flash Update #30 - Escalation of hostilities in Lebanon](#) May 28, 2026;

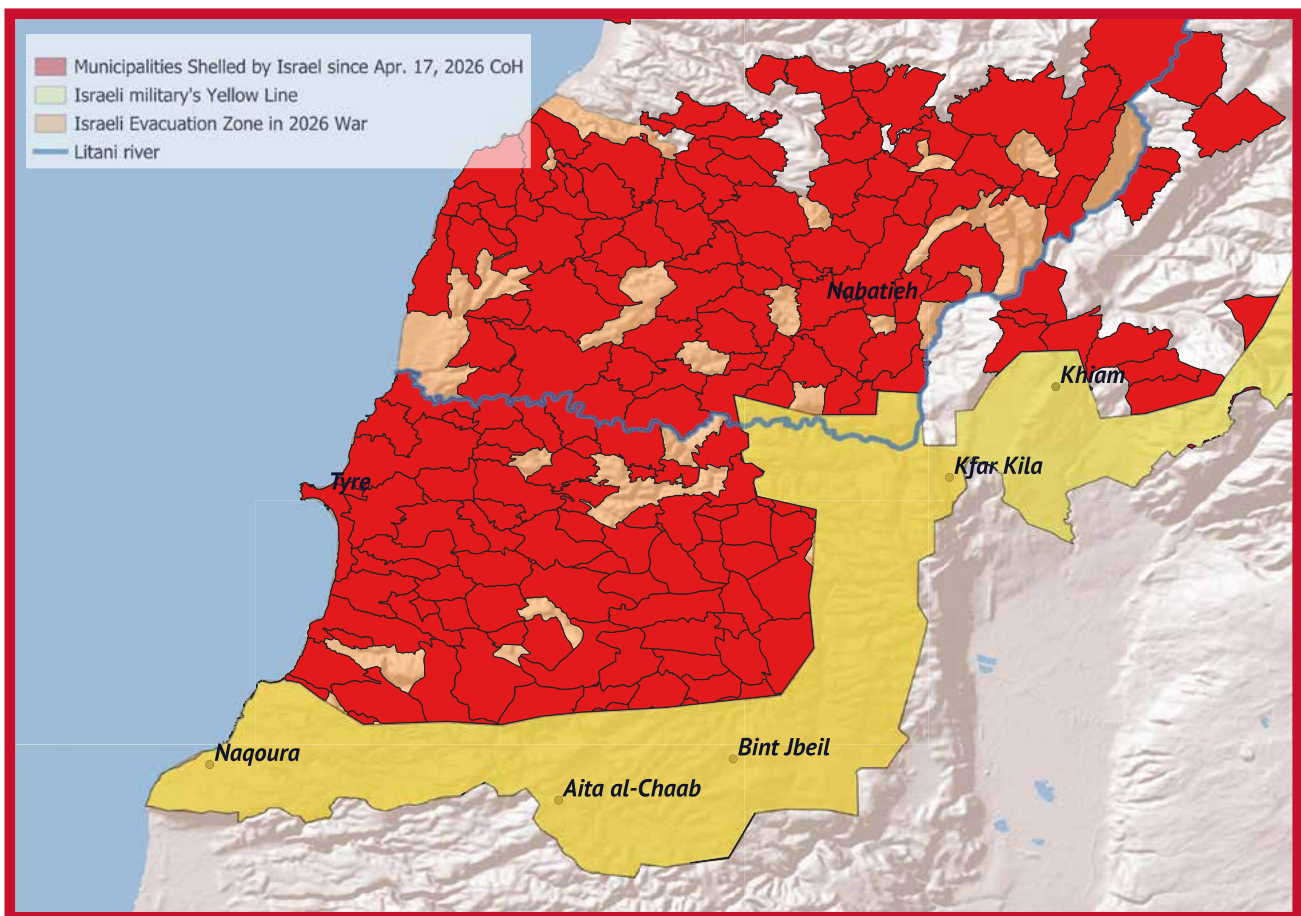
National News Agency, «التقرير اليومي لـ «وحدة ادارة مخاطر الكوارث» April 13, 2026

<sup>37</sup> LCAT cross-referenced geographic data on Israel's evacuation notices, airstrikes, and artillery shelling with WorldPop's global demographic data, which uses satellite imagery and geospatial analysis to estimate population distribution.

WorldPop, [Population Data](#)



- On May 27, the Israeli military issued a blanket evacuation order for southern Lebanon up to the Zahrani river,<sup>38</sup> covering a population of 596,110, according to an analysis of WorldPop Global Demographic Data. As this region includes towns that have not come under shelling since the start of Israel-Hezbollah hostilities in October 2023 and not all residents relocate after an evacuation notice, the amount displaced is likely lower.
- Since the start of the 2026 CoH, Israel has conducted airstrikes against 178 municipalities in southern Lebanon and the western Bekaa whose populations total 680,746. Assuming that 70% of these municipalities' residents have been displaced, **LCAT estimates at least 476,522 are unable to return due in part to Israel's shelling.**



**Figure 7.** Municipalities shelled by Israel in southern Lebanon (except within the Yellow Line) since the start of the 2026 CoH.  
Source: LCAT analysis, [WorldPop](#).

- Internal displacement across Lebanon is intensifying humanitarian pressures on overstretched sectors like shelter, food security, protection, health, and WASH, amid chronic humanitarian underfunding. Education is severely disrupted, with 44,800 IDP children in 623 collective shelters across 443 schools. Protection risks are rising from overcrowded shelters, poor WASH, and gender-based violence vulnerabilities, especially for women, girls, and migrants.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee, [@AvichayAdraee](#) May 27, 2026

<sup>39</sup> OCHA, [Lebanon: Flash Update #22 - Escalation of hostilities in Lebanon \(as of 30 April 2026\)](#) May 2, 2026



## Political and Social Tensions

**Lebanon's direct talks with Israel are heightening political tensions, but a dramatic escalation remains unlikely in the near term.**

- Hezbollah has repeatedly criticized Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam's government for backing direct talks with Israel and for accepting the April 17 truce, which it views as granting Israel free rein to strike Lebanon.<sup>40</sup> Hezbollah has issued combative statements warning Lebanese authorities against pursuing the diplomatic track.
- On April 27, Hezbollah Secretary-General Naim Qassem said the Lebanese government's backing of talks with Tel Aviv and the US-facilitated truce was tantamount to collaboration with Israel, and called on it to retract its decisions.<sup>41</sup> On May 16, Hezbollah warned that direct diplomacy with Israel would have "serious repercussions" on Lebanon's stability.<sup>42</sup> Naim Qassem on May 24 warned that the party's supporters could take to the streets to overthrow the government.<sup>43</sup> Hezbollah has yet to take concrete escalatory steps against the government such as a prolonged boycotting of cabinet sessions or ordering affiliated ministers to resign.
- Aoun and Salam have reaffirmed their support for talks with Israel and the US-led ceasefire process and rejected Hezbollah's criticisms.<sup>44</sup> Neither Aoun nor the Lebanese government are likely to reverse course on their policies, especially amid heavy international pressure to engage in diplomacy with Israel.
- On April 10 and 11, Hezbollah supporters staged limited protests against the start of Lebanon-Israel talks that led to minor tensions in Beirut.<sup>45</sup> Hezbollah and its ally the Amal Movement, the two main Shia Muslim political parties in the country, called off the protests to "protect civil peace."<sup>46</sup>
- Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, the leader of the Amal Movement, has repeatedly affirmed his support for avoiding civil strife in Lebanon<sup>47</sup> and is unlikely to back a move that threatens internal conflict.

<sup>40</sup> National News Agency, [رعد: على السلطة أن تخل من شعبها وتنسحب مما سمي مفاوضات مباشرة مع العدو الصهيوني](#) April 24, 2026;

National News Agency, [نعيم قاسم: لم تهزمتنا إسرائيل ومنفتحون لأقصى تعاون مع السلطة في لبنان بصفحة جديدة مبنية على تحقيق سيادة وطننا](#) April 18, 2026

<sup>41</sup> National News Agency, [قاسم: المفاوضات المباشرة ومخارجاتها لا تعيننا وسند على العدوان الإسرائيلي ونواجهه](#) April 27, 2026

<sup>42</sup> National News Agency, ["ندعو السلطة اللبنانية الى وقف التنازل المجاني والتفريط بالحقوق وبكرامة الوطن عجزب الله"](#) May 16, 2026

<sup>43</sup> National News Agency, [قاسم للحكومة: اتركوا التفاوض المباشر وعودوا الى التفاهم الوطني ونستطيع أن نعتمد على إجراءات الجيش](#) May 24, 2026

<sup>44</sup> National News Agency, [سلام في حفل تكريم فيصل سنو: أي إنقاذ فعلي للبنان اليوم يستحيل أن يتم من دون العودة الواضحة إلى منطق الدولة](#) May 15, 2026

<sup>45</sup> National News Agency, [سلام: لبنان يريد انسحابا كاملا للقوات الإسرائيلية ونشدد على الالتزام ببنود وقف الأعمال العدائية الصادر في 2024](#) April 21, 2026;

<sup>46</sup> National News Agency, [الرئيس عون: امام وفد من حاصبيا ومرجعيون والعرقوب: ابلغنا الجانب الاميركي ان وقف إطلاق النار خطوة أولى لأي مفاوضات لاحقة وأي كلام آخر غير معين به](#) April 27, 2026

<sup>47</sup> L'Orient Today, [Hezbollah supporters protest in Beirut against negotiations with Israel](#) April 10, 2026;

Al-Jadeed, [العلم الأزرق الى جانب الأصفر والمستقبل يستنكر](#) April 11, 2026

<sup>48</sup> National News Agency, [قيادة «أمل» و«حزب الله» في بيروت: ندعو أهلنا الشرفاء الى عدم التظاهر في هذه المرحلة الدقيقة](#) April 11, 2026

<sup>49</sup> L'Orient Today, [Berri: National unity and civil peace are a red line that must not be crossed](#) April 17, 2026



## The issue of Hezbollah's disarmament could exacerbate political tensions in the near term.

- On March 2, following Hezbollah rocket fire into Israel, Lebanon's government announced a ban on all of the party's security and military activities, and tasked the LAF and security agencies with preventing Hezbollah from conducting military operations against Israel. Shortly after, LAF Commander in Chief Rodolphe Haykal implicitly rejected direct action against Hezbollah.<sup>48</sup>
- With Lebanon and Israel now engaged in direct talks and a truce mediated by the US, Washington is once again pressing for the LAF – which it heavily funds – to take quick action on disarmament.<sup>49</sup> Lebanese and Israeli military officials met on May 29 in Washington to discuss security issues,<sup>50</sup> with no substantive outcome to the sit-down.
- The LAF should be expected to continue its policy of avoiding potential civil strife by directly confronting Hezbollah over its arms, instead favoring containment measures such as setting up checkpoints to restrict Hezbollah's access to and movement of arms.<sup>51</sup> However, the US and Israel will likely push for direct action.
- On April 27, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington was working on a plan to select units of the LAF for training and equipping "to go after elements of Hezbollah and dismantle them so Israel doesn't have to do it."<sup>52</sup> The US on May 21 sanctioned a senior LAF officer for allegedly sharing intelligence with Hezbollah and obstructing the group's disarmament,<sup>53</sup> further suggesting Washington could pursue a policy of vetting select Lebanese army officials and units for proposed efforts to confiscate non-state arms.
- While disarming Hezbollah is a stated objective of the government, opponents of a confrontational approach caution that pursuing this goal without a broader political settlement could create internal divisions within the LAF and risk destabilizing an already fragile context.
- Moreover, the US reportedly had stopped delivering aid to the LAF since the start of the latest war between Israel and Hezbollah and March 2.<sup>54</sup> The US might make future aid contingent on the LAF taking action against Hezbollah, which could lead to funding drawdowns for the cash-strapped Lebanese military.<sup>55</sup>
- A fracturing of the LAF or a degradation of its capacities would deprive the state of its primary security institution, compounding political and social tensions while likely accelerating already nascent efforts at localized self-security.

<sup>48</sup> Lebanese Armed Forces, [اجتماع قائد الجيش مع أركان القيادة وقادة الوحدات والأفواج العملائية](#) March 7, 2026

<sup>49</sup> US House Armed Services Committee, [Statement by Honorable Daniel Zimmerman, Assistant Secretary of War for International Security Affairs](#) May 19, 2026

<sup>50</sup> US Department of War, [Readout of Under Secretary of War for Policy Elbridge Colby's Meeting With Israeli and Lebanese Military Delegations](#) May 29, 2026

<sup>51</sup> Lebanese Armed Forces, [بيان من قيادة الجيش – مديرية التوجيه](#) March 4, 2026

<sup>52</sup> US Department of State, [Secretary of State Marco Rubio With Trey Yingst of Fox News Channel](#) April 27, 2026

<sup>53</sup> US Department of the Treasury, [Treasury Targets Hizballah-Aligned Officials Obstructing Peace and Disarmament](#) May 21, 2026

<sup>54</sup> The National, [US tightens grip on Lebanese army aid as delays bite in Beirut](#) April 24, 2026

<sup>55</sup> *ibid*



Source: Asharq Al-Awsat

## Political Updates:

2026  
MAY

Tensions erupt in Beirut's southern suburbs when individuals fire into the air during a funeral procession, prompting the LAF to deploy.<sup>56</sup> Soldiers arrest six suspects and seize weapons and ammunition from one of the suspects' homes.<sup>57</sup>



3



Prime Minister Nawaf Salam heads a delegation visiting Damascus for talks with Syrian officials on border policy, Syrian detainees in Lebanese prisons, and cooperation in the economic, transport, energy, and security sectors.

9

The United Arab Emirates adds 16 Lebanese individuals and 5 Lebanon-based firms and financial institutions – including Al-Qard al-Hassan – to its terrorism list based on alleged links to Hezbollah.<sup>58</sup>



12



Ahmad Rami al-Haji, appointed on April 30 as the Public Prosecutor at the Court of Cassation, is sworn into office.<sup>59</sup>

14

Public Prosecutor al-Haji refers individuals accused of publishing offensive content targeting Maronite Patriarch Bechara al-Rahi and inciting sectarian tensions to the Public Prosecutor's Office of Appeal in Beirut, but refrains from recommending charges against Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International over its controversial "Angry Birds"-inspired video.<sup>60</sup>



15

<sup>56</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, [لبنان: إطلاق نار خلال تشييع في الضاحية... و«حزب الله» يمنع توقيف المسلحين](#) May 3, 2026;

Annahar, [توتر في الضاحية الجنوبية لبيروت... منع الجيش من توقيف مطلوبين وإطلاق نار يسفر عن إصابات](#) May 3, 2026

<sup>57</sup> L'Orient Today, [Facing Hezbollah, Lebanese Army flexes its muscles a notch higher](#) May 6, 2026;

Annahar, [عمليات دهم للجيش اللبناني في الضاحية الجنوبية لبيروت... توقيف شخص وضبط أسلحة](#) May 3, 2026

<sup>58</sup> L'Orient Today, [UAE puts 16 individuals, 5 entities on terrorism list over Hezbollah ties](#) May 12, 2026

<sup>59</sup> L'Orient Today, [Ahmad Rami al-Haji sworn in before President Aoun](#) May 14, 2026;

L'Orient Today, [Lebanon's newly appointed top prosecutor pledges independence from political parties](#) May 5, 2026

<sup>60</sup> National News Agency, [القاضي الحاج أمر بملاحقة المسيئين الى البطريك الرابعي](#) May 15, 2026;



## Lebanese-Iranian Relations

On April 21, the Lebanese foreign minister sent identical letters to the UN secretary-general and the president of the UN Security Council accusing Iran of interfering in Lebanon's sovereign affairs and of drawing the country into the regional conflict. The letters address:

- The purported violation of Lebanese constitutional norms by Iranian state institutions, including the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, which has conducted joint operations with Hezbollah launched from Lebanese territory;
- The contested diplomatic status of four Iranian personnel killed in the March 8 Israeli strike on the Ramada Hotel in Beirut's Rouche district who had not been officially registered with the Foreign Ministry – as required under the Vienna Convention;
- A second purported breach of the Vienna Convention through the conduct of designated Ambassador Mohammad Reza Shibani, whose public statements Beirut deemed unacceptable interference in its sovereign affairs and who had defied a formal order to leave the country.<sup>61</sup>

Lebanese reporting on these letters on May 13 sparked a range of reactions. The decision to submit them was widely read as part of the current government's broader effort to reassert sovereignty over its foreign policy. The Foreign Ministry nonetheless moved to downplay their significance, characterizing them as a standard diplomatic reply to prior Iranian correspondence. Rather than a formal complaint, ministry sources argued that the Foreign Ministry had used the opportunity to state its grievances on the record. Many observers attributed the clarification to political pressure, with sources suggesting that both the presidency and prime minister's office were wary of further straining relations with Tehran and potentially triggering domestic unrest.<sup>62</sup>

## Lebanese-Syrian Relations

On May 9, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam led a ministerial delegation to Damascus, where he held talks with Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa while other Lebanese ministers met with senior Syrian officials. The two sides discussed border security, Syrian detainees in Lebanese prisons, ongoing negotiations between Lebanon and Israel, and bilateral cooperation on trade, energy, and telecommunications.<sup>63</sup>

Beirut and Damascus agreed to form a Lebanese-Syrian Supreme Business Council to advance economic and trade relations.<sup>64</sup> Following an initial transfer of 133 Syrian prisoners to Damascus, Salam and al-Sharaa also agreed to expedite a second transfer involving 100 additional prisoners, which had originally been expected before Eid al-Adha.<sup>65</sup> The fate of non-convicted Syrian detainees remains unresolved and contingent on the passage of the General Amnesty Law in Lebanon.<sup>66</sup> Four days after the visit, on May 13, Syria's chargé d'affaires in Beirut met separately with President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam to follow up on issues raised in Damascus.<sup>67</sup>

The visit took place amid related bilateral developments. The Al-Bqai'a border crossing – fully closed since an Israeli military strike in 2024 – reopened to pedestrians on May 4 on a limited basis, with plans for a full reopening expected in the coming months.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Al-Araby al-Jadeed, [تفاصيل شكوى لبنانية إلى الأمم المتحدة ضد إيران](#) May 13, 2026

<sup>62</sup> L'Orient Today, ['Complaint' against Iran: Why the Foreign Ministry had to soften its stance](#) May 15, 2026

<sup>63</sup> Al Jazeera, [نواف سلام في دمشق... ملفات شائكة على طاولة البحث](#) May 9, 2026

<sup>64</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, [تشكيل «المجلس الأعلى للأعمال اللبناني - السوري» لتنشيط العلاقات الاقتصادية](#) May 13, 2026

<sup>65</sup> Syria TV, [خاص | تأجيل نقل دفعة من السجناء السوريين في لبنان إلى ما بعد عيد الأضحى](#) May 26, 2026

<sup>66</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, [لبنان يسلم دفعة ثانية من المحكومين السوريين قبل «الأضحى»](#) May 11, 2026

<sup>67</sup> L'Orient Today, [After Salam's visit to Syria, Syrian chargé d'affaires received in Baabda and Grand Serail](#) May 13, 2026

<sup>68</sup> Annahar, [بالصور- إعادة افتتاح معبر حدودي بين لبنان وسوريا](#) May 4, 2026



On May 18, as part of a broader plan to integrate northern Lebanon into regional logistics networks, the Minister of Public Works signed a tender to “modernize” and refurbish the Tripoli–Al-Aboudiya railway line, a 35-kilometer stretch of the historic Tripoli–Homs route suspended since 1975. The Syrian side has given preliminary approval for the cross-border rail link, and a feasibility study is slated to be completed within 18 months.<sup>69</sup>

These developments, among others, mark a shift in Lebanese-Syrian relations. The transfer of Syrian inmates in Lebanese prisons to their home country and bilateral engagement on border management and electricity interconnection indicate that Beirut and Damascus are prioritizing pragmatic cooperation, a move that could facilitate progress on higher-level issues. In addition, Beirut and Damascus are reviewing several Assad-era bilateral agreements, chief among them the 1991 Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination Agreement.<sup>70</sup> To this end, the two countries have agreed to suspend the Higher Lebanese-Syrian Council and launch joint ministerial and technical committees to review, amend, and in some cases replace legacy agreements.<sup>71</sup>

### Ad Hoc IDP Shelter Policy in Beirut and its Ramifications

Efforts to relocate more than a thousand IDPs sheltering in tents along Beirut’s waterfront have become mired in uncertainty over governance, security issues, and objections from local businesses and property owners – an illustration of the challenges facing both displaced communities and officials across the country. On May 9, the Ministry of Social Affairs issued a call for the IDPs to move to the Camille Chamoun Sports City Stadium. Most IDPs refused, citing unfavorable exit and entry restrictions, the lack of privacy at formal shelters,<sup>72</sup> and the risk that the stadium could be targeted by Israeli forces. In response to the IDPs’ refusal, on May 18, Beirut Governor Marwan Abboud – under the direction of Prime Minister Nawaf Salam – ordered that the temporary encampment be moved to land owned by the Beirut Municipality, where IDPs were provided with tents and security measures.<sup>73</sup> The order was contingent on the fact that permanent structures would not be erected – a condition unlikely to quell opposition.

Officially, the Ministry of Social Affairs’ May 9 call was prompted by concern over the IDP’s security and wellbeing.<sup>74</sup> The relocation initiative, however, aligned with concerns raised by local business and property owners that the improvised shelter zone could become a long-term fixture and would have a negative effect on business activity in an area popular with tourists and expatriates.<sup>75</sup>

For the time being, the waterfront encampment remains in place, with no clear, comprehensive plan on its future. Similar disputes are likely to arise elsewhere in the country, as over 1 million people remain displaced, with only some 128,000 temporarily residing in shelters.<sup>76</sup> As long as it remains unclear how long Israeli forces will occupy southern Lebanon – and given Tel Aviv’s June 1 threat to heavily bomb Beirut’s southern suburbs, which triggered a mass exodus – IDP management policy is likely to remain ad hoc.

<sup>69</sup> Annahar, [نقض الغيار عن سكة طرابلس-العبودية: هل جان وقت التنفيذ؟](#) May 18, 2026

<sup>70</sup> Annahar, [أيّ أولويات فرضتها زيارة سلام لسوريا في الأمن والاقتصاد؟](#) May 16, 2026;

Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, [اتفاقيات التعاون اللبنانية - السورية رهن الإلغاء أو التعديل](#), December 15, 2024

<sup>71</sup> Annahar, [أيّ أولويات فرضتها زيارة سلام لسوريا في الأمن والاقتصاد؟](#) May 16, 2026;

Asharq al-Awsat, [تشكيل «المجلس الأعلى للأعمال اللبناني- السوري» لتنشيط العلاقات الاقتصادية](#), May 13, 2026

<sup>72</sup> Annahar, [وزارة الشؤون تحاول إخلاء واجهة بيروت البحرية... ماذا يخشى النازحون في المدينة الرياضية؟](#) May 12, 2026

<sup>73</sup> Annahar, [تجهيز خيم جديدة للنازحين في واجهة بيروت البحرية | النهار](#), May 18, 2026;

National News Agency, [وزير الداخلية تفقد واجهة بيروت البحرية وتابع إزالة الخيم: نتمنى انتهاء الأزمة قريبا](#), May 18, 2026

<sup>74</sup> Minister of Social Affairs [Haneen Sayed via X](#), May 9, 2026

<sup>75</sup> Al-Akhbar, [نازحو «البيال»: لن نغادر إلا إلى قرانا](#), May 8, 2026;

Annahar, [وزارة الشؤون تحاول إخلاء واجهة بيروت البحرية... ماذا يخشى النازحون في المدينة الرياضية؟](#) May 12, 2026;

Annahar, [تجهيز خيم جديدة للنازحين في واجهة بيروت البحرية | النهار](#), May 18, 2026

<sup>76</sup> Beirut alone hosts around 100,000 IDPs while North Lebanon’s 61 shelter centers host only about 5,000;

Asharq al-Awsat, [تنظيم النازحين في وسط بيروت ينتهي بمخيم على الواجهة البحرية](#), May 21, 2026



## Draft Amnesty Law Delayed

The advancement of a draft amnesty law in parliament stalled following objections by lawmakers and protests by several groups opposed to its provisions. With several notable exceptions,<sup>77</sup> the legislation would grant a full general amnesty for several categories of crimes committed prior to its enactment. In parallel, it would reduce sentences for crimes not covered by the amnesty: commuting death sentences to 25 years, life sentences to 20 years, and cutting other penalties by one-third. The legislation would also mandate the release of pre-trial detainees who have been held for nine years or more.<sup>78</sup>

In mid May, families and supporters of Islamist detainees – who have been calling for amnesty for several years – led demonstrations in Tripoli, Saida, Akkar, and the Kharoub region. They argued the draft offers no genuine amnesty, but rather reduces select sentences while excluding those convicted on terrorism charges. Many also contested the legitimacy of the convictions themselves, stating that the military court had operated under Iranian and Hezbollah influence, a view widely shared among the party's opponents.<sup>79</sup> Sunni MPs, figures affiliated with Dar al-Fatwa, and families of Islamist detainees are pushing for a broader amnesty to remedy what they see as unjust, decade-long detentions.<sup>80</sup>

Around the same time, the families of LAF personnel killed in action – most prominently those who died in the 2013 Saida clashes – rejected any measures benefiting individuals convicted of attacks against the army, arguing this would undermine justice and fail to acknowledge military sacrifices.<sup>81</sup> Separately, in Baalbek and the Bekaa, protests organized by local leaders and clans demanded an unconditional amnesty extending to fugitives and wanted individuals, with demonstrators arguing that decades of state neglect and underdevelopment had driven many residents to engage in illegal acts.<sup>82</sup>

Amid street action and political opposition – and following a meeting between President Joseph Aoun and lawmakers where the participants<sup>83</sup> objected to the amnesty's scope and implications – Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri postponed a parliamentary session scheduled for May 21 to discuss the draft law, citing what he termed sectarian and religious incitement and a failure to secure national consensus.<sup>84</sup> The draft law appears stuck between disparate interests, with no clear timetable for a new plenary session to debate and vote on the legislation. A senior judicial figure and several political actors describe the amnesty law as “inevitable sooner or later” given prison overcrowding, but expect that there will be amendments and caution that the legislation may not be acted upon in parliament for months.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Among the exceptions are nine categories of offenses, including the murder of civilians and military personnel, cases referred to the Judicial Council, repeated drug felonies, encroachment on public property, embezzlement and corruption offenses, and treason and espionage on behalf of Israel.

<sup>78</sup> An estimated 3,400–4,000 individuals could be released in total, significantly reducing overcrowding.

L'Orient Today, [Information and amnesty laws: Two key bills, zero progress](#) April 24, 2026;

Breaking News Lebanon, [الاكتظاظ يفضح الخلل القضائي: هل يَمَرّ قانون العفو العام؟](#) April 28, 2026;

<sup>79</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, [لبنان: تأجيل جلسة «العفو العام» تحت ضغط الشارع](#) May 20, 2026;

Al Jazeera, [قانون العفو العام في لبنان... الجزيرة نت تنقل روايتي الضحية والمتهم](#) May 24, 2026

<sup>80</sup> MTV Lebanon, [اجتماع نيابي وديني في طرابلس يناقش قانون العفو العام](#) May 30, 2026;

Al-Modon, [العفو العام في لبنان: عدالة غائبة أم صفقة طائفية جديدة؟](#) May 28, 2026

<sup>81</sup> Al Jazeera, [قانون العفو العام في لبنان... الجزيرة نت تنقل روايتي الضحية والمتهم](#) May 24, 2026

<sup>82</sup> El-Nashra, [اعتصام في بعلبك للمطالبة بعفو عام شامل ورفض العفو المجتزأ](#) May 20, 2026

<sup>83</sup> MTV Lebanon, [Jun 2026 قانون العفو العام - - 02 - Program](#) June 2, 2026;

LBCI, [معوض: قانون العفو العام ليس الطريق الأسلم لرفع الظلم](#) June 1, 2026

<sup>84</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, [لبنان: تأجيل جلسة «العفو العام» تحت ضغط الشارع](#) May 20, 2026

<sup>85</sup> Al-Modon, [العفو العام في لبنان: عدالة غائبة أم صفقة طائفية جديدة؟](#) May 28, 2026;

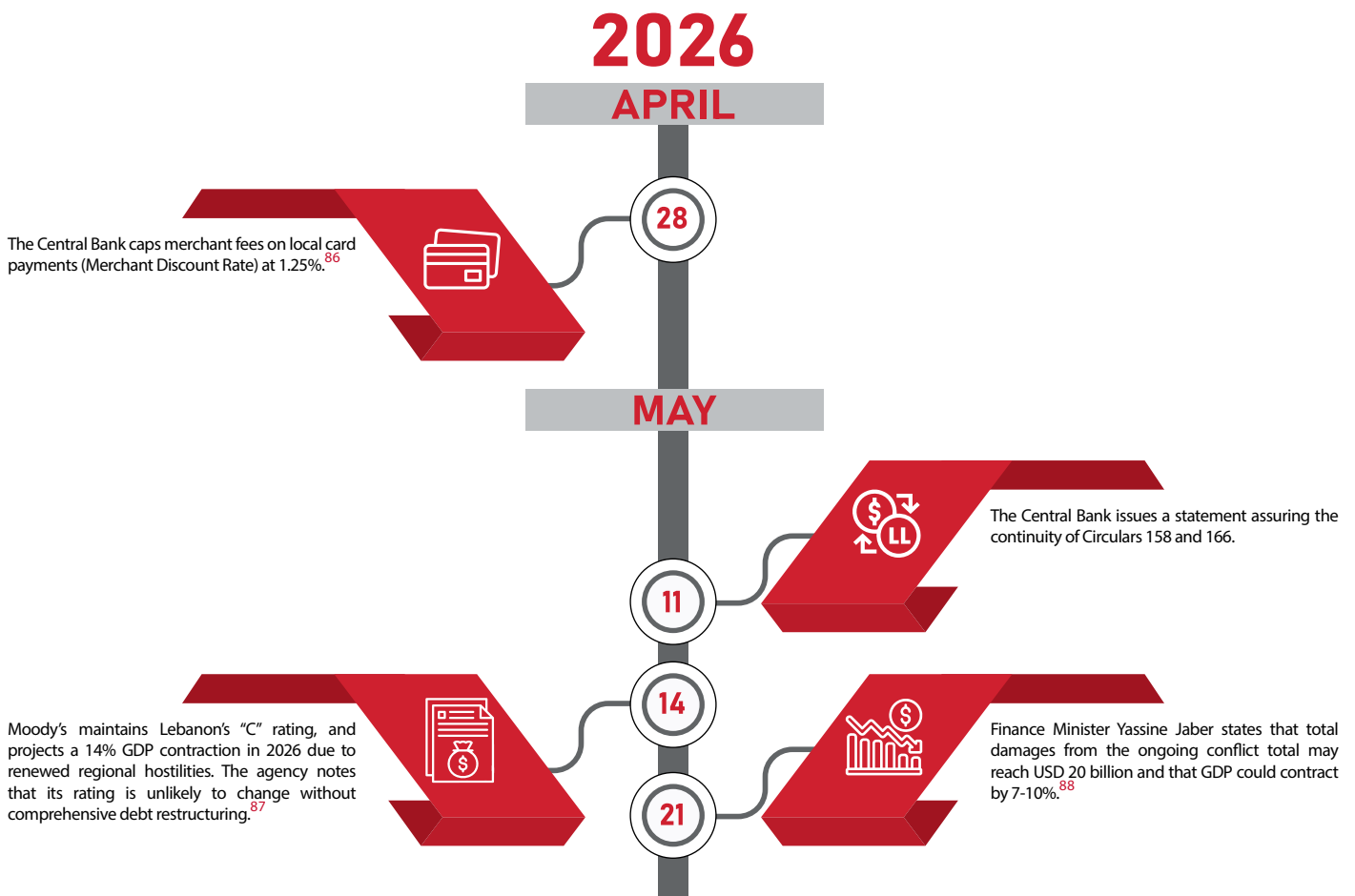
Yahoo News, [Analysis: Prison overcrowding, amnesty disputes... a ticking time bomb for Lebanon](#) May 29, 2026;

Lebanon 24, [القرار سيصدر... مصدر قضائي يكشف مصير العفو العام](#) May 29, 2026



Source: AP

## Economic Updates:



<sup>86</sup> L'Orient Today, [BDL caps merchant fees on local card payments at 1.25% in various sectors](#) May 4, 2026.

<sup>87</sup> Credit Libanais, [Moody's Completes Periodic Review of Lebanon's Ratings](#) May 19, 2026

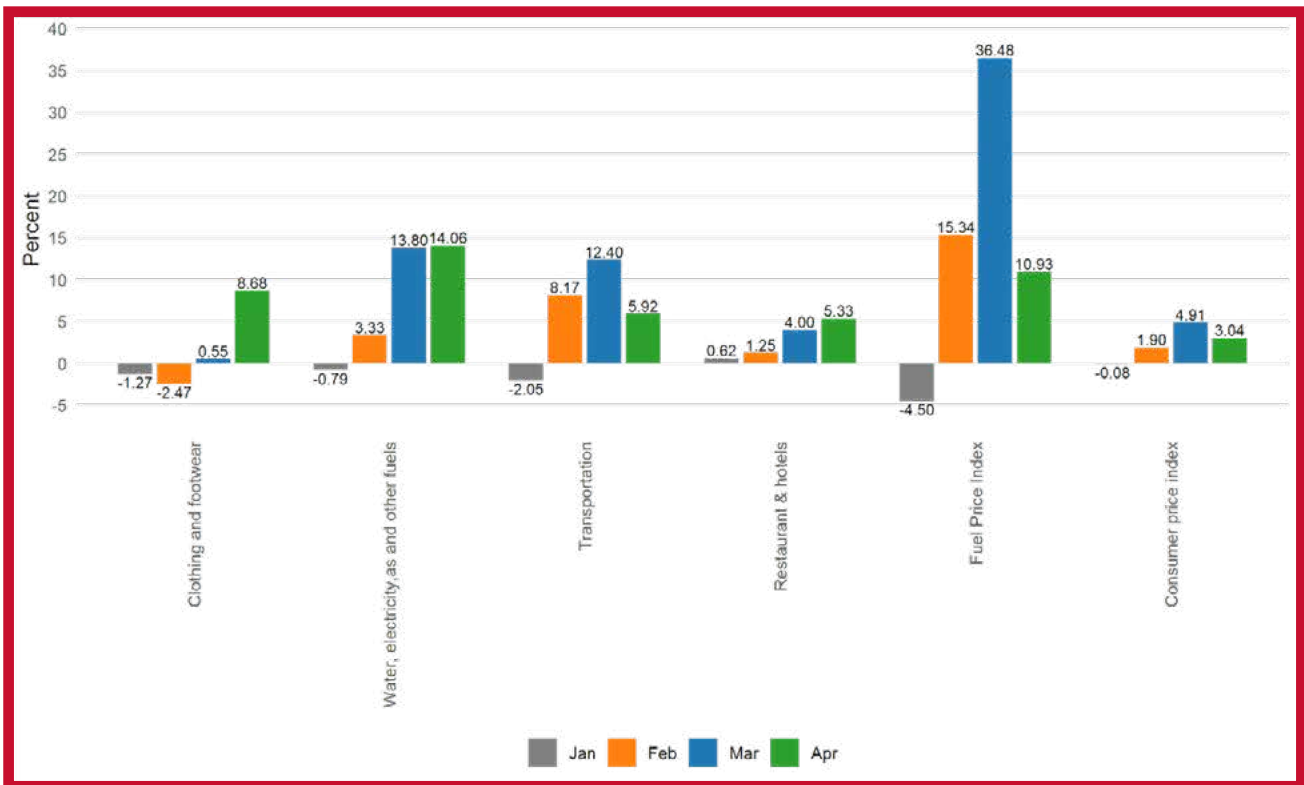
<sup>88</sup> National News Agency, [جاين: من المتوقع انكماش الاقتصاد اللبناني من 7 إلى 10% هذا العام بسبب الحرب](#) May 21, 2026; Business News, [Minister of Finance: "The Lebanese are tired of this"](#) May 22, 2026

<sup>89</sup> L'Orient Today, [BDL launches new forensic audit to fill gaps in first one](#) May 27, 2026



## Inflation

According to the Central Administration of Statistics, the CPI increased by 3.04% in April.<sup>90</sup> Following a negligible 0.8% dip in January, prices have risen for three consecutive months, driven by increasing fuel and shipping costs (see Figure 8). April saw shipping and supply chain costs impact previously stable items, including clothing, footwear, and accommodations. From January to May 2026, the cost of 20 liters of petrol increased by 85.3%, driven largely by a 33.8% jump between February and March. Over the same period, food prices rose by 7.9% nationally, with the sharpest increases in Nabatieh (9.9%), the North (8.9%), and Mount Lebanon (8.5%). Overall CPI climbed by 10.1% nationally, led by Bekaa (15.4%) and Nabatieh (14.3%), while the water, fuel, and electricity index rose by 34.2%, with especially steep increases in conflict-affected areas such as Bekaa (69.9%), Nabatieh (51.0%), and South (48.9%). This indicates that prices increased most in areas highly affected by shelling and/or displacement.

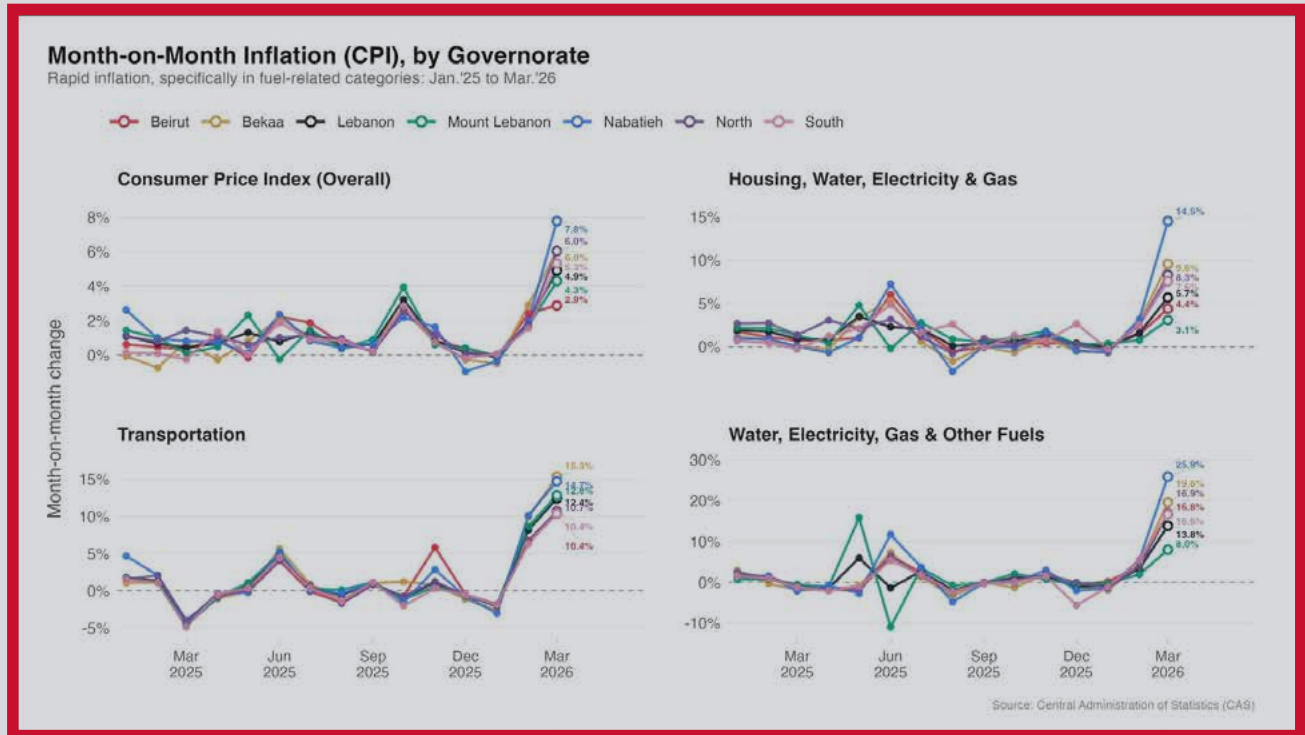


**Figure 8.** Fastest-rising CPI components, Fuel Price Index, and overall CPI (January–April 2026).  
Source: Central Administration of Statistics (CAS).

<sup>90</sup> Central Administration of Statistics, [Consumer Price Index](#)



## Affordability Analysis



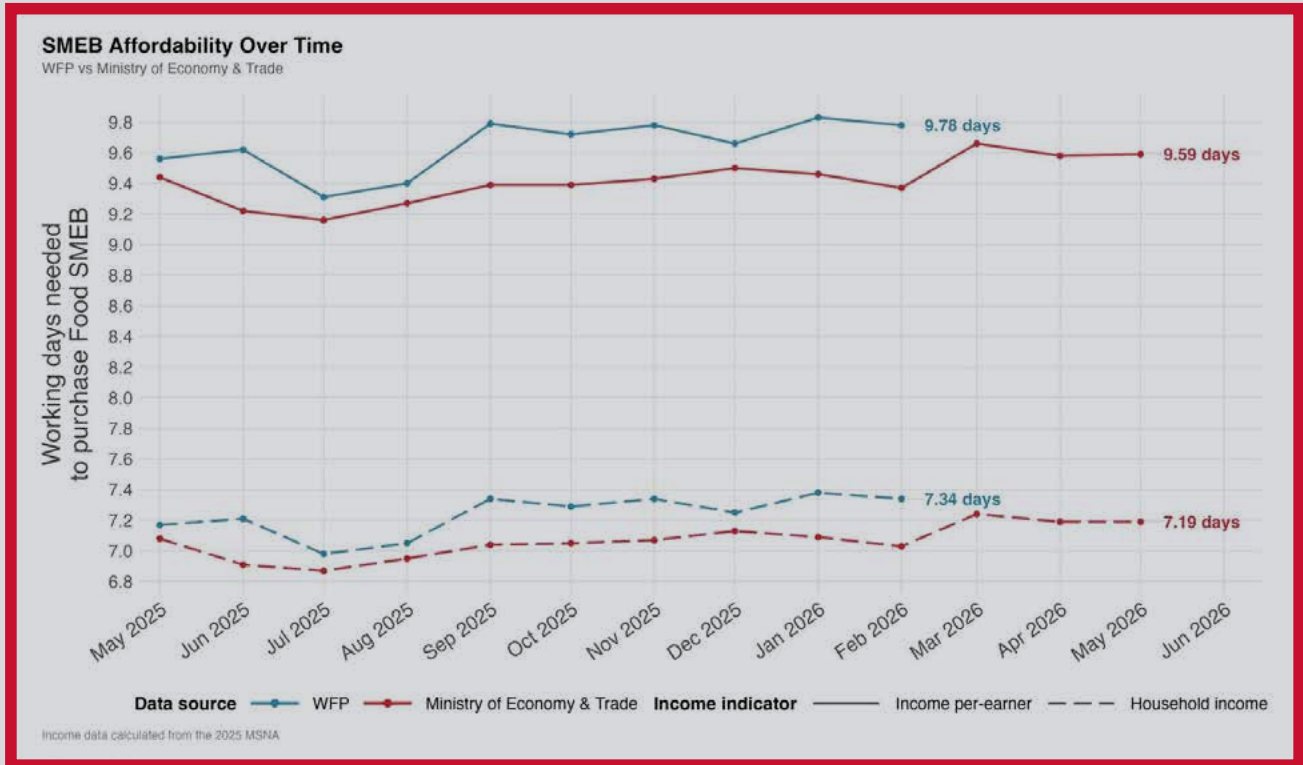
**Figure 9.** CPI components (March 2025–March 2026).  
Source: Central Administration of Statistics (CAS).

Monthly CPI inflation in Lebanon remained broadly stable throughout most of 2025, with month-on-month changes generally ranging between 1% and 2%. In early 2026, inflation increased sharply, reaching 2.9% in Beirut and 7.8% in Nabatieh by March, with intermediate increases across other governorates (see bottom-right chart). The rise was driven primarily by energy-related components, as prices for water, electricity, gas, and other fuels increased by around 14–26% in a single month, with the largest gains in Nabatieh and the Bekaa.

The timing coincided with a major external energy shock, including the closure of the Strait of Hormuz in early March following US–Israeli strikes on Iran and renewed fighting between Hezbollah and Israel. This contributed to a roughly 65% increase in Brent crude prices – the steepest monthly rise on record.<sup>91</sup> Given Lebanon’s heavy reliance on diesel generators, these increases were quickly passed on to household energy costs. The geographic pattern was uneven, with sharper increases in more rural and generator-dependent governorates such as Nabatieh, the Bekaa, and the North, while Beirut experienced comparatively smaller movements.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>91</sup> BBC News, [Oil prices plunge as Iran says Strait of Hormuz ‘open’ during ceasefire](#) April 17, 2026.

<sup>92</sup> UNHCR Lebanon Information Hub, Voices of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees, [Energy](#) 2021



**Figure 10.** The Food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (May 2025–June 2026).  
Sources: WFP, Ministry of Economy and Trade.

Between May 2025 and May 2026, the working days required to afford the Food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) remained broadly stable, at around 9.6–9.8 days based on income per earner and 7.0–7.3 days based on pooled household income across both data sources.<sup>93</sup> The WFP basket is consistently slightly higher than the Ministry of Economy & Trade Food SMEB by around 0.2–0.4 days, partly reflecting differences in basket composition.

Overall, a typical income earner would need to allocate a third of monthly income (USD 450) to afford the minimum food basket while pooled household income (USD 600) reduces this to about a quarter. The absence of a downward trend over the period suggests that wage growth broadly tracked food inflation, resulting in persistent, strained affordability rather than improvement.

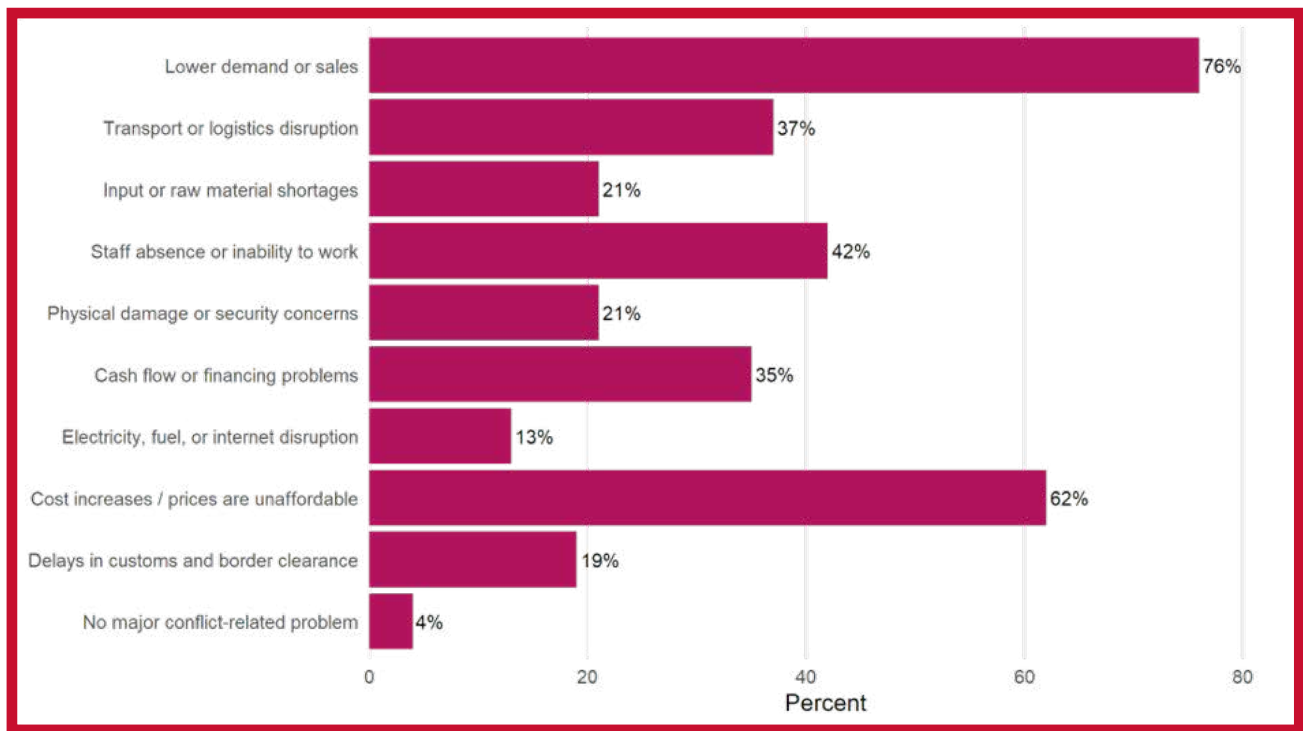
<sup>93</sup> Income estimates are derived from the 2025 REACH Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) using median income per earner and median pooled household income.  
REACH Lebanon, [REACH Lebanon Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment 2025 Cleaned Dataset](#) 2025



## Income and livelihoods

Conflict-ridden regions are experiencing a severe disruption to income-generating activities, with major implications for agriculture and local markets. LCAT estimates that this conflict has displaced over 95% of agricultural households in the South, alongside similarly high shares of working households in local markets and MSMEs, including Lebanese households and Syrian and Palestinian refugee households.<sup>94</sup> As a result, agricultural workers face the potential loss of a key income-generating season, with additional costs associated with prolonged displacement.<sup>95</sup>

Economic activity outside areas directly targeted by Israeli fire and/or subject to forced evacuation orders has also deteriorated. The Purchasing Managers' Index fell below 50 in March, April, and May, signaling worsening business expectations for the medium term in the formal sector. Survey data from March indicate that 77% of businesses in these regions reported declining revenues and 58% reported losses. Overall, businesses are reporting lower sales, rising operating costs, labor shortages, transportation disruptions, and cash flow pressures. Around a third expect recovery will take longer than six months.<sup>96</sup>



**Figure 11.** Conflict-related challenges faced by businesses.  
Sources: Leaders Club by Lebanon Opportunities, BlomInvest.

<sup>94</sup> According to a report published by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, approximately 95% of agricultural households were estimated to have been displaced during the 66-Day War. Taking into account that the Israeli ground invasion has extended further into Lebanese territory during the current conflict than in the 2024 conflict and that the scope of Israeli forced evacuation notices for the south is similar, LCAT assumes that the same number of agricultural households have been displaced.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, [Economic Recovery in Conflict-Affected Areas of Lebanon - 2026-2030](#) November 21, 2025

<sup>95</sup> Al-Modon, [When Livelihoods Are Displaced: War Crushes Lebanon's Workers](#) May 1, 2026; The New Arab, [أكثر من 56 ألف هكتار زراعي متأثر بالاعتداءات الإسرائيلية في لبنان](#) May 8, 2026

<sup>96</sup> BlomInvest, [Economic Burden of the 2026 Lebanon-Israel War on Lebanese Businesses](#) May 13, 2026; BlomInvest, [PMI Reports](#)



Rather than resorting to mass layoffs, employers in less-affected areas are adjusting working conditions and introducing pay cuts. These measures kept formal employment relatively stable but significantly weakened workers' income security and job quality. Rough estimates indicate that around one third of private companies reduced employee hours, a quarter of them froze hiring, and some 7% cut wages.<sup>97</sup>

## Monetary Policy

The ongoing war is depleting foreign exchange reserves and tightening liquidity management, with the Central Bank intervening aggressively to stabilize the lira amid growing pressures. Central Bank Governor Karim Souhaid confirmed that foreign currency reserves reached USD 11.43 billion, yet this figure masks continuous depletion of USD 642 million during the war period, as authorities struggle to maintain the LBP/USD 89,500 exchange rate through controlled lira supply and steady USD inflows.<sup>98</sup>

The Central Bank tightened the lira supply in May to conserve market value. Souhaid defended the Bank's monetary policy despite reserve declines, arguing that it protects the lira's purchasing power.<sup>99</sup> The institution faces critical liquidity challenges in managing dollar availability, with import-dependent sectors and essential services competing for scarcer foreign currency amid war-driven trade disruptions.<sup>100</sup>

To support depositors and maintain financial stability, the Central Bank issued statements reaffirming its commitment to Circulars No. 158 and No. 166, which facilitate USD withdrawals from trapped deposits in commercial banks. These exceed USD 2.5 billion annually, further draining reserves.<sup>101</sup> This policy creates a delicate balance between supporting depositors and preventing reserve exhaustion, as war-related financial pressures threaten to reignite the currency volatility seen during the crisis years of 2020-2023.

<sup>97</sup> ibid.

<sup>98</sup> The New Arab, [مصرف لبنان: موجوداتنا بالعملة الأجنبية ارتفعت إلى 11.43 مليار](#), May 28, 2026;

Al-Modon, [استنزاف الاحتياطات مستمر: 642 مليون دولار خلال الحرب](#), May 7, 2026;

L'Orient Today, [BDL tightens lira supplies as financial pressures mount](#), May 10, 2026

<sup>99</sup> L'Orient Today, [Decline in foreign exchange reserves: Souhaid defends monetary policy](#), May 26, 2026

<sup>100</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, [لبنان يواجه تحديات إدارة السيولة النقدية بالدولار](#), May 15, 2026

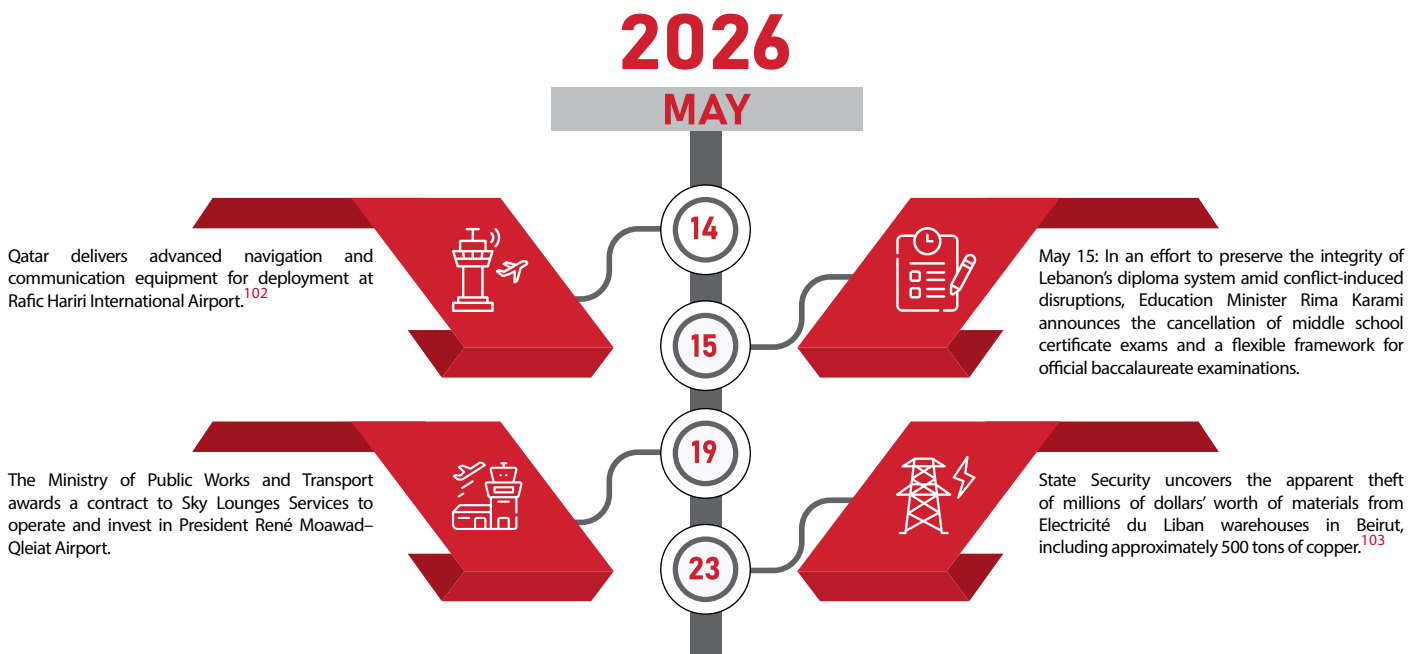
<sup>101</sup> NNA, [بيان لمصرف لبنان حول التعميمين الأساسيين رقم 158 ورقم 166 وأكد متابعة عمله لدفع المتوجبات دعماً للمودعين](#), May 22, 2026;

L'Orient Today, [Withdrawals under circulars No. 158 and No. 166 exceed \\$2.5 billion per year, according to central bank](#), May 26, 2026



Source: OLI

## Access to Services Updates:



<sup>102</sup> National News Agency, [هبة قطرية لتعزيز القدرات التشغيلية في المطار ورسامني يؤكد: بقي شريان لبنان رغم الحرب وكل ثلاثة أشهر ستفتتح مشروع جديد للسفير عيد](#), May 14, 2026

<sup>103</sup> Annahar, [بالفيديو- هدرّ بملايين الدولارات في مستودعات شركة كهرباء لبنان](#), May 23, 2026



## Renee Mouawad International Airport Redevelopment

On May 19, the government awarded a four-year contract to Sky Lounges Services to operate President René Moawad Airport in Qleiat, Akkar.<sup>104</sup> The company will oversee facility maintenance and repairs, as well as aircraft security. Under the contract, Sky Lounge Services will demolish the existing passenger terminal and construct a new fully equipped one to support commercial and civilian flights. The new terminal will cover 1,500 to 2,000 square meters and have a capacity of 150 passengers per hour.<sup>105</sup> Sky Lounge Services is expected to invest between USD 3-4 million in the facility in exchange for a share of annual revenues. Ten percent of annual revenues will be transferred to the state, with a guaranteed minimum annual payment of USD 1 million.<sup>106</sup> Work is expected to begin by August 2026, with partial civilian operations unlikely before mid-2027.<sup>107</sup>

According to proponents of the deal, the project will alleviate pressure on Beirut's Rafic Hariri International Airport and position Qleiat as an economic and logistical hub for Akkar and northern Lebanon. Located approximately 6 kilometers from the Lebanese-Syrian border and 25 kilometers from Tripoli, the airport is expected to strengthen northern Lebanon's trade and transport connectivity, with some estimates projecting it will create approximately 6,000 jobs during its initial phases.<sup>108</sup> When completed, the project will also facilitate infrastructure investment outside Beirut, in a region long marked by underdevelopment. Officials have attributed repeated delays in reopening the facility – despite feasibility assessments dating back to 2012 – to political interference, sectarian quota-based appointments, and lack of political will.<sup>109</sup>

## School Exam Scheduling

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) announced a series of temporary policy changes on official examinations amid the ongoing conflict, including the cancellation of middle school certificate exams and the adoption of a more flexible baccalaureate examination process. Minister Rima Karami explained that middle school exams would be replaced by in-school assessments, with final grades based on a combination of coursework and school-administered exams. The baccalaureate framework provides for three examination sessions between June and September, reduced curricula in selected subjects, and exam centers selectable by residence or displacement status.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>104</sup> The contract was awarded under a competitive tender process, after the Council of Ministers rejected earlier proposals to directly award the contract to Middle East Airports Services (MEAS) through a negotiated agreement.

Lebanon Debate, [مناقصة القليعات تحسم... وتشغيل المطار يدخل مرحلة التنفيذ](#), May 19, 2026;

Al-Modon, [تشغيل مطار القليعات: فوز «سكاي لاونج» و«مينز» بالمشروع](#), May 19, 2026;

Al-Akhbar, [مزايمة مطار القليعات مُفضلة على القياس؟](#), May 13, 2026;

Al-Akhbar, [مجلس الوزراء يقرر تلزيم مطار القليعات بمناقصة عامة](#), February 6, 2026

Al-Akhbar, [مزايمة مطار القليعات مُفضلة على القياس؟](#), May 13, 2026

<sup>106</sup> Addiyar, [عكار على موعد مع الإقلاع هل يبدأ عصر مطار القليعات؟ - داني القاسم](#), May 21, 2026;

Elnashra, [عيد المسح: مطار القليعات سيكمل مطار بيروت وتشغيله ينعش اقتصاد الشمال ويوفر فرص عمل](#), May 22, 2026

<sup>107</sup> Lebanon Debate, [!تغرات عديدة تراقق التحضيرات لافتتاحه... اليكم الموعد المبدئي لانطلاق مطار القليعات](#), May 21, 2026

<sup>108</sup> Kataeb, [القليعات» إلى الواجهة: 6000 فرصة عمل قبل صيف 2026](#), January 28, 2026;

<sup>109</sup> Sawt Beirut International, [رسقّ مزايمة تشغيل مطار القليعات... دفعة للنقل الجوي والتنمية في الشمال](#), May 19, 2026;

Al-Akhbar, [مطار القليعات في مجلس الوزراء: مخالقات بالجملة](#), February 6, 2026;

Lebanon Debate, [مناقصة القليعات تُحسم... وتشغيل المطار يدخل مرحلة التنفيذ](#), May 19, 2026

<sup>109</sup> Lebanon Debate, [!تغرات عديدة تراقق التحضيرات لافتتاحه... اليكم الموعد المبدئي لانطلاق مطار القليعات](#), May 21, 2026

Legal Agenda, [مطار القليعات: الحرب تعيده إلى الواجهة... والتقاش بشأنه مؤجل إلى ما بعدها](#), October 25, 2024

<sup>110</sup> Lebanon Debate, [إكرامي أعلنت إلغاء الشهادة المتوسطة بشروط... وإلزام ما قرره لإمتحانات الثانوية العامة](#), May 15, 2026



The ministry based its decision on a nationwide study, conducted in coordination with the Educational Center for Research and Development, of 598 public and private high schools, comprising some 63% of all high schools in Lebanon. The study found that curriculum completion rates ranged between 60% and 85% across most subjects. The ministry stressed that disparities between public and private schools and across regions were limited.<sup>111</sup>

In response, a group of baccalaureate students from conflict-affected areas staged a protest on May 22 outside the Ministry of Education, questioning the fairness of proceeding with official exams, arguing that curriculum completion rates do not reflect actual learning retention due to disruptions throughout the school year. The students highlighted the problems caused by consecutive wars alongside teachers' strikes and continued Israeli occupation and military operations in southern Lebanon. Demonstrators noted that many displaced students lack educational materials and must study in overcrowded shelters, under bombardment, or with limited internet connectivity, while contending with significant psychological stress; conditions that have rendered remote learning largely ineffective.<sup>112</sup> Criticism intensified following the killing of a Lebanese University student and her family in an Israeli airstrike on the Nabatieh-Khordali road while returning from an exam, prompting renewed calls for the Ministry of Education to reconsider examination procedures amid concerns over students' safety while traveling to examination centers.<sup>113</sup>

Experts have also cautioned that a uniform approach cannot adequately address Lebanon's fragmented wartime educational realities, arguing that prolonged disruption to in-person learning, displacement, and unequal access to remote education have deepened what some describe as an emerging "educational federalism," in which academic achievement is increasingly determined by geographic location and socioeconomic status rather than national curricula or standardized policy.<sup>114</sup>

## Displacement and Disability Access

On May 11, the Alliance of Organizations of People with Disabilities (AOPD) staged a sit-in outside an abandoned municipal market building in Qasqas, Beirut, demanding that authorities designate shelters for displaced persons with disabilities. The alliance had previously petitioned the Minister of Social Affairs, the Governor of Beirut, and the UN to designate the vacant facility as an inclusive shelter, without success. AOPD members and allies noted that the absence of accessible facilities in existing displacement centers effectively forces those with disabilities to remain in their homes under fire or rely on relatives and friends for housing – losing their independence and placing an additional burden on host families in the absence of viable alternatives – leading authorities to undercount their needs. Persons with disabilities are estimated to comprise 15% of the population, and the AOPD asserts they have been systematically excluded from emergency response planning across successive wars and crises, such as the August 2020 Beirut Port blast. The coalition has called on relevant ministries and the Beirut Municipality to designate at least one inclusive shelter per district.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>111</sup> ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Legal Agenda via Facebook, [إضرابات، وقصف يومي، ثم تهجير» طلاب الثانوي يسألون عن «عدالة» الامتحانات الرسمية، خلال وقفة احتجاجية أمام وزارة التربية اليوم»](#), الجمعة، إعداد: جاد فقيه May 23, 2026;

Al-Modon, [طلاب الترمينال قلقون: أين وكيف وبماذا ستمتحننا؟ وزيرة التربية؟](#) May 23, 2026;

Al Jadeed via YouTube, [مدارس الضاحية.. حضور تحت رقابة المسيرات](#) May 21, 2026

<sup>113</sup> Al Jadeed, [بعد مجزرة الخردلي.. نائب نيسائل، وزيرة التربية](#), June 2, 2026;

Al Araby TV, [غادرت الجنوب بسبب الامتحانات.. غضب في لبنان لاستشهاد طالبة بطريق العودة](#) June 2, 2026

<sup>114</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, [الأزمات والحروب المتلاحقة تهدد مستوى التعليم في لبنان](#), May 15, 2026

<sup>115</sup> Legal Agenda, [محاولة تخريب اعتصام للمطالبة بمركز إيواء دامج: متى تُفتح النقاش حول المبانئ الشاغرة؟](#) May 13, 2026



## Quarry Licensing in Koura

The Council of Ministers issued a decree on April 23 allowing cement companies to obtain 10-year licenses to operate quarries in Koura, Batroun, and Chouf. In response, environmental organizations filed appeals<sup>116</sup> with the State Shura Council, arguing that the decree should be revoked because it violates existing quarry regulations and exceeds municipal authority.<sup>117</sup> The Ministerial Committee tasked with reviewing cement company licensing defended the decree as an effort to regulate the sector and “end the state of lawlessness.” Committee members emphasized that the licenses do not authorize new quarries, that they require compliance with environmental mitigation and rehabilitation measures, and that annual renewals are tied to compliance.<sup>118</sup> Proponents framed the measure as necessary to preserve the cement sector, protect employment, and meet post-war reconstruction demand. Critics – including environmental organizations, municipalities, agricultural associations, and affected residents – claimed it reinforces existing monopolies without introducing pricing or export controls, calling instead for facilitating cement and clinker imports to reduce environmental and public health pressures.<sup>119</sup> They also warned that even full compliance would be insufficient to prevent environmental degradation, damage to agricultural lands, depletion of safe water sources, and health risks linked to dust and industrial pollution.<sup>120</sup>

## Rubble Management

The current war has compounded an already severe rubble crisis inherited from the 66-Day War, which generated an estimated 17–22 million tons of debris across southern Lebanon, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and the Bekaa. The World-Bank-funded Lebanon Emergency Assistance Program (LEAP) allocated USD 250 million toward rubble removal and recovery in June 2025, envisioning that 70% of debris would be reintegrated into the circular economy and 30% isolated as inert material. Despite this, a coherent disposal strategy is lacking. The government’s response has been limited to identifying 42 temporary sites to receive debris pending a longer-term plan. In practice, contractors often extract metal for resale and transport remaining concrete to landfills. The Ministry of Public Works has removed approximately 30,000 cubic meters of debris and rubble across conflict-affected areas of the country; this work has been confined to clearing road access, while full debris removal requires property owner approvals.<sup>121</sup> The absence of a coherent disposal strategy across the two consecutive wars has shifted the rubble crisis from a logistical challenge to a structural one. Without sustained funding, regulatory enforcement, and institutional coordination, rubble accumulation will continue to have implications for reconstruction timelines, environmental degradation, and public health in affected areas.

<sup>116</sup> Legal Agenda, [«دعوى ضدّ «غنيمة المقال»»](#) April 30, 2026

<sup>117</sup> Legal Agenda, [«بيان حول قرار الحكومة بتعديل المخطط التوجيهي للمقال: التخلي عن الشرعية من أجل «شركات الإسمنت»»](#) April 28, 2026

<sup>118</sup> MTV Lebanon, [«ماذا صدر عن اللجنة الوزارية المكلفة النظر بإعطاء الترخيص لشركات الترابية؟»](#) May 18, 2026

<sup>119</sup> Legal Agenda, [«بيان حول قرار الحكومة بتعديل المخطط التوجيهي للمقال: التخلي عن الشرعية من أجل «شركات الإسمنت»»](#) April 28, 2026;

MTV Lebanon, [«ماذا صدر عن اللجنة الوزارية المكلفة النظر بإعطاء الترخيص لشركات الترابية؟»](#) May 18, 2026

<sup>120</sup> Lebanon24, [«لجنة كفرزبر البيئية: نرفض إعادة تشغيل مقالع الترابية وتدعو لنقلها إلى السلسلة الشرفية»](#) May 10, 2026;

National Human Rights Commission - Lebanon, [«الهيئة الوطنية لحقوق الإنسان تدعو إلى تفعيل آليات المساءلة الدولية في أعقاب استهداف الصحافيين في الطبري»](#) April 28, 2026;

National News Agency, [«جمعية مزارعي الزيتون في الكورة: كسر احتكار الإسمنت معركة وجود»](#) May 17, 2026;

Al-Markazia, [«مقالع الترابية في الكورة: الأوطان لا تبني على تدمير القرى وتحريف الجبال»](#) May 16, 2026

<sup>121</sup> Annahar, [«ملايين الأطنان من الركام في لبنان: أين تذهب أنقاض الحرب؟»](#) May 15, 2026;

Annahar, [«الضاحية تتابع إدارة الركام وجنوب لبنان ينتظر... كيف ستدار ملايين الأمتار من الردميات وبأي كلفة؟»](#) May 15, 2026



## Healthcare in Southern Lebanon

The healthcare sector continues to operate under severe strain. Three hospitals are non-operational – Bint Jbeil Governmental Hospital, Mays al-Jabal Governmental Hospital, and Salah Ghandour Hospital – while 16 others have sustained partial or major damage and 45 primary healthcare centers remain closed. Six hospitals in Sour, Bint Jbeil, Hasbaya, and Nabatieh districts have yet to restore maternity services, significantly limiting access to delivery care in high-need and return-affected areas.<sup>122</sup> According to the Ministry of Public Health, ambulance crews and health facilities have been attacked 163 times, killing 123 medical personnel and destroying 108 ambulances as of May 22 – attacks the ministry characterized as systematic violations of international humanitarian law.<sup>123</sup>

Hospitals in Sour, Tibnin, and Nabatieh continue to operate with a fraction of their pre-war staff – Tibnin Governmental Hospital has retained 70 of its original 200 employees, while Nabatieh Governmental Hospital is operating with 100 of its pre-war 400 staff. Some facilities have converted wards into shelters for displaced families of medical personnel, while others have become refuges for civilians unable to evacuate. Basic supplies, including fuel, oxygen, and medical equipment, are currently secured through coordination between the Ministry of Public Health, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Doctors Without Borders, though hospital directors in Sour and Nabatieh warn that any disruption to road access to Saida and Beirut could rapidly lead to shortages.<sup>124</sup>

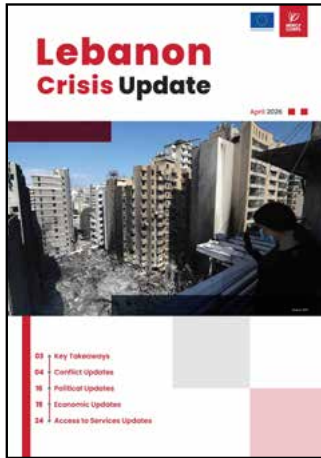
<sup>122</sup> World Health Organization, [WHO Lebanon Health Emergency Situation Update #25 \(22 May 2026\) - Lebanon | ReliefWeb](#) May 24, 2026

<sup>123</sup> National News Agency, [وزير الصحة أطلق اللوحة الرقمية وعرض بالأرقام الإستجابة لتحدي النزوح: لن نصمت ومستمرّون في توثيق كل الإعتداءات 380 شهيداً و1122 جريحاً](#) May 12, 2026;

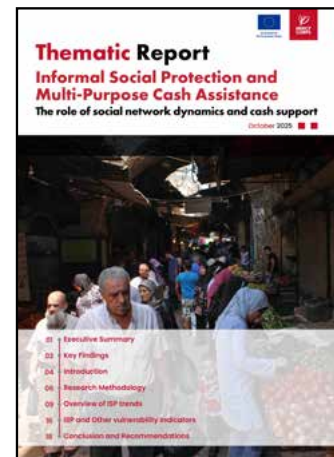
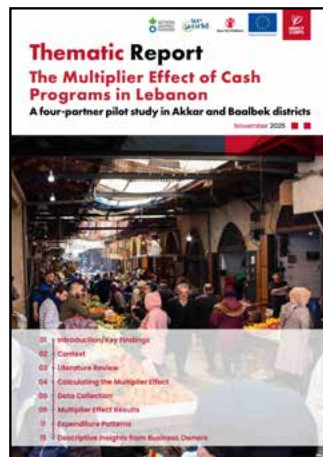
<sup>124</sup> [إسرائيل تواصل استهداف القطاع الصحي في لبنان منتهكة قراراً أممياً](#), Al-Araby al-Jadeed, May 22, 2026

<sup>124</sup> [مستشفيات الجنوب اللبناني... خط الدفاع الأخير تحت النيران الإسرائيلية](#), Al-Araby al-Jadeed, May 16, 2026

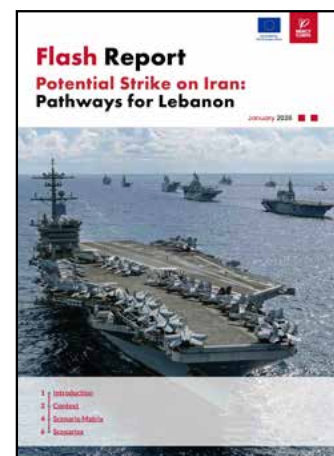
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