

Lebanon - 3 Week News Roundup

Contributed by Naharnet
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Naharnet news compiled from NNA.

Live Coverage 9-6-08 Lebanon Developments

4:30pm MP Mustapha Alloush: Hariri's Visit to Tripoli is vital following Assad's dubious campaign.

3:33pm MP Elie Kairouz: We are still at the heart of the crisis and the Lebanese Forces shall continue its struggle.

11:45am Ex-Premier Omar Karami returned home from a visit to Iran.

11:35am Israeli warplanes fly reconnaissance missions over south Lebanon.

11:30am Mustaqbal Movement leader Saad Hariri arrives in Tripoli.

Live Coverage 9-5-08 2:45pm Saniora says tentative agreement has been reached on a pay raise that would be discussed by the cabinet in its forthcoming meeting.

12:05pm Parliament's justice and administrative committee will convene on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss a bill to amend the current elections law.

12:00pm Israeli jetfighters flew reconnaissance flights over the northern areas of Batroun, Shekka, Tripoli and Diman.

10:20am Voice of Lebanon: The government will hold its weekly session next Tuesday.

7:15am Huge traffic was reported during morning rush hour near Beirut's Pierre Gemayel Boulevard which was closed after a main water pipe blew up. Traffic was diverted to secondary roads.

Live Coverage 9-4-08 9:50pm Saniora: We don't accept the use of weapons as a means to change and we welcome dialogue through constitutional institutions.

9:48pm Saniora: Tripoli is not a city for terrorism as it is accused by some (people). The conflict is mainly deliberate and (it involves) external parties.

9:45pm PM Saniora said during an Iftar dinner that the government will tackle the pay raise issue next week.

9:36pm Nasrallah ends his speech.

9:35pm Nasrallah: The families of the martyrs – both from the resistance and the army – want justice and I hope that the holy month of Ramadan will be a month of forgiveness, repentance and justice.

9:33pm Nasrallah: I pardon the group charged with plotting to assassinate me.

9:30pm Nasrallah: There is a national unity government and it should bear the responsibility of recovering martyrs' bodies from Israel.

9:28pm Nasrallah: I officially announce today that there are no Lebanese prisoners alive in Israeli jails and the dossier of brother Yehya Skaff remains to be solved.

9:25pm Nasrallah: We don't believe that the dossier of (resistance) bodies is closed.

9:12pm Nasrallah: The person who opened fire on the helicopter was the one who asked to be turned over to the military judiciary. We do not turn over anyone by force.

9:18pm Nasrallah: Some analyses said that the incident was intentional and that Hizbullah was drawing red lines on the state. These analyses bear a grudge. Are they instigating hatred? Are they turning the army against the resistance?

9:19pm Nasrallah paid condolences to the family of airman Samer Hanna.

9:10pm Nasrallah: The helicopter was not downed but was flying over the area and some brethren got suspicious and opened fire.

9:09pm Nasrallah: The Lebanese army command, the intelligence and the prime minister dealt responsibly with the helicopter issue in Sujud.

9:07pm May 7 events proved that others, too, possess weapons and no one can prevent them from resisting and fighting (Israeli troops).

9:00pm Nasrallah: Decision of war and peace is in the hands of Israel and America.

8:59pm Nasrallah: Israel is the one who is threatening (Lebanon with war), while we are the ones who say 'we will protect our territory and we will destroy the enemy.'

8:48pm Nasrallah: We are still in the heart of the battle and in the heart of confrontation.

8:50pm Nasrallah to Israel: The five (Israeli) brigades will be destroyed in the south, Western Bekaa and everywhere.

8:40pm Nasrallah: The resistance knew its enemy from the beginning and knew what it wants – liberate the land and the people.

8:35pm Nasrallah: The resistance in Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq is an embodiment of the will of the occupied people.

8:20pm Nasrallah begins his speech.

5:00pm Manar TV: Hizbullah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah will deliver a speech at 8 pm today during an Iftar dinner.

3:58pm Future News TV: Israel will evacuate the northern part of Ghajar in three months.

2:10pm A delegation from Hizbullah visited Gen. Jean Qahwaji to congratulate him for his new post.

2:00pm The Army Command: The military abides by legislative decisions and doesn't take sides.

1:15pm Families of those arrested after the Sheikh Lar clashes in Akkar tried to cut the Bireh-Qobayyat-Bekaa road to protest the arrests. But mediation in cooperation with security forces stopped their actions.

12:00pm Israeli warplanes overflew Nabatiyeh and its surroundings.

11:25am Sarkozy: We back all of Lebanon and not just one side.
 11:24am Sarkozy: We stress the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon and peace in it.
 11:18am French President Sarkozy: We are happy that Qatar succeeded in its mission. What Assad did in Lebanon brought back trust between Lebanon and Syria.
 11:14am The Syrian president said that the Lebanese should solve their main problems through dialogue. A principle element of the positive developments was Suleiman's visit to Damascus.
 10:15am Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani: Lebanon has gone through an ordeal. It is only now that the security situation started to stabilize despite the Tripoli events.
 10:00am Syrian President Bashar Assad at the quadripartite summit: The situation in Lebanon is still fragile. We are worried about what is happening in the north. We are awaiting the end of legal procedures to appoint ambassadors.

Live Coverage 9-3-08 9:45pm Al-Mustaqbal movement leader MP Saad Hariri said he is ready to support and sponsor all reconciliation efforts in Tripoli and the North.

8:05pm Sarkozy said he discussed with Assad the special tribunal for Lebanon.
 8:02pm Saniora said after meeting President Suleiman in Baabda the cabinet would not hold its weekly meeting on Thursday, noting that the pay raise would be discussed next week.
 7:55pm Sarkozy stressed in a joint press conference with Assad in Damascus the importance of a sovereign and independent Lebanon.
 7:00pm Premier Saniora telephoned his Belgian counterpart to extend condolences over the death of a Belgian UNIFIL sapper in south Lebanon.
 6:00pm VOL: The cabinet will not hold its weekly meeting on Thursday.
 2:01pm Bishops's statement: Loyalty to the nation is a national obligation.
 2:00pm Bishops statement called for thorough reconciliation, stating that serving foreign states is tantamount to high treason.
 1:58pm Bishops statement: It's a pity that our country still witnesses some insulting speeches at the official level while government institutes are disunited.
 1:55pm Bishops statement: There is a sharp divide among political groups in Lebanon and there is an urgent need for March 14 and March 8 to get along now that the national unity government has been formed.
 1:50pm Maronite Bishops statement "highly cherished" efforts exerted by the President, the government and parliament to return the situation to normal and hoped that a new electoral law would soon be adopted.
 12:45pm Heavy Israeli overflights are reported over Marjayoun, Khiam, Nabatiyeh and Iqlim al-Tuffah.
 12:40pm Suleiman meets Speaker Nabih Berri at Baabda Palace.
 11:00am President Suleiman told visitors there would be no dialogue without reconciliation and no reconciliation without dialogue.
 9:30am Maronite Bishops hold their monthly meeting at Diman.

Live Coverage 9-2-08 2:35pm Egypt's public prosecutor charged Egyptian tycoon Hisham Talaat Mustafa with involvement in the brutal killing of Lebanese singer Suzanne Tamim in Dubai.

200pm The Administration and Justice Committee holds a meeting at Parliament.
 11:45am Saniora is meeting with heads of municipalities and syndicates in Tripoli and will later hold talks with other officials and journalists from the northern city.
 10:55am Army commander Gen. Jean Qahwaji in his first Order of the Day: Keep your eyes (focused) on the south to reclaim the occupied land and on the domestic situation to consolidate security.
 10:50am Saniora meets Muslim and Christian spiritual leaders from Tripoli.
 10:45am Premier Saniora to Tripoli representatives: Nothing could justify negligence in providing your city with security.
 10:15am Saniora meets Tripoli cabinet ministers and MPs.
 10:00am Miqati after meeting Saniora at the Grand Serail: The fundamental solution is settling the security situation in Tripoli.
 9:30am PM Fouad Saniora launched consultations to resolve several issues regarding the northern city of Tripoli, and is meeting former PM Najib Miqati.
 7:20am VOL: Unknown assailants tossed a hand grenade into a crowd in east Lebanon's Taalbaya district at dawn Tuesday, wounding five people.

Live Coverage 9-1-08 Lebanon Developments

2:10pm Army Commander Gen. Qahwaji assumed his new post at the defense ministry.
 2:00pm President Michel Suleiman left for Qatar on an official visit.
 12:15pm Premier Saniora discussed the security situation with ISF commander Gen. Ashraf Rifi.
 11:10am Israeli troops carry out war games around their outposts in the occupied Shebaa Farms region. Thuds of explosions echo across southern villages.
 10:25am Seven MPs presented a memo to President Suleiman proposing a constitutional amendment banning the naturalization of Palestinians.
 10:22am Unidentified assailants started fire in a car belonging to customs official Akram Rhayem at the Masnaa border crossing to Syria.

Live Coverage 8-30-08 Lebanon Developments

8:00pm KSA announced that Ramadan starts on the first of September.

2:10pm Interior Minister Baroud Meets Patriarch Sfeir in Diman.

2:00pm A major car accident blocks traffic near the Nahr al-Kalb Tunnel on the northern highway leading to Tripoli. Rescuers are evacuating casualties.

12:20pm The new Army Commander Brig. Gen. Jean Qahwaji was promoted to the rank of General at the Baabda Palace where he met president Michel Suleiman.

11:40am FPM leader Michel Aoun leaves for Europe on a private visit.

Live Coverage 8-29-08 1:40pm Hizbullah said it will cooperate with the Lebanese army and judicial authorities to find out the truth about the attack on the military helicopter in the south.

12:15pm Maj. Gen Shawki Masri and Maj. Gen. Saeed Eid informed PM Fouad Saniora about the ongoing investigation into the shooting on the army helicopter.

11:15am Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas met with Phalange party leader Amin Gemayel who stressed his rejection to naturalize Palestinians in Lebanon.

11:00am Media reports: The shooting attack in Tripoli targeted the home and office of ex-PM Omar Karami's brother

9:48am Buildings housing apartments and offices belonging to politicians in Tripoli's Maarad street came under fire.

9:45am Batroun residents thronged the streets to welcome the body of slain 1st Lieutenant Samer Hanna, who will be buried at his hometown in Tannourine.

Live Coverage 8-28-08 7:45pm Abbas arrives at Grand Serail and goes into immediate meeting with Saniora.

7:20pm Palestinian President Abbas called after meeting Berri for wise and firm handling of tension in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps to avoid a repeat of the Nahr al-Bared tragedy.

7:10pm Army units moved in to contain clashes between rival gunmen in the northern village of Sheikh Lar.

6:30pm Abbas meets Berri at Ain el-Tineh.

4:00pm An extraordinary session is to be held at Baabda Palace Friday the evening.

3:15pm Abbas and the accompanying delegation left the Baabda Palace where a meeting is currently underway between President Suleiman and Speaker Berri.

2:30pm A state banquet is thrown for Abbas in the presence of Berri, Saniora and several Lebanese dignitaries.

1:30pm Abbas after meeting Suleiman: We are against naturalization of Palestinians in Lebanon. Palestinians in Lebanon are under the law … We agree with Lebanon on the issue of Palestinian weapons.

1:15pm Lebanese army command: Military helicopter came under gunfire attack by armed members, forcing it to make an emergency landing in Iqlim al-Tuffah. 1st Lt. Samer Hanna was killed in the attack.

12:14pm Intense Israeli overflights over Jezzine in south Lebanon.

12:12pm AFP: Gunmen opened fire on a Lebanese army helicopter flying over a southern village, killing an officer.

12:10pm A formal reception was given to Abbas at Baabda Palace.

12:00pm OTV: A Lebanese army helicopter was forced to land in Arab Salim and four crew members were wounded.

11:47am Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas arrived at Beirut airport.

11:46am Reports that a Lebanese army officer was killed in the helicopter shooting.

11:40am A Lebanese army helicopter was hit by gunfire from unidentified gunmen over Sojod hills in south Lebanon.

7:45am Unknown gunmen opened fire overnight on Lebanese army troops in Qobbeh district in the northern city of Tripoli.

7:20am Lebanese authorities foiled an attempt to smuggle a huge quantity of cocaine through Beirut airport.

Live Coverage 8-27-08 Lebanon Developments

5:35pm Abulghheit meets Phalange Party leader Amin Gemayel.

3:55pm Defense Minister Elias el-Murr met Hale and U.S. ambassador to Lebanon Michelle Sesson to discuss U.S. aid to Lebanese Army

3:05pm LBC: One person wounded in the clashes at Ain el-Hilweh.

1:30pm Clashes erupted between the mainstream Fatah faction and extremists from Jund al-Sham in south Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camp of Ain el-Hilweh

1:10pm Abulghheit meets Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri.

12:14pm Abulghheit meets former Prime Minister Najib Mikati.

12:02pm Future TV: Israeli troops comb the surroundings of their positions in the occupied-Shebaa Farms amid helicopter overflights.

11:02am U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State David Hale meets President Michel Suleiman at Baabda Palace.

10:20am Abulghheit: Egypt is prepared to build the Lebanese army capabilities so it could shoulder its responsibilities .

10:15am The Parliamentary Administration and Justice Committee is holding a meeting under MP Robert Ghanem to discuss the proposed law on electoral divisions and related reforms.

10:10am Abulghheit meets Prime Minister Fouad Saniora at the Grand Serail.

9:44am Abulghheit said he is worried about the situation in Lebanon, particularly in Tripoli.

9:41am Abulghheit said after meeting President Michel Suleiman: The president is always welcome to visit Egypt.

8:40am VOL: A Lebanese citizen was wounded early Wednesday by gunfire in the eastern town of Taalbaya in a quarrel over hanging posters of Imam Moussa Sadr.

Live Coverage 8-26-08 Lebanon Developments

4:00pm Communications minister Jibril Bassil said March 14 Forces are responsible for postponing the adoption of the electoral constituencies' bill.

3:40pm Future TV: The proposed electoral constituencies' law was referred to the parliamentary administration and justice committee

1:25pm Speaker Nabih Berri said he would form a parliamentary committee to investigate into alleged bugging of telephone communication.

1:20pm Israeli warplanes carried out mock air raids over the central and eastern sectors of south Lebanon.

1:15pm Parliament has been in session since 10:30am and has adopted 17 laws out of 31 listed bills.

4:15pm Belgian Defense minister arrived in Beirut to inspect his country's contingent in UNIFIL and to meet Lebanese officials.

Live Coverage 8-25-08 Lebanon Developments

10:10pm Sporadic disturbances between AMAL and Mustaqbal Movement in Beirut's Ras al-Nabaa and Hamra districts.

4:55pm Aoun said, following his bloc's weekly meeting, that reforms had been proposed due to pressures by the opposition and electoral constituencies should be adopted tomorrow.

4:50pm FPM leader Michel Aoun said his bloc would propose a bill to parliament defining powers of the deputy prime minister.

2:10pm Kouchner arrived in Damascus for talks with Syrian officials.

12:23 Kouchner said he will convey a message to Syria about general willingness to live in a stable Lebanon.

12:22pm Kouchner: The situation is complicated in Lebanon. Let us not add more complications to it.

12:20pm Kouchner at Beirut airport: France is Lebanon's friend. We came to express our support for the Doha accord.

12:10pm VDL: Kouchner discussed with Berri about the Shebaa Farms issue.

11:40am Kouchner is meeting with Berri in Ain el-Tineh.

10:20am The army command: Israeli warplanes flew over southern Lebanon and Beirut on Sunday night.

10:18am Kouchner arrived for a meeting with PM Fouad Saniora at the Grand Serail.

10:05am Two people were killed and 5 wounded of the same family when their car slipped on the old Akkar road in north Lebanon.

10:00am Kouchner after meeting Suleiman: Our openness to Damascus is related to steps made by Syria in favor of Lebanon.

9:00am French FM Bernard Kouchner arrived at Baabda Palace and went into talks with President Michel Suleiman.

Live Coverage 8-24-08 Lebanon Developments

8:00pm French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner arrives in Beirut for talks with Lebanese officials.

6:40pm Aoun addresses his partisans at a rally in Jezzine.

6:00pm Aoun arrives at Jezzine's main square.

3:38pm Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah said during the annual Imam al Mahdi Scouts' celebration that Hizbullah takes the Israeli threats seriously. Israel is exaggerating for internal political reasons.

3:24pm Aoun will wrap up his southern tour in Jezzine where thousands of his supporters are gathering to greet him.

3:20pm Aoun is having lunch at al-Tiri village.

1:14pm Aoun relayed to the crowds salutes from the mountain.

1:12pm Aoun told a rally in Bint Jbeil the defense strategy should protect our homeland and we are ready for that.

12:50pm MP Ali Bazzi, speaking on behalf of Amal Movement, welcomed Aoun in the name of "all southerners."

12:42pm Cabinet Minister Mario Aoun said Patriarch Sfeir can declare his opinion as "a citizen" from Lebanon and stated that he is against intervention by clergymen in politics.

12:40pm Aoun arrives at Bint Jbeil.

11:55am Hizbullah MP Ali Ammar told OTV he is proud of Aoun's visit to south Lebanon, declaring that contacts with the FPM started in the 1990s.

11:18am Aoun tells supporters in Rmeich the martyrs of the army and Hizbullah resistance have merged to defend the nation.

10:45am Aoun arrives at Rmeich to a greeting by partisans.

10:05a, Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir warned against the persisting splits in viewpoints and called for uniting views and hearts to safeguard the nation.

9:45am Aoun lays a wreath at the Qana Martyrs graveyard and leaves for Rmeich.

Live Coverage 8-23-08 Lebanon Developments

12:45pm Mustaqbal MP Ammar Houry: We will not accept Punishment while others go untouched.

12:00pm Lebanese army command responds to Mustaqbal MP Mustafa Alloush: The military was not and will not take sides in any internal conflict.

11:30am State Minister Nassib Lahoud headed to the United States where he would take part in a Democratic Party conference.

10:00am Foreign Minister Fawzi Salloukh heads to Equatorial Guinea as part of efforts to upgrade political and economic relations.

7:30am Al Liwaa: An Israeli force made up of 8 soldiers made a brief penetration overnight into Mais al-Jabal before pulling out.

7:15am Five people were wounded in an overnight clash in Beirut's Tarik Jedideh neighborhood.

Live Coverage 8-21-08 Lebanon Developments

- 5:30pm Cabinet convenes.
- 5:25pm Defense Minister Elias Murr confirmed upon arrival at Baabda that the appointment of Lebanon's new army commander will not be made during today's cabinet session.
- 5:20pm A closed-door meeting is underway between President Michel Suleiman and Premier Fouad Saniora ahead of the cabinet meeting.
- 3:43pm French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner rescheduled his visit to Lebanon until next Sunday.
- 1:50pm The Higher Judicial Council appointed judge George Rizq Examining Magistrate in the Zahle Crime.
- 1:40pm Lebanese troops seal off Sheik Bilal Shaaban's residence in Tripoli to check a suspicious object found deserted in the neighborhood. It turned out to be a garbage bag.
- 12:00pm Relatives of apprehended Fatah al-Islam suspects stage a sit-in near the Beirut Justice Palace amidst strict security measures.
- 10:00am Israeli jetfighters flew apparent reconnaissance missions over south Lebanon.
- 9:15am A precautionary security dragnet was set up at the Beirut Justice Palace prior to a scheduled sit-in by relatives of apprehended Fatah al-Islam suspects.
- 9:00am Security sources reported that unidentified assailants hurled a hand grenade near an army post in Tripoli overnight. No casualties were reported.

Live Coverage 8-19-08 1:45pm Police sappers found no explosives in a suspicious 'Renault 12' vehicle parked near ex-Premier Najib Mikati's residence in Tripoli.

- 1:15pm The Lebanese army erected a barbed wire between Baal al-Darawish, which straddles Bab al-Tabbaneh, and Jabal Mohsen neighborhoods to stop security breaches.
- 1:00pm Police sappers are checking a suspicious car near Ex-Premier Najib Mikati's residence in Tripoli.
- 12:15pm Several Parliamentary committees held meetings in parliament in the first day of the extraordinary legislative session.
- 12:00pm The Lebanese army arrested a man called Abdulrahman Mahmoud Mohammed, who admitted that he threw a bomb at Tripoli's Bab al-Tabbaneh neighborhood.
- 11:48am Premier Fouad Saniora is meeting at the Grand Serail with Canadian MP of Lebanese origin Maria Mourani.
- 11:00am Israeli fighter jets are flying over Jbeil and Marjayoun.
- 10:15am PSP spokesman Rami Rayess: Suicide bombers, who are pretending to be tourists, are heading to Lebanon.