

# THE FEDERATION

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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

### FCCIAL NEWS

#### THE UKRAINIAN-LEBANESE AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS FORUM IN BEIRUT

The Ukrainian-Lebanese Agricultural Business Forum began on March 21, under the auspices of the Minister of Agriculture Hussein Hajj Hassan, in the presence of H.E. Volodymyr Koval, the ambassador of Ukraine in Lebanon, Nabil Itani, chairman and general manager of IDAL, Raphael Debbane, chairman of the Agriculture Committee at the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture of Lebanon representing the chairman of the Federation, Mohamed Choucair, representatives of Ukrainian and Lebanese Chambers, representatives of farmers and exporters syndicates and associations, businessmen from both countries and Lebanese officials at Golden Tulip Hotel in Beirut.

The main purpose of the forum was to develop and diversify the cooperation between Ukraine and Lebanon in the field of agriculture, and to increase the export volumes of fresh Lebanese agricultural products to Ukraine.

In the opening ceremony, Minister Hajj Hassan discussed the importance of talks to be carried out between the two parties in order to identify the difficulties hindering the best possible cooperation.

Debbane said he regarded the agricultural sector as one of the pillars of the economy in most countries of the world, and noted that the Lebanese have developed their competencies in this area and have gained a good reputation as a result.

The representative of the Ukrainian Chamber, Yuri Tsiritsinky, also spoke, stressing the importance of such a forum and efforts in this regard, as a

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### Mohamed Choucair

Chairman of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon



## LEBANON: A DIAMOND FOREVER

**L**ebanon is a creative nation where jewelry designers, artists and fashion designers flourish. They have become ambassadors of the country throughout the world, portraying Lebanon's culture, good taste and way of life.

The jewelry industry has a long history in Lebanon. Old jewelry families have been passing know-how from one generation to the next. They have established their brands in important markets, such as the Arabian Gulf, Paris, London, Geneva, New York, and beyond.

Lebanese jewelers are renowned because of their talent for design innovation. They have put fine jewelry on the export map. Jewelry exports have risen from 17 percent out of total exports in 2008 to 35 percent in 2011, amounting to \$1.5 billion that year.

Also in 2011, more than 32 percent of Lebanon's exports of jewelry went to the UAE, while 23 percent went to Saudi Arabia. Qatar, Jordan, and Kuwait ranked fourth, fifth, and sixth, with respective shares of 12 percent, 6percent, and 4.6 percent.

According to the Syndicate of Lebanese Jewelers, the Lebanese jewelry sector employs 5,000 people, most of them high-quality craftsmen, particularly in terms of price/quality ratio.

I would like to wish Lebanese jewelers and their craftsmen all possible success, in the global market that they have made their own.

I hope Lebanon will remain a beautiful gem that grows more valuable with time.

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## Chamber's News

### MoU SIGNING BETWEEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE OF BEIRUT AND MOUNT LEBANON AND CHAIRMAN OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE IN TRIPOLI – WEST LIBYA

Beirut, April 9, 2013

A memorandum of understanding to promote economic and trade relations and the development of economic integration was signed between the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon and the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Tripoli – West Libya.

The signing of the MoU took place during the Extended Economic Meeting organized by the Chamber of Beirut and Mount Lebanon at the Phoenicia Hotel. The meeting was attended by the Libyan economic delegation headed by Milad Miftah Al-Farjali and a large number of Lebanese economic bodies.

Among the Lebanese were vice presidents of the Chamber of Beirut, Gabi Tamer and Dr. Nabil Fahad, chairman of the Chamber of Saida and the South, Mohamed Saleh, chairman of International Chamber of Commerce-Lebanon, Wajih Bizri, the general secretary of the FCCIAL, Tawfiq Daboussi, Dean of Lebanese Industrialists Jacques Sarraf, the president of the Federation of Merchants of Mount Lebanon, Sheikh Nassib Al Gemayyel, the president of the Lebanese Businessmen Gathering Dr. Fouad Zmekhol, the vice president of the Lebanese Industrialists Association, Ziad Bakdash, the chairman of the Al Mays Arab Group Elie Rizk, the chairman of the Board of Directors of the IFP Group Trade Fairs, Albert Aoun, the chairman of the board of the Industrial Exports Development, Khalid Farshoukh, the chairman of the Association of the Traders of Iklim Al-Kharoob, Ahmed Alaa El Din, the chairman of the Traders and Industrialists Association of Mkalles region, Mansour Machaalani, and the director general of the Chamber of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, Rabih Sabra. The meeting also featured a crowd of Lebanese businessmen.

The memorandum provides for cooperation in the fields of trade and economic activities, along with various industrial activities in order to achieve stronger ties and means of communication for mutual understanding between companies and businesses and members of the chambers in the two countries.

It aims to develop programs and the appropriate mechanisms to develop a network of contacts

between their members, and strives to provide information and to facilitate possible trade transactions and stimulate common economic activities; as well as the exchange of information on laws and legislation governing economic activity and information on business opportunities and areas of cooperation available. Finally, it aims to facilitate exchange visits for the trade and economic delegations and help organize joint meetings and seminars.

As the meeting began, Chairman Choucair pointed out that the historical transformations witnessed recently in Libya constitute an opportunity to create strong and well-established business relationships between the two countries based on common interests. He then addressed Farjali, and told him that his presence was clear evidence of the desire of the private sector in Libya to explore ways to strengthen economic ties. He expressed the chamber's willingness to cooperate with its Libyan counterpart for their mutual benefit and to overcome any obstacles to the prosperity of trade relations between the two countries.

Farjali said he welcomed all Lebanese to visit Libya in order to increase communication and in order to implement useful mechanisms. He expressed his hope that his visit would lead to positive results for excellent and permanent economic relations.

After signing the agreement, an open session with the audience was held during which questions about the benefits of business in Libya and applicable laws were discussed. Members of the delegation provided detailed explanations about the projects at hand and the nature of investment in the country and the facilities offered to investors, particularly Arabs. They pointed out the need for investments in all fields in Libya, expressing hopes for the potential of making use of Lebanese expertise in the fields of industry, construction, reconstruction and services.

Farjali also pointed out that Libya will facilitate the process of providing visas to Lebanese businessmen, which will be done at the Libyan airports through communication with the Chamber of Tripoli. ■

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chance to further strengthen economic and trade cooperation between both countries.

For his part, Ambassador Koval said the relationship between both countries is excellent, and offered all possible help to further develop it. He also welcomed any Lebanese delegation willing to visit Ukraine, and said he hoped trade would increase between the two countries.

The forum, which lasted for three days, was attended by representatives of major Ukrainian companies involved in the export and import of agricultural products and their Lebanese partners, and several B2B meetings were held, during which key technical details were discussed.

Moreover, field visits to Lebanon's south and the Bekaa regions were organized, during which the Ukrainian delegation was introduced to the advanced technologies used in Lebanon for the production of fruit and vegetables in light of the global environmental conservation through good agricultural practices and quality systems, particularly GLOBALGAP & ISO: 22.000. ■

### FOLLOW-UP IN ORDER TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF LEBANESE EXPORTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE AGRICULTURAL FIELD IN EACH OF THE REPUBLICS OF IRAQ AND EGYPT



The Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Tripoli and the North has been carrying out many multifaceted activities which focus on ways to secure the transfer of Lebanese exports, particularly those in the agricultural sector, by providing sea routes and discussing possible facilities and exemptions from transit fees that could be set by the relevant authorities in both Iraq and Egypt. Similar rules have already been set by the Turkish authorities in terms of exemptions from transit fees for Lebanese exports through the port of Mersin in response to the efforts made by the Chamber of Tripoli in this area.

The chamber has reported continuous communication with the official Iraqi and Egyptian authorities with the aim of signing cooperation agreements in order to boost bilateral relations between Lebanon and the two countries in order to achieve this. This is done through the promotion of the areas of maritime commercial transport movement, as exports have not been able to go through land routes due to the situation in Syria.

Efforts aim to provide national services to large segments of agricultural exporters in order to meet their legitimate demands. It is also to be noted that cooperation with IDAL, in supporting them financially, has helped encourage investments, which is in the interest of the Lebanese Treasury both in terms of performance ratio of the value-added tax and other taxes. Moreover, refrigerated and transit trucks are a commercially significant element that plays an important role in the structure of the national economy.

It is worth noting in this context that each of the ambassadors of Iraq and Egypt have been working hard in contributing ways to find swift solutions to the difficult circumstances experienced by the refrigerated Lebanese trucks and transit trucks. Furthermore, the Egyptian authorities concerned expressed their readiness for agreements of cooperation to be signed between the two countries and possible exemptions from transit fees. Similarly the Iraqi embassy's doors are open to projects and proposals of Lebanese investors in various sectors and Iraq is providing the necessary visas for Lebanese to carry out commercial projects and urban development on the ground in Iraq.

Ultimately, this wide range of communication, reaching senior officials in Lebanon and in neighboring Arab countries, is focused on the exemption from transit fees for goods, commodities and trucks while passing through Iraq, as well as exemption from the necessary fees for the empty trucks returning to Lebanon through the land of Iraq. What is required from the Iraqi side will positively affect the exemption of goods, commodities and trucks from transit fees while passing through Egypt as well. ■

## Why Lebanon Shines

# TUFENKJIAN A LEGACY SINCE 1909

### OUR LEGACY

Tufenkjian is a family tradition that inspired a legacy.

Over 100 years ago, Leon Tufenkjian first opened the doors of our jewelry house with a passion for creating exquisite, unique works of jeweled art. We have carried on this passion ever since and have earned an unrivaled reputation for jewelry excellence in the region.

Since 1909, Tufenkjian has been designing for a discerning clientele who seeks treasures that are stunning and timeless. Traveling from all over the globe, jewelry lovers enter our luxurious showroom knowing they will find the precious gems, captivating designs and the superior quality they desire.

Today, we are proud to carry on our father's legacy as Lebanon's most prestigious fine jeweler, recognized for our expertise and for our capability to consistently create jewelry that dreams are made of.

### COLLECTIONS

#### The Ultimates

Stunning...dramatic...decadent. This is The Ultimates collection!

The quintessential essence of Tufenkjian is The Ultimates collection – our premiere haute jewelry line of sets and individual pieces crafted to fulfill any woman's bejeweled desires.

### THE SETS

Avant garde or classically chic, The Sets of Tufenkjian cater to the woman seeking the perfect jeweled expression of who she is, inside and out.

### THE TRENDS

At Tufenkjian, our clients always find what's on trend and in fashion. There is style for every season...capture the moment with The Trends collection of Tufenkjian.

### THE BRIDE

To be adorned is to be adored. Tufenkjian's bridal collection is the final touch to making every woman's wedding dreams come true.

Here comes The Bride!



### THE TIMEPIECES

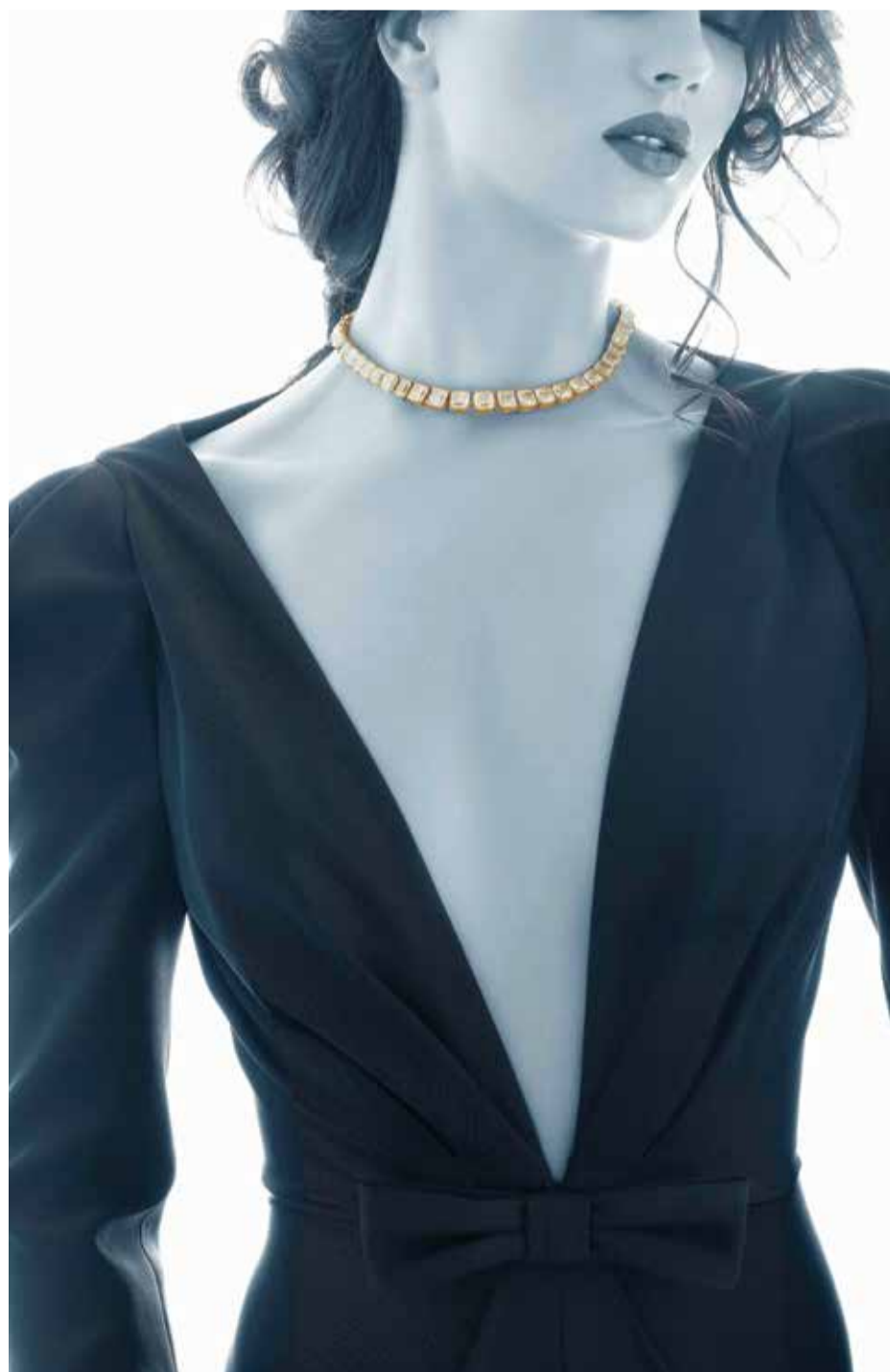
Shine all the time with the unique and beautiful selection of gold watches set with brilliant diamonds from the Timepieces collection of Tufenkjian.

### OUR REPUTATION

All legacies are built on reputation.

At Tufenkjian, we are proud to have created a brand whose reputation is synonymous with luxury, quality and value.

We welcome you to find out more about the essence of Tufenkjian via our regionally recognized promotional campaigns and our press coverage. ■



"THE SETS OF TUFENKJIAN CATER TO THE WOMAN SEEKING THE PERFECT JEWELLED EXPRESSION OF WHO SHE IS, INSIDE AND OUT."

# Happening Now

## BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISE FORUM AND EXHIBITION BIFEX 2013

April 17, 2013



BIFEX 2013 – Opening Ceremony

From right to left: Head of Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group Raouf Abou Zaki, Chairman of FCCIAL Mohamed Choucair, Minister of Economy and Trade Nicolas Nahas representing President of the Lebanese Republic Michel Sleiman, Minister of Industry Vrej Sabounjian, President of the Lebanese Franchise Association Charles Arbid

The opening of the 2013 Beirut International Franchise Forum and Exhibition BIFEX took place on April 17, under the patronage of the President of Lebanon Michel Sleiman, represented by the Minister of Economy and Trade Nicolas Nahhas.

The “Branding Lebanon, Branding a Nation,” initiative was launched at the opening by the president of the Lebanese Franchise Association, Charles Arbid. The initiative lays the foundation for the protection and support of the Lebanese brand, based on the idea that “our distinction is in our national unity and our initiator, producer and creative culture, in the way we live: a lifestyle adored by others.”

Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group participated in the organization of the forum, which was attended by the Minister of Industry Vrej Sabounjian, and of Information Walid Daouk, Chairman of the Federation of Chambers Mohamed Choucair, the head of the Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group, Raouf Abou Zaki, economists, businessmen and industrialists, traders and investors, as well as participants in the meeting of the World Franchise Council taking place in Beirut in conjunction with BIFEX 2013.

Minister Nahhas, in the president’s message, stressed on the importance for the Ministry of Economy of franchising, which he said has become “one of the most effective growth strategies for most companies.” He added that it has “generated a lot of successful names in this sector, especially since working under this concept, which combines investors and creators under a single brand, has contributed to achieving growth.”

Moreover, he said, “the potential for applying standardized systems of administration, advertising, production and distribution, and consequently providing a uniform product or service which is consistent with the specifications and that meets consumer requirements and satisfies their tastes and expectations, has also developed everywhere.”

Meanwhile Minister Sabounjian noted that “the franchise industry is a supportive fundamental pillar of the economy along with industry, commerce and the service sectors.” He also noted that the characteristics of Lebanon’s national economy and society’s unique features have enabled the country to spread the concept of franchising more easily.

“We have made a statement in the world of fashion and wine, so we are required to make franchising, kitchen, Lebanese cuisine and others transcend similar success,” he added. “This way, we will be able to further develop, and become a launching pad for expansion to the countries of the Middle East, Europe and Africa, and even South Asia and Russia.”

Chairman Choucair noted that the free economy of Lebanon, and the domestic market’s readiness for foreign products and companies and the faith in the market economy, has begun to reflect positively on the national economy. The conference, he added, was a proof of the success of Lebanese institutions in expanding domestically and internationally.

“The experience of Lebanon in the areas of promotion and publicity and the presence of active and widespread Lebanese media, have all contributed to enhancing the good reputation of Lebanese products,” Choucair said, pointing out that “creating a concept and developing it

contributes to a large extent in the development of the local industry as a whole.”

Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Head Abou Zaki concluded by saying that Lebanon is the right location for a forum such as BIFEX, since the country is at the forefront in the region in terms of the number of projects and brands “whose great local success has attracted investors and who have been able to become trademarks with regional and international presence.”

“The franchising sector has been bringing international success stories and transforming them into successful investments in Lebanon or the region,” he added. “But at the same time, it has been making its own success stories which have proved their competence in the market and have become in demand abroad via the concept of franchising. This way, Lebanon today is a source of many successful franchises.”

Arbid will launch the strategic plan of the initiative “Branding Lebanon, Branding a Nation,” at a press conference held at the Phoenicia Hotel for the introduction of the Lebanese franchises, attended by the WFC. ■

## HORECA 2013



The HORECA 2013 exhibition opening ceremony took place in BIEL for the 20th year, in the presence of economic figures, as well as the heads of unions, associations and companies and various exhibition participants.

During the ceremony, the Minister of Tourism Fady Abboud decorated Nuhad Damous, the founder of Hospitality Services, the company which organizes HORECA, as Knight of the Order of Merit for his efforts in serving the community during his long professional life.

Joumana Dabbous Salameh, the general director of HORECA, was also decorated with an Honorary Shield by Chairman of the Federation of the Chambers

of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon Mohamed Choucair, as a token in recognition of her active participation and involvement in the world of agro-food business and hospitality in Lebanon, for which Salameh expressed her gratitude and honor.

In its 20th year, HORECA continues to be the hub at which all the experts in the food industry are able to meet. HORECA 2013 saw more than 12,000 visitors, with 385 participants from various companies, as well as international brands of equipment, products and services for restaurants and the agro-food sector. ■



Mrs. Joumana Dabbous Salameh - general director of HORECA decorated with an Honorary Shield by Chairman of FCCIAL Mr. Mohamed Choucair, in the presence of Minister of Tourism Mr. Fady Abboud, Chairman of IDAL Mr. Nabil Itani, FCCIAL Board Members Mr. Toufic Dabboussi and Dr. Nabil Fahed

**Special Feature** | By Youmna Naufal

# THE ART OF YOUTH: THE MUKHI SISTERS



THIS IS THE STORY OF TWO CULTURES THAT HAVE COME TOGETHER TO CREATE GEMS. LITERALLY.

The Mukhi sisters, Maya, Meena and Zeenat are half-Lebanese and half-Indian. Both parents were originally in the jewelry business. Their mother is Effat Kreidie, the creative force behind Effy's Jewelry. Their father, Chandru Mukhi, comes from a long line of Indian jewelers, in the industry since 1875.

Eldest daughter Maya recalls how she would spend her time growing up collecting stones and watching her mother create gem designs. "I always knew this is what I wanted to do. I was obsessed with the colors of stones and putting them together to form a piece. I also knew I wanted to collaborate with my sisters on this project."

Using gold, diamonds and other precious and semi-precious stones, the sisters draw on their personalities, interests and obsessions to

create high-end pieces. "Every piece has a story and is a statement of individuality," Maya says. She explains that their brand has gained popularity through social media, mostly on Facebook and Twitter. She gives me the example of a trend the sisters started called '#Occupy Conversations' and



explains that "when anyone wears any of our pieces, it will automatically give them something to talk about, thus occupy[ing] conversations"

Their pieces fall into different signature collections: 'Queen Vicky,' a vintage-based array of pieces combining precious stones with gold; 'Ever Yours,' finer pieces for romantics that includes rings, bracelets and bangles, streamlined with pendants of sapphire and emerald. 'Contagious' is a range about the evolution of the brand. Contagious continuously reflects the most eclectic of Mukhi Sisters

designs: a combination of creative spark and explosive originality defines the Mukhi Sisters' aesthetic. Finally their fourth collection is 'Baby Rocks' for the little ones.

For more information, you can check out Facebook: MukhiSisters / Twitter: MukhiSisters. For any inquiries you can email info@mukhisisters.com

Office & Showroom Beirut Souks +961 1 989188

Office & Showroom: Dedeyan bldg. 5th floor +961 1 247274

Available at Effy's Jewelry Verdun 730 +961 1 785473



## Happening Now

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP BUSINESS FORUM @ FORWARD RECRUITMENT FORUM

Biel - April 18-21



The 13th session of the first employment and guidance forum in Lebanon and the region, "Forward," and the third session of the "Entrepreneurship Business Forum," began on Thursday, April 18 at Biel under the patronage of the Minister of Economy and Trade Nicolas Nahhas and in the presence of the guest of honor, former Minister Leila Soloh.

This year the Forward exhibition coincided with the Business Forum and the annual outstanding concept "the Visionary Entrepreneur Panels." It also coincided with the new, first-of-its-kind event "HR Summit Lebanon," which took place under the slogan "See what you want; get what you see."

Thus it was the most prominent economic event, and is one which continues and evolves year after year, despite the economic difficulties and challenges in the country, in order to reduce the migration of economic energies and contribute to the development of businesses and accelerate the growth of the national economy.

"The exhibition provides employment opportunities to all those with years of experience whose jobs no longer meet their potentials and expectations," Tanya Eid, the chairperson of the board of directors, and director general of the companies Careers and E. Square, said. She noted that "exhibitors are offering more than 6,000 jobs in Lebanon and abroad, particularly in the Gulf countries, despite the current political and economic conditions."

She also highlighted the large number of Arab companies participating in the exhibition, referring to the special attention the exhibition gives to "entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises who wish to develop their businesses and who aspire to establish their companies through bank loans." Thus, she added, the exhibition will contribute by aiding employment opportunities.

Since its inception in 2001, Forward has received nearly 1,579 exhibitors, including local, regional and international companies and institutions, and has been visited by more than 524,000 people, providing around 46,000 jobs.

Eid also mentioned that Forward challenges the prevailing circumstances this year and is hosting, on an area of 6,000 square meters and over four consecutive days, more than 150 local regional and international companies, prominent in the sectors of engineering, trade, industry, construction, insurance, banking, telecommunications, information technology, hospitality, food and consumable commodities, among others. It is also open daily for job seekers from beginners and new graduates to those wishing to build on their existing careers to fulfil their ambitions.

This year Forward launched a new, first-of-its-kind, event, which will be taking place annually, titled HR Summit Lebanon. The summit hosted 18 Lebanese and international figures, pioneers in the field of human resources management, with the participation of more than 125 specialists in human resources and was held on

Friday and Saturday 19 and 20 April 2013.

Furthermore, the Business Forum was once again held this year, supported by many institutions that believe in the important role it plays. In its third session, the Forum was held under the patronage of the Bank of Lebanon and in collaboration with the Federation of Chambers and the Chamber of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, the Association of Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce And Industry ASCAME, the U.S.-Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon, the Lebanese Association for concession licenses, and the participation of a large number of economic bodies, companies, institutions and civil society associations and experts.

With the participation of more than 120 companies and institutions, the forum included a special section involving

specialists and economists that offered visitors consulting services in the areas of law, finance, marketing and feasibility studies, in addition to workshops and training courses in order to develop the capabilities of company owners, thereby helping them to increase their productivity and expand their potential.

The highlight of the forum, according to Eid, were the Visionary Entrepreneur Panels; these are open dialogue sessions, which were renewed after their success in the past two years.

Ultimately, the event aims to support the labor market and the national economy by providing the necessary services and meeting the needs of companies in the process of establishment or expansion, from financial services and individual counseling to training and networking. ■



FCCIAL stand



CCIAB-ML Stand

# News Bits | provided by www.businessnews.com.lb

## BEIRUT PORT ACTIVITY HAS GROWN SHARPLY

Suggested measures to manage congestion



New measures for managing the port's increasing import and export activity were discussed in a meeting between the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation (MoPWT), the Port of Beirut, the Syndicate of Public Truck Owners, and the International Chamber of Navigation (ICN).

Elie Zakhour, President of the ICN, said: "The possibility of increasing the Customs staff, bringing in more trucks to move stacked goods, and increasing the number of work hours at the port were among the measures discussed."

Exports increased lately from 3,000 to 7,500 containers per month. "Events in Syria disrupted regular land routes so traders and farmers resorted to maritime transport instead." For the same reason, incoming containers have also increased from 24,000 to 35,000 last month, according to Zakhour.

"Vessels used to enter the port directly or wait for a maximum of 24 hours. Today, ships are waiting up to four days to be able to go in," said Zakhour. A meeting will be held at the MoPWT next week to decide on final measures to reduce congestion at the port.

The first phase of a project to expand one of the Port's container terminals was recently completed. The terminal will be ready to operate by September, once container handling equipment is installed. The number of cranes will be increased to 36. "The port can currently contain one million containers per year. Starting September, it will be able to host 1.4 million containers," said Zakhour. The port is now considering expansion on its southern end.

Reported by Yasmine Alieh

## SOLAR POWER FROM BEIRUT RIVER

\$40-million project financed by Energy Ministry

The first local solar farm will be constructed along the Beirut River. It will provide up to 10 MW of electricity once connected to the national grid. The 'Beirut River Solar Snake' project is governed by the Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) and the Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation (LCEC).

The project's first phase will see the installation of solar panels across 20,000 square meters of the river's bed, generating 1 MW as a start.



The first phase is expected to be completed within a period of six months. A pre-qualification round for interested firms will take place on April 23. Local and foreign technical experts have been invited to set the technical specs and regulations of the bid. The first contract is expected to be awarded in July this year.

Overall, the project comprises ten phases. Each phase has a budget of \$4 million fully funded by the MoEW. "The \$4 million figure is the maximum budget set, but the bid will attract contractors that will provide lower cost estimates," said Ziad El Zein, Vice President of the LCEC. Revenue generated from each phase will be used to fund the later phases. "A new phase will be launched every time the funds for a 1 MW facility are secured," Zein said. By the end of all the phases, 6.5 kilometers of the Beirut River will be covered by solar panels generating a total of 10 MW and connected to the Electricité Du Liban (EDL) grid.

The solar panels will be installed across the River's concrete structure six meters above the water level. Given that the river is on a downward sloping, the risk of submersion is minimal. Maintenance of the panels is expected to be part of the contract signed with the winning bidder.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### ICCIT (INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY)

Duration June 19-21  
Venue American University of Beirut

Building on the success of ICCIT-2012 and ICCIT-2011 conferences, we invite you to participate in the Third International Conference on Communications and Information Technology (ICCIT-2013) that will be held in Beirut, Lebanon on June 19-21, 2013, hosted by the American University of Beirut.

The conference aims to bring together leading scientists, academics, practicing engineers and policy makers from government, academia and private sectors. ICCIT-2013 seeks to be a forum for the exchange of ideas on the latest development and use of communications and information technologies.

ICCIT-2013 will be inaugurated under the patronage of his Excellency Mr. Nicolas Sehnaoui, the Minister of Telecommunications in Lebanon.

**Exhibitor Information**  
Organizer's name: American University of Beirut  
Tel: (01) 347.952  
Fax: (01) 744.462  
Email: contact@iccit-conf.org  
Website: www.iccit-conf.org

### OUTDOOR LEBANON

Duration June 26-30  
Venue BIEL

Outdoor Lebanon 2013 is a unique event and platform for the growing outdoor and sports industry in Lebanon. Over 20,000 visitors attended the 2012 show and hundreds of exhibitors gathered under one roof to display the latest in sports and outdoor equipment.

**Exhibitor Information**  
Organizer's name: IFP  
Address: IFP Bldg., SNA St., Hazmieh  
Tel: (05) 959.111  
Fax: (05) 959.888  
Email: info@ifp.com.lb  
Website: www.ifpexpo.com

## MADE IN LEBANON

Duration October 3-6, 2013  
Venue Biel

Organized under the patronage of the Lebanese Ministry of Industry and held in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, Made in Lebanon will take place for the first time and will gather more than 150 Lebanese exhibitors from different industries and more than 20,000 expected visitors.

The exhibition will take the brand "Lebanese," with its industries and culture, to the business opportunities available in Lebanon. With seminars, forums, and cultural events, it promises to be the perfect opportunity for those looking to expand and expose their business.

**Exhibitor Information**  
Organizer's name: Promofair  
Address: Media Center II, 5th Flr, Accaoui, Beirut  
Tel: (01) 561.600/1/2/3/4  
Fax: (01) 561.605  
Email: info@promofair.com.lb  
Website: www.promofair.com.lb

## DREAM 2013 THE REAL ESTATE EXPO

Duration Oct 6-19

This fourth edition of this large-scale real estate exhibition will gather a wide number of renowned real estate developers, brokers, and financiers. Dream 2013 will occupy a larger space than previous years, to make the experience of both exhibitors and visitors more convenient, beneficial, and interesting.

Defying the challenging situation, Dream 2013 foresees a positive outcome and a change of perspective for the industry. Developers are seeing in exhibitions such as Dream the ideal platform to introduce, display, and sell their properties, and Dream will aid developers in fulfilling their objectives.

**Exhibitor Information**  
Organizer's name: Promofair  
Address: Media Center II, 5th Flr, Accaoui, Beirut  
Tel: (01) 561.600/1/2/3/4  
Fax: (01) 561.605  
Email: info@promofair.com.lb  
Website: www.promofair.com.lb

## A Spanish girl in Beirut

# SUPERSTITION IN JEWELLERY

By Belén Hernández-Mancha

**T**HE POWER OF JEWELRY HAS ENDURED THROUGHOUT HISTORY. IT HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT FEATURE IN DIFFERENT CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS AND, NEEDLESS TO MENTION, IS ONE OF THE OLDEST FORMS OF BODY ADORNMENT. RECENT STUDIES SUGGEST SEA SHELLS ARE THE OLDEST EXAMPLE OF JEWELRY, IN USE AS LONG AGO AS 100,000 YEARS.

Jewelry has profound meaning. It has been valued not only for its ornamental significance, but also for its use as form of expression; its form of communication. All societies throughout the ages have used different gems and minerals that represent objects of spiritual supremacy, political dominance and power. Jewels have been given a ritual use as amulets or charms. Within Mediterranean countries and the Middle East, many people believe that gestures of envy or praise from others hold the power to transmit positive and negative energy, good and bad luck. There are studies that demonstrate the powerful ability of one's look to unconsciously transport a psychical force, and with it evil wishes, unto others; commonly known in the Arab world as 'Ain' or 'Hasad'.

The "evil eye" amulet, originally called Nazar Boncuk, is one of the most symbolic icons in the Middle Eastern region, dating back thousands of years. This blue eye can find its roots with the arrival of immigrants from northern Europe to Turkey. Legend has it that the blue

eyes of these immigrants generated fear in the people of the Mediterranean country, leading to the creation of little glass eyes to protect the holder from the Nordic look, further utilising the symbolism of the color blue, which is linked to heaven and light.

The Oriental talismans usually resemble circular colored spheres, representing the evil eye. The blue eye symbol can also be found in the "hand of Hamsa," also known as the hand of Fatima by Muslims. Christians on the other hand, have given such amulets



various other labels, most commonly Mary's Hand, or the Hand of Miriam, referring to the sister of Moses. The amulet represents the open right hand and is very popular as a way to ward off the evil eye, bringing blessings, power and strength to those who wear it.

Symbols such as the Hamsa or the evil eye amulet have crossed borders and no matter the religion, are very commonly found all over the world



today, in Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities. Perhaps this has to do with our collective memory. We recognize a protective symbol regardless of whether we know its meaning or not. Regardless of our religious beliefs, the intense positive energy that such ornaments communicate, reaches our body one way or another, leaving our consciousness with a sense of peace and a belief that we are protected.

During the Islamic rule in Spain, the hand of Hamsa became popular and the Arabs even placed it on the iconic Gate of Justice at the beloved Alhambra Palace in Granada. In 1526, promoted by the Emperor Charles V, the Church forbade the use of symbols such as the hand of Fatima. Nonetheless, such Arab dogmas survive in Spain and are still prevalent in Spanish culture. For example, the hand of Fatima is still commonly placed on main gates and door entries into homes, even though over the years it may have lost some of its symbolic significance.

Superstitious societies and sceptics agree that the blue eye found in Hamsa is surrounded by a halo of mystery and that many people are trapped by its magnetism. As we all know,

"prevention is better than cure"; so whether it is true that these emblematic jewels protect us against the evil eye or not, as a Spaniard, I will continue to wear mine around my neck, just in case... ■

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