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INTERNATIONAL SOS

Lebanon: Urban centres: Avoid further protests over potential subsidy cuts


OVERVIEW




Level: Notice



Location: Lebanon



Category: Protest/Rally, Political unrest



Active: 09 Dec 2020 - 08 Jan 2021

Last Updated: 09 Dec 2020 20:38 (GMT)

The table below shows the number of impacted and potentially impacted individuals and assets at the date/time the alert was issued. The counts include individuals within the impact radius of the alert and may not reflect the total number of people in each area listed.

Please log into [Tracker](#) for the latest information or [click here](#) for an up-to-date list of affected individuals and assets in the impacted area.

EXPOSURE IN IMPACTED AREA ONLY

Location	There Now	There in next 24 hours	There in next 1-7 days	There while the alert is active
Lebanon (Medium Risk)	3	4	10	20
TOTAL	3	4	10	20

Members in Lebanon **in the coming weeks** should avoid further protests over the potential removal of subsidies on some imported basic goods. Related protests have occurred since 7 December in the capital Beirut, Tripoli (North governorate) and Sidon (South governorate). The removal of subsidies – and subsequent increase in prices – is expected to heighten anti-government unrest and crime rates against the backdrop of heightened political instability and a deepening economic crisis.

MORE DETAIL

The demonstrations follow an announcement on 1 December by Central Bank Governor Riad Salameh that the institution may only be able to sustain subsidies on essential goods – including wheat, fuel and essential medication – until **February**, due to rapidly declining foreign currency reserves. The central bank has played a pivotal role in supporting the imports of basic goods by upholding the official exchange rate, despite a stark depreciation in the value of the Lebanese pound since 2019.

Although caretaker Prime Minister Hassan Diab’s administration on 8 December announced that an emergency plan would be devised to uphold some of the subsidies, deadlocked negotiations over the formation of a new cabinet led by the Prime Minister-Designate Saad Hariri will delay comprehensive reforms and the dispersal of international aid. In turn, a further downturn in living standards will serve as a key driver behind anti-government demonstrations and an increase in crime – particularly petty and opportunistic theft – over the short-to-medium terms.

WHAT WE ADVISED YOUR PEOPLE

Inbound travellers

Defer all travel to Lebanon amid persistent anti-government unrest and worsening socio-economic conditions.

In-country employees


Liaise with your local contacts to remain apprised of the latest developments on the ground, including the timings and locations of any planned and/or ongoing events in your area.

Foreign nationals should avoid all protests due to the risk of localised unrest. Local nationals and journalists attending gatherings should exercise caution and ensure access to reliable communications in the event of an emergency.

Anticipate heightened security in the vicinity of demonstrations. Follow all official directives.

Monitor our alerts on Lebanon for updates.

ASSISTANCE



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