

Banned pesticides ‘smuggled into Lebanon as cleaning products,’ MP claims

BEIRUT: Banned pesticides linked to cancer and other illnesses are being smuggled into Lebanon and used by farmers across the country, a former Lebanese health minister has claimed.

Wael Abou Faour said on Wednesday that harmful agricultural products prohibited in most countries are freely available on the Lebanese market and pose a growing threat to public health.

Some farmers are using the pesticides “out of ignorance, while others are aware of their danger, but use them out of lack of conscience,” the Democratic Gathering MP said.

Lebanese army helicopter crashes near Beirut killing 2 crew members and injuring 1

BEIRUT: A Lebanese army helicopter crashed during a training mission in a forest east of Beirut on Wednesday night, killing two crew members and wounding one, the army said.

The army, in a terse statement, said the helicopter crashed near the mountain town of Hammana. It gave no further details.

Lebanon is in the grips of the worst economic crisis in its modern history and the army has been severely affected. The nearly four-year meltdown is rooted in decades of corruption and mismanagement by the country’s ruling class.

Top Turkish diplomat calls for Iraq to designate PKK a terrorist organization during Baghdad visit

BAGHDAD: Turkiye’s foreign minister on Tuesday denounced a separatist Kurdish group that operates in northern Iraqi territory as an enemy of both Turkiye and Iraq, and urged the Iraqi government to ban the group as a terrorist

organization as Ankara has done.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan urged Iraq to label the Kurdistan Worker's Party, or PKK, a terrorist organization during his first visit to Baghdad since taking office.

[US says deal on Iran releasing five US citizens on track](#)

WASHINGTON: The United States believes an understanding on Iran eventually releasing five US citizens remains on track, White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said on Tuesday but declined to offer any timeline. Iran on Aug. 10 released four imprisoned US citizens into house arrest, where they joined a fifth already under home confinement, in the first step of a deal under which \$6 billion in Iranian funds in South Korea would be unfrozen and the five would eventually be allowed to leave the Islamic Republic.

[UN Libya envoy urges 'unified government' for election in apparent shift](#)

TRIPOLI: United Nations Libya envoy Abdoulaye Bathily said on Tuesday that "a unified government, agreed upon by the major players, is an imperative for leading the country to elections," an apparent shift from an earlier position that elections should come first.

Libya's internationally recognized Government of National Unity (GNU) in Tripoli has not been accepted by the eastern-based parliament since early 2021 after a failed attempt to have national elections.