

# Child among 13 civilians killed by Houthi ballistic missile

Author:

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SANAA: A child was among 13 people killed when a missile fired by Yemeni rebels struck a tribal leader's home south of the strategic city of Marib, military and medical sources said on Friday.

"A Houthi ballistic missile hit the house of Sheikh Abdul Latif Al-Qibli in Al-Jawba on Thursday evening during a meeting with tribal leaders fighting on the government's side," a government military official said.

"Thirteen people, including a child, were killed," he added. The death toll was confirmed by a medical source in the area.

As well as the child, Thursday evening's missile strike also killed four tribal leaders, said the military official.

At least 11 houses were damaged and 16 civilians were wounded in the attack, according to the officials.

Yemen's Information Minister Moammar Al-Eryani said on Twitter that at least 12 people were killed, including two sons of Al-Qibli, whose fate was unknown. The Houthi "militia continues to systematically and deliberately bombard villages and homes ... in order to inflict max casualties among civilians" forcing hundreds of families and displaced to flee, he wrote.

The Arab coalition backing Yemen's government has been conducting a fierce air campaign since Oct. 11 to prevent the rebels from reaching Marib city.

Since then, about 2,000 Houthi fighters have been killed in Al-Jawba, about 50 km south of Marib, and two other districts, according to the coalition. Fierce fighting has gripped Al-Jawba district in recent days.

Earlier this month, the Houthi rebels advanced in the district of Abdiya, south of the city of Marib.

The Houthis "are committing genocide" in Abdiya, preventing food, medicine and other basic needs from reaching the district, said Marib provincial Gov. Sheikh Sultan Al-Aradah.



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Arab coalition says 95 Houthis killed in strikes on Juba and Al-Kasarah

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## [Lebanon asks Russia for satellite images from day of Beirut port blast](#)

Author:

Fri, 2021-10-29 22:12

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Michel Aoun has asked Russian ambassador Alexander Rudakov to provide satellite images of Beirut from Aug. 4, 2020, when a huge explosion rocked the city's port, according to a Lebanese presidency tweet on Friday.

The massive explosion occurred when around 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate – which had been stored at the port since 2014 – and quantities of explosives ignited. The resulting blast killed more than 215 people, injured thousands and destroyed swathes of the Lebanese capital.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said a week ago: "I would like to once again offer my condolences to the Lebanese people... Many years ago, ammonium

nitrate was delivered to and stored in the port; the local authorities did not give it the attention it needed, although, as far as I know, they wanted to sell it profitably.”

Putin added: “As for helping with the investigation, frankly speaking, I do not understand how satellite images can help, and whether we even have any. However, I promise that I will make inquiries, and if we do have anything and can provide assistance to the investigation, we will do so.”

After the explosion last year, Aoun told the press: “There are two possibilities; the explosion occurred either as a result of negligence or external interference by means of a missile or a bomb.”

In October 2020, then-Prime Minister Hassan Diab said he asked French President Emmanuel Macron for satellite images of the port before, during and after the explosion, and that he had sent a similar request to Italy. Neither country has yet publicly confirmed their intention to provide such images to Lebanon.

The lead investigator of the probe into the explosion, Judge Tarek Bitar, is expected to issue his rulings early next year, a judicial source told Arab News.

However, the probe into what was one of history’s largest non-nuclear explosions is stalling amid a smear campaign against Bitar and pushback from powerful political factions.

Bitar has so far accused 10 officials, officers, and judges of being in part culpable for the explosion, including Diab; two MPs from the Amal movement (Hezbollah’s ally) Ali Hassan Khalil and Ghazi Zeaiter; MP Nohad Machnouk; former minister Youssef Finianos; Director General of State Security Maj. Gen. Tony Saliba; his counterpart at General Security Maj. Gen. Abbas Ibrahim; and former army commander Gen. Jean Kahwaji.

Hezbollah has accused Bitar of politicizing the investigation, and several of the politicians accused of negligence and causing the death of hundreds and injury of thousands have refused to appear before Bitar when summoned for questioning.

The latest of those is Zeaiter, who failed to appear for his scheduled interview with Bitar on Friday.

On Aug. 25, Bitar supervised a simulation of the welding that preceded the explosion in the port warehouse. The simulation was attended by several lawyers representing the parties concerned and a number of security and judicial officials. The Meteorological Department was also present to provide advice about the weather conditions on the day the explosion occurred.

French and American officials were also involved in the investigations, the results of which remain confidential.

The families of the victims and those affected by the explosion have been increasingly vocal about their dissatisfaction with the fact that, more than



one year after the blast, no senior official has yet been held accountable for the country's worst peace-time disaster.



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Families of Beirut blast victims back judge amid pressureLebanon court dismisses case against Beirut blast judge allowing probe to continue

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## [How beating breast cancer changed the lives of four women in the Middle East](#)

Fri, 2021-10-29 19:55

DUBAI: Gloria Halim, Cristina Polo, Sapna Venugopal and Bharti Rao come from very different backgrounds but they have one thing in common: they are all breast-cancer survivors who emerged from their battles with the disease with a new outlook on life and a desire to help others.

The four women, who are in their 40s and 50s, are among the millions of women worldwide each year who are diagnosed with some form of breast cancer and embark on a difficult journey of surgeries, chemotherapy and radiotherapy to overcome what can be a fatal illness.

Beyond the physical side effects of the treatments, the experience of fighting and beating cancer can have a profound emotional effect on women. Indeed, medical practitioners say the vast majority of patients emerge from treatment with a greater willingness to extend a helping hand to others.

Many also take what is often seen as a second chance as a sign to change the direction of their lives, taking on new challenges or switching to a new career path.

British citizen Gloria Halim, for example, was working in the information technology sector in the UK when she discovered she had breast cancer 14 years ago. Now in her mid-40s, she is a chief wellness officer in the corporate world and a certified holistic health practitioner living in Dubai.



Breast cancer, known to be the most common cancer in women worldwide, is the leading cause of death among Saudi women, according to a retrospective epidemiological study conducted in 2012. (Shutterstock)

“For me, the key information is that prevention is possible and is important,” Halim told Arab News this month, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. “Having gone through what I’ve been through, there is no way I want anybody else to go through it.”

Halim said she has come to appreciate the importance of good physical, emotional and mental health in helping to reduce stress and maintain a strong immune system.



“We are not built to be in fight-or-flight mode constantly,” she said. “It takes a long time to get to the point where the human body says: ‘I’ve had enough. I can’t move.’ The immune system goes down, inflammation of the bodily organs goes up, an environment for disease grows.”

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in the world. As of December last year, 7.8 million surviving women had been diagnosed with breast cancer in the past five years, according to the World Health Organization. In 2020, about 2.3 million women were diagnosed with breast cancer worldwide and 685,000 died from the disease.

In Saudi Arabia, of the 24,485 cases of cancer recorded in 2018, 14.8 percent involved breast cancer, making it the most common form of cancer in the Kingdom. Of the 4,707 cancer cases recorded in the UAE in the same year, 22.4 percent were breast cancer.



L-R: Bharti Rao, Cristina Polo and Sapna Venugopal who all beat breast cancer. (Supplied)

While there was little improvement in breast cancer mortality figures between the 1930s and 1970s, survival rates began to rise in several countries from the 1980s on, thanks to early detection programs and new and improved treatments.

A growing body of research, and significant medical advances, continue to improve the prognosis for millions of women with the disease. But perhaps the most important development has been the increase in public awareness and the willingness of women to check themselves regularly and seek help early if they notice a potential problem.

Cristina Polo, from France, was 43 and living in Dubai when she noticed a

lump in her breast in 2018. Determined to see her daughter, who was six at the time and the youngest of three siblings, grow up and have children of her own, she sought treatment immediately.

“Since cancer treatment, I have had a thirst for life,” she told Arab News. “I have this urge to do things in life that I kept postponing or put aside, saying I would do them later.”

Like Halim, Polo viewed her victory over cancer as an opportunity to change course. After completing her treatment, she resigned from a senior position in Dubai’s hospitality industry, began a course in digital marketing, earned a certificate in teaching English as a foreign language, and established a blog, called Cancer Majlis, devoted to cancer awareness.

## **INNUMBERS**

**\* 2.3m women diagnosed with breast cancer worldwide in 2020.**

**\* 685,000 breast cancer deaths globally in 2020.**

**(Source: WHO)**

She said she spent many years before she was confronted with cancer worrying about “what ifs” and putting off making changes.

“Then, boom, the diagnosis came,” Polo said. “Suddenly, all this ‘what if, what if, what if’ became ‘what else, what else, what else can I explore?’”

Polo moved to Paris last year, where she teaches English at a French hospitality school and is a consultant for the travel and hospitality industry. She also enjoys sculpting and painting in her spare time and does voluntary work with recovering cancer patients, helping them to plan their post-cancer lives by developing new skills in the arts.

Sapna Venugopal had a similar desire to help others following her cancer diagnosis in Sept. 2017 at the age of 46 while living in Dubai. So she began volunteering to visit patients undergoing chemotherapy in the city, and donating a portion of her income as a jewelry designer and from furniture restoration to a cancer charity in her native India.

Despite the many awareness campaigns launched by governments and charities the world over, women are still often left in shock when they receive a breast cancer diagnosis.



Pink umbrellas decorate the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health in the capital Beirut as part of a national campaign for the public awareness of breast cancer. (AFP/File Photo)

“At the very beginning everybody thinks they have just been handed a death sentence, which they haven’t,” Elsbeth Bentley, a nurse at Dubai’s Mediclinic City Hospital, told Arab News. She is one of the few specialist breast cancer nurses in the UAE, who undergo an extra year of training to teach them how to help with the specific needs of breast cancer patients, with a main focus on communication skills.

“Research shows that after the word ‘cancer’ has been mentioned in a meeting with a doctor, most people will only retain some 20 percent of what they are told, because it freezes the brain and there is this feeling that it is happening to somebody else and they are not connected with it,” Bentley added.

Regardless of background and social status, all women react to the diagnosis in a similar way, said Bissi Punnackel-Sivaraman, a breast care nurse at King’s College Hospital in Dubai.

“It is a stressful period,” she told Arab News. “Most of the time patients will be in shock upon diagnosis, followed by anger, anxiety, fear and loneliness. Some of the patients will be in denial and it will take some time for them to accept the diagnosis, as it happens unexpectedly.

“Initial reaction will be more or less the same. But taking it in and coping with the treatment can be slightly different, as each individual is unique



and it can depend on their personal, family and occupational backgrounds.”

Bharti Rao, from India, recalled feeling “absolutely numb” and slipping into a state of denial when cancer was diagnosed in 2018, the year she turned 40, while living in Dubai.



Dubai's Burj Khalifa is lit up in pink to raise awareness and funds to fight breast cancer. (AFP/File Photo)

“But I didn’t sit on it for long because I understood that the more I go into denial, the more I am being pushed toward darkness,” she told Arab News.

Rao said she drew much of her resolve to seek treatment and beat the disease from her husband, parents, daughters and in-laws.

“I fought physically but they fought with me mentally and physiologically,” she said. “And that is where my battle was won. My day started with a smile and ended with gratitude.”

Rao worked in the banking sector but left her job before the cancer diagnosis and had worked as a volunteer helping children with autism. After beating the disease she developed a new outlook on life and is now a certified holistic lifestyle coach who provides her services for free to friends and relatives in Dubai and other people they refer to her, helping them during their emotional journeys while fighting cancer.

There is clearly an overriding sense among many breast-cancer survivors that they have been given a second chance in life to take on fresh challenges and pursue experiences they had long put on hold. Many also emerge with a sense of gratitude and a desire to give something back in some way.

“They want to see some good come out of it,” said nurse Bentley. “Life is not going to go back to exactly how it was. Something in them has changed and that means they don’t want to accept the things they accepted before.”



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Saudi campaigners are highlighting the risks of breast cancer – and not only for women  
Saudi businesses think pink for October breast cancer awareness campaign

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## [On UK visit, Jordan's king calls for strengthening efforts to solve Middle East crises](#)

Author:

Thu, 2021-10-28 22:33

LONDON: Jordan's King Abdullah II on Thursday called for strengthening regional and international efforts to reach political solutions to Middle East crises that bring stability and security for the region.

His comments came during a visit to the UK capital, London, where he met with Prime Minister Boris Johnson to discuss strengthening economic, tourism, trade, and defense cooperation.

King Abdullah praised the UK's efforts in hosting the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), adding that he is looking forward to participating in it. "The meeting also covered the importance of stepping up regional and international efforts in the war against terrorism, within a holistic approach," Petra News Agency reported.

He called for reaching just and comprehensive peace, based on the two-state solution, which guarantees the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

King Abdullah said it was important to maintain support for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees to be able to continue its relief services in line with its UN mandate.

He also called for "ending unilateral Israeli measures that could undermine stability and the prospects for achieving peace."

His Majesty King Abdullah II meets with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on the centenary of diplomatic ties between [#Jordan](#) and [#UK](#), discusses strategic bilateral relations and enhancing economic, trade and defence cooperation

Details:<https://t.co/sz9xTv6kzA> [pic.twitter.com/Y1FBTk8YTX](https://pic.twitter.com/Y1FBTk8YTX)

– RHC (@RHCJO) [October 28, 2021](#)

Johnson reaffirmed his country's support for regional economic projects, commending Jordan for hosting refugees, including Syrians, and providing them with health and educational services.

"Johnson also lauded Jordan's commitment to reducing carbon emissions, and its efforts in mitigating the impact of climate change," the statement said. Speaking during a meeting with UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss in London, the king said his country "supports efforts to safeguard Syria's sovereignty, stability, territorial integrity, and the unity of its people."

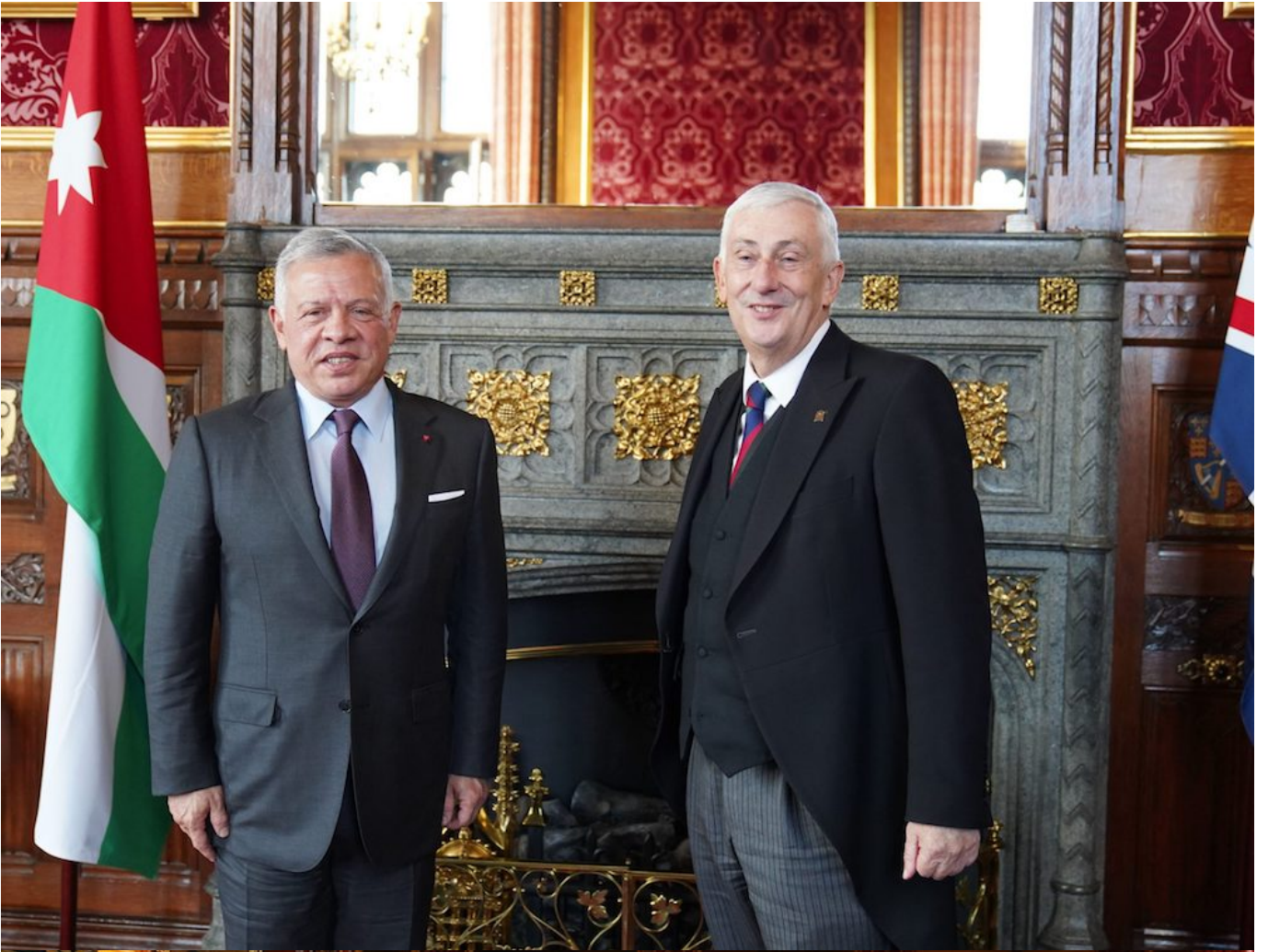
Truss said the UK was keen on strengthening its historical ties with Jordan and developing them in various fields, adding Britain was committed to continuing support for Jordan's development efforts, and in providing educational and health service to refugees.

Also on Thursday, the king held a number of meetings in the Parliament with Speaker of the House of Commons Lindsay Hoyle, chairs and members of the House of Commons foreign affairs and defense committees, and the All-Party Parliamentary Jordan Group.

The Jordanian monarch said his country was "keen to enhance cooperation with the UK in addressing global challenges, including climate change and food security, as well as countering the humanitarian and economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic."











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## [Lebanese information minister facing legal action over controversial Houthi comments](#)

Author:

Thu, 2021-10-28 21:51

DUBAI: Three lawyers took legal action against Lebanon's information minister on Thursday, wanting him to be charged and tried in a criminal court for inciting strife and disrupting relations with Arab countries for his "libelous and fabricated" comments on the Houthis.

Information Minister George Kordahi on Tuesday triggered diplomatic outrage and a social media frenzy when a video of him saying that the Houthis were defending themselves and describing the Yemeni war as "absurd" surfaced online.

Kordahi was asked in an interview that was recorded on Aug. 5, before he was named information minister, about his position on what was happening in Yemen. He replied: "In my opinion, this Yemeni war is absurd and should stop."

Arab News has learned that Lebanese lawyers Mohammad Ziyad Ja'afil, Abdul Aziz Jumaa and Abeer Bannout lodged a legal notice before the Cassation Prosecution General accusing Kordahi of committing crimes that jeopardized national unity and damaged Lebanon's relations with Arab countries.

Referring to his "controversial comments" in their legal notice, the lawyers said Kordahi's statement had created a diplomatic and political crisis considering he was a member of the current cabinet of Lebanon, "a country that has common interests as well as historic and close relationships with Arab Gulf countries and namely Saudi Arabia and the UAE."

According to the legal notice, the lawyers said: "The relevant minister is not an ordinary person but rather a veteran broadcaster, information minister, represents the head of Lebanese media and a professional academician and diplomat. His comment wasn't just a coincidence or simple reaction as some are trying to propagate."

They said Kordahi's comments had endangered Lebanon's relations with its Arabic counterparts, that he had breached the code of professional and diplomatic conduct, and caused a crisis for his country.

"He endangered the interests of citizens and expats, aside from harming Lebanon's political and economic interests adding up to its isolation. He incited sectarian, religious and racist strife," read the legal notice, a copy of which was obtained by Arab News.

The lawyers deemed Kordahi's comments to be "baseless, libelous and fabricated" and that they remained a figment of his imagination.

"His comments have harmed every patriotic citizen who appreciates and respects Arab countries that have constantly supported and aided Lebanon," read the notice.

Ja'afil, Jumaa and Bannout said they lodged their legal notice to refrain anyone from slandering Arab countries, to punish the wrongdoer, and to set a future precedent for others not to disrespect or libel Arab brothers.

The plaintiffs added that what the minister had said, and the fact that the

Lebanese president and prime minister's office disassociated themselves from his comments, before he repeated what he said and refused to apologize on Wednesday, confirmed that he had committed a crime and breached his duties.

"His behavior is incriminated and punishable by the Penal Code and requires that he be prosecuted and tried before a criminal court and not before the special parliamentary committee that tries presidents and ministers," said the lawyers.

Jumaa said they had lodged the legal notice in their capacity as Lebanese citizens who did not want to be affected or influenced by Kordahi's statements.

"We disagree with his controversial statements that could bring unwanted sufferings and ramifications and inflict damages upon us, as citizens, and on expats living in the Gulf," Jumaa told Arab News.

Asked what punishment Kordahi could face if he were charged and referred to court, the lawyer replied: "If the judicial progress takes its independent course without any political pressure, he could face between one and three years in jail and/or a fine of \$600 as per the Lebanese Penal Code's article 194."

When asked if the Cassation Prosecutor General's decision in the case was irrevocable, Bannout told Arab News that there was no timeframe for the investigating prosecutor to hand out a decision that could not be appealed.

Prosecutors are yet to decide whether to impeach Kordahi and refer him to a criminal court or dismiss the legal action.

The Gulf Cooperation Council on Wednesday condemned the minister's comments, saying it reflected limited knowledge and shallow understanding.

A former TV presenter, Kordahi has stirred controversy in the past with his opinions on matters ranging from Syrian President Bashar Assad to harassment in the workplace.





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[Lebanese Information Minister George Kordahi](#)

Saudi Arabia summons Lebanese envoy over 'offensive' comments made by information minister  
Lebanese media minister George Kordahi stirs controversy yet again by defending Houthis