

LATEST NEWS # 418, June 8, 2007

The following news concerns Lebanon.

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http://biblesociety.org/latestnews/index_latestnews.html

A bomb explosion on Monday evening injured at least 10 people close to the Bible Society in Lebanon's centre in the capital. Mike Bassous, the Society's General Secretary, has sent the Fellowship the following report and request for prayer

'Business as usual after the bomb – but please pray for us'

By Mike Bassous, General Secretary of the Bible Society in Lebanon

LEBANON – "I was a bit reluctant to write something about the situation here, particularly since no-one really knows what's going on. But the bomb that exploded on Monday night at 8.20 pm only 300 metres from our Bible Society Center in Bouchrieh, Beirut, has prompted me to send this email and ask for your prayers.

"About 15 days ago, a radical Islamist group attacked the Lebanese army near the northern city of Tripoli. The militants are now hiding in the Palestinian camp of Naher Al-Bared, while the army tries to find them and minimise civilian casualties." [EDITOR'S NOTE: A story published by the BBC on its website on Tuesday, June 5, at 3.00pm reported a commander of the Palestinian Fatah party in Lebanon as saying that seven of the militants had surrendered to his group.]

"Two-thirds of the residents of the camp – about 20,000 people – have fled to another camp and to public schools nearby as the fighting has intensified with street combats and booby-trap bombs placed in buildings, cars, dead bodies and animals. The situation is quite grave in and around the Palestinian camp, with a huge number of displaced families waiting for the conflict to end.

"In the meantime, the terrorists – or other groups who sympathise with them – are spreading an atmosphere of terror in the capital, having placed several bombs under parked cars and buses in Beirut, the last explosion very close to the Bible Society. We thank God the offices were empty at the time – the last staff member having left 15 minutes before – and that there was no damage to the building."

"For the Bible Society team, it is 'business as usual' in proclaiming God's Word. There is an underlying sense of fear, mainly of the unknown, but we know that God is in control. Our children will be attending school until the end of this month.

"Please pray that this conflict will end soon, especially the sporadic bomb explosions. It is causing a lot of panic and a sense of uncertainty. Also pray for the safety of our children, staff, and premises."

For further information please contact comms@ubs-wsc.org