

**“STRESS IS THE NUMBER ONE RANKING
PROBLEM MY CLIENTS FACE AT AUIS”**

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AUIS
VOICE

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INSIDE CAMPUS

AUIS HUMANITIES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM STRAYS FROM ORIGINAL PURPOSES

By Yalda Al-Ani

The selection committee for the American University of Iraq Foundation (AUIF) Humanities Scholarship Grant in the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani deviated from the stated goals of the program, and the management of the program lacked transparency and consistency.

The \$250,000 grant, announced by the university in November 2017, was mainly to provide for as many as six scholarships a year—"up to five new one-time AUIS scholarships...for first or second year female students" and one for "a female student in her final year."

The committee was composed of the Dean of Students Mr. Geoff Gresk, the Chair of the English department Dr. Ali Chetwynd, the Chair of the Social Sciences department Dr. Joy Samad, former AUIS professor Dr. Marie Labrosse, and another unnamed former AUIS professor.

The first round of the program, in which a selection committee

chose students using an informal, undocumented process, produced four scholarships. None of the recipients was in her final year. While three of the recipients received scholarships that covered a full semester, one recipient's only covered three summer term classes.

One of the recipients was not even an undergraduate student at the university and never had been. Her biography in the announcement of March 8, 2018 claimed she was an undergraduate student with a declared major and minor. Her favorite class was also listed although she had never taken a single undergraduate course at the university and had also never declared either a major or minor.

The student in question, in the post-secondary Academic Preparatory Program (APP) at the university, stated that she had asked Mr. Gresk about financial sponsorship. "Actually [Mr. Gresk] was very gentle and helped me out a lot to won [sic] this scholarship fairly. I'm really grateful."

Dr. Chetwynd commented that, "in the first meeting, not everyone on the committee agreed with giving awards to APP students."

Asked about the same topic, Dr. Samad responded simply, "Maybe she changed her major. Check with Geoff and Ali." Mr. Gresk, for his part, declined to answer any questions about the APP student, citing confidentiality, and has not responded to questions about the fabrication on the University's website.

A second round of scholarships was announced on March 8, 2018. This time, female undergraduates were invited to apply but were informed that the scholarships would now be assigned by whether a student had completed more or less than 60 credits.

But according to Dr. Chetwynd, after receiving student applications in April, one of the committee members insisted that only upperclass students be selected for this new round of scholarships. Dr. Chetwynd confirms

that no lowerclassmen applicants were awarded scholarships even though at "least one member of the committee did suggest winners for the early-years scholarship even though it doesn't seem to have ever been awarded."

One of the applicants with fewer than 60 credits, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, heard about the change from Dr. Chetwynd. She feels it is unfair because after announcing the opportunity verbally and on the website, they cancelled it "without any clarification". She confirmed that she had not received any email telling her about the cancellation, and stated, "It would've been nice and professional especially on [Dean Gresk's] side to actually write an apology email and explain why it has been cancelled."

Until now, no announcement about the changes has been made to the student body in general nor to the applicants specifically. The winners of the second round have also not been announced publicly by the university.

AUIS WENT THROUGH A CONTROVERSIAL ELECTION FOR ITS STUDENT BODY

By AUIS VOICE

On November 6th, AUIS students headed to the polls, choosing the President and 12 Senators for 6th term of Student Association, who will be in office from the Fall 2018 until the Fall 2019.

On the same night, the Dean of Students of AUIS, Geoffrey Gresk, announced the final results of the election in which Sherzad Rahim Sharif became the 6th President of Student Association along with 12 Senators from six different departments.

"This was democracy in action," the elected President of the Student Association, Sherzad Rahim Sharif, told AUIS Voice. "It was the first election with the highest number of participants; 68.47% of students voted, up from 65% in 2017, which was also an increase from the previous years," he continued.

Even though the campaign and the electoral process seemed to be running smoothly; yet the results were controversial.

During the process, the Presidential Candidate, Mera Jasim Bakir, told AUIS Voice: "This election is a great opportunity to freely choose the one they think is the most qualified."

Not all the candidates agreed with Mr. Bakir.

"The process was very weak and

bad," Presidential candidate, Nawroz Sabir told AUIS Voice. "especially with the computers through which some of the students were able to vote more than once. This affected the results, that is why I cannot say the results were fair," he added.

One of the candidates for Business Department won the election with the difference of only one vote against his competitor, which was considered as "suspicious" by the Dean of the Students. Mr. Gresk decided to hold another election between the two candidates.

The candidate for Business Department, who won only by one vote, Braw Faraj, rejected the new decision to hold another election to decide on the fate of the department's controversial senator. As a result, he withdrew from the competition.

"There is no validity of doing the election again between me and Daban [another competitor running in the re-election] since I was chosen by the votes and support of the Business students," Faraj said. "When the election was between 4 people, the votes were distributed among all of them. Now, the votes might not be divided equally," he added.

The Supervisor of the counting process and observer during the



election, Rahel Mahmood, denied the claims regarding allegations of electoral frauds.

Some students on campus argue that Student Association do not have real power in the University and the body's powers are only ceremonial.

"The Student Association powers are probably less than what most people think they are," Mr. Gresk told AUIS Voice. "If you look at the constitution, the official name is the Student Advisory Council. Their role is to advise. They are not a policy-making body. I would like to see the Association to have more power in the future," he continued.

In the Article II of Student Association Constitution, it is written

that the purpose of the Association is "to consider and act upon matters of concern brought to its attention by students of AUIS."

"The position of Student Association President does not give me any authority over AUIS students," Mr. Sharif told AUIS Voice. "I want to ensure them that I am here to represent all in order to defend their rights, fight to get them what they truly deserve, and I will do my best to serve our purpose in the most efficient way," he continued.

The elected President and the senators of AUIS Student Association are the 6th staff of the Association that serve in the office.

INTERVIEW

STRESS IS THE NUMBER ONE RANKING PROBLEM MY CLIENTS FACE AT AUIS



Who is
Frishta
Kewe

By Sureen N. Abdulmajeed

What is like to work in AUIS?

In a university setting, it is my first time to be a consultant; and working in AUIS as a consultant is not much different from outside the campus, since my clients struggle with similar issues.

What are the common-psychological issues that most of your clients face?

Stress is the main problem that my clients face. Stress can lead you to any dead end. Cases vary according to many different factors.

What are their causes?

Everything can be a reason to cause stress. We cannot know the main reason immediately until we investigate with the client to find out the main reason.

Who are your clients at AUIS?

I work as a university consultant, therefore anyone employed by AUIS whether a student or staff can always meet me. At some points, I have had more staff than students.

What are your common methods to treat your clients at AUIS?

Clients who come to me can get different types of help and support. Some people might need only one session and they get well; others need a longer period to be cured. The thumb rule in AUIS is that each client, whether a student or faculty member, has an allowance of 4-6 sessions. We cannot do long-term therapy in university because of load and pressure. If more than that limit is needed then I need to evaluate and we will need to have a goal. If a client needs more than six sessions, then the treatment should be done outside. Luckily most of the cases that I face in AUIS have been cured with 4-5 sessions. The methods of treatment can be mentoring, supervising, counselling, therapy, and ears to hear. When clients come to my office they must be committed in order to fulfil their goal. Healing from their problem should be priority

number one because anyone with a psychological issue might not function normally in daily life.

How do you persuade your clients to continue on their therapy process?

It depends on the client; whenever they feel better and they have a sense that they do not need any sessions/treatments anymore. Trust is the main factor to be built with my clients in my career. With the trust that I build with clients, I can introduce important methods that they need. You cannot work in a team if you don't have a sense of trust and reliability. I can't force anyone to stick to their goals, because clients' goal is to be away from their problems.

How do you encourage students to check-up on their psychological well-being and how should they know that they should visit a psychologist?

The signs of having unhealthy psychological conditions are stress, getting

angry easily, a sudden drop in grades, having no control in life and being helpless are signs that you should visit a psychologist.

What are your last words?

I would like to thank everyone who trusts me even if it is with hesitation, and it is pleasure for me to serve this small community with all passion and love.

“The signs of having unhealthy psychological conditions are stress, getting angry easily, a sudden drop in grades, having no control in life and being helpless”

I am Frishta Kewe; I was born and raised in Kurdistan then when I became 17 years old I moved to Sweden. Since childhood, I had a passion to be a doctor. After moving to Sweden; I started studying and learning the language quickly like a native which helped me to adapt and understand the culture. When I was in high school in Sweden, I experienced many things that made me to question myself and my surroundings. It was a time where I knew that I wanted to be a psychologist. I have worked in many countries. I have dealt with 50 different nationalities around the world with different cultural backgrounds and religions. I have worked in many places like hospitals, universities, prison and also my clinics. Working in prison gave me a different perspective on life.

Why is the youth unemployed?

By Przha Jabar

Just after graduation, most of us complain about unemployment; or, at least, of not getting a decent job. Well, this summer I found an answer to this dilemma. We as the youth, the new generation let's say, usually do not work with enough exertion. When we are in university, all we think about is passing without actually doing anything worthwhile to gain experience in any field that we desire. As a result, our career experiences would be remarkably limited: our lives not fruitful and our CVs scanty. The hiring sectors look at their best options, such as those who have more work experience, or who look more devoted. Therefore people with the previous qualities have a low chance of employment.

I am directly working with graduates for my startup, Volunteer Enterprise. Half of the CVs we get is just plain empty. Moreover, the others send videos and photos of their CVs. We never indeed do receive anything that fulfils our expectations. It is not about luck or destiny. It is about the anticipated skills of the applicant which make them eligible for employment. The problem is not the companies not hiring us; the problem is in us not making ourselves the rare jewel in town for them to accept us. So the next time you apply for a job make sure your CV is eye-catching. Also, don't put "hobbies" in the last section of your CV. Make sure that you mainly know what you are good at, and which company is seeking your capacities.

AUIS HINDERS ITS STUDENTS IN STUDY-ABROAD PROGRAMS

By Saman Ihsan Fuad

The American University of Iraq, Sulaimani (AUIS) does not assist its students in finding study-abroad programs in any significant way. While the students are on the program, the university does not have an international mobility department to deal with the concerns and complications that these students go through. All this ends up making it quite the logistical challenge for the students who travel abroad to navigate the bureaucratic channels AUIS is so famous for.

Perhaps what is the cornerstone of AUIS's branding, is its emphasis on how its students excel in such ways that they get into the best programs and internships not only in the region, but all over the world. Who can forget the elegantly crafted advertisements about how AUIS students made it to top universities such as Harvard and Johns Hopkins? But for all this glitter, there doesn't seem

to be any gold. These students did not get any financial help from the university and less moral support than all the press made it out to be.

I was lucky enough last semester to go to abroad to Ca Foscari University in Venice; one of the few universities AUIS has a partnership with. While there, I met a host of students from multiple backgrounds ranging from China to Zimbabwe. Without exception, these students had financial assistance ranging from full tuition plus stipend to partial tuition and some travel expenses. I was constantly getting asked: "So, what does your university cover?", and as hard as I thought I could only think of a fancy support letter that they gave after three business days.

While on campus I saw how the students were taking full advantage of the facilities, opportunities, and events that the university provided week-in and week-

out. Towards the late month of the semester the university would send out an email making the students aware of all the abroad opportunities available to its students. On their website, they had a huge database of every university they had a partnership with and the number was well over a hundred. The website was so simply designed that all you needed to do was find the major you belong to and you got an interactive map with dots all over Europe and even some in Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. This disparity that I was a witness to made me acutely conscious of just how lagging and lacking AUIS is in assisting its students in not only finding semester abroad programs, but also helping them while they are there.

And to all the AUIS apologists I say: yes, AUIS does indeed have a partnership page on its website. Yes, AUIS does send out emails here

and there with a few relevant fellowships and programs. Yes, AUIS does currently have a partnership with Arizona University. However, the scale and assistance that they provide is nowhere near the magnitude it needs to be. More importantly, it is nowhere near what they claim it to be either. When the financial, logistical, and international application process are all laid upon the student, it becomes heavily burdensome; especially considering that most students hold the second worse passport in the world. What AUIS must and needs to do is have a grant that takes ten to fifteen of its best students to abroad programs either fully funded, or highly funded. AUIS needs to help out in every step of the way so that the student does not become his or her own international mobility department.

WHY IS BABA DONER STILL IN BUSINESS?

By Hasar Ali

Repelling images of contaminated food from Baba Doner keep hitting the timeline of our Facebooks. Students and staff don't have a sense of safety while eating their meals.

With the increased frequency of these incidents in the previous semester, it makes one wonder how Baba Doner is still in business.

These incidents are not limited in number to the ones that are seen on social media. In addition to images of strands of hair and larvae in served food that are on Facebook, there must also be other incidents that are unreported neither to the Facilities Management Department (FMD,) nor anywhere else. In my personal

experience, I found a hair strand buried deep in my potato soup as I was finishing my meal. This was in the time of writing this article.

If students and staff had a choice, I am sure Baba Doner's business would not be doing as well as it is doing now. Baba doner has a monopoly on lunch service in AUIS. Chenar cannot compete due to their limited resources as its apparent by their lengthy waiting times. Also, having lunch outside university is not always plausible to students and staff due to time constraints, transportation and even financial limitations.

These incidents hint the terrible hygienic standards followed by Baba Doner and one

tolerated by AUIS and the FMD. The red flags keep piling up. It is obvious that the FMD has failed at solving these issues, as they persist. The FMD has not updated students and staff on their efforts to solve the issue which is one of the reasons for the distrust felt by the community.

FMD only addressed the community when larvae was found in salads: "free protein," one student joked. The FMD, in response, were complaining that people are not reporting to them directly. They also mentioned any images posted on "social media will not be held against and will not be considered as a violation towards to the food vendors." The FMD should be seeking

to do its job no matter what platform issues are brought to its attention. The rest was filled with empty statements like the ones you hear new governments make, ones I hope we do not have to read again in response to this. Solutions are always preferred, in the absence of one, updates on FMD's efforts are well welcomed.

It is unclear what would make the university revoke the contract of Baba Doner. It is not unheard of for the repercussions of such incidents to be graver in universities AUIS claims better standards than. For the sake of the AUIS community, please do not let this issue lurk any longer.

FEATURE

RAHAND: A NEW CANDLE LIT IN SULAIMANI

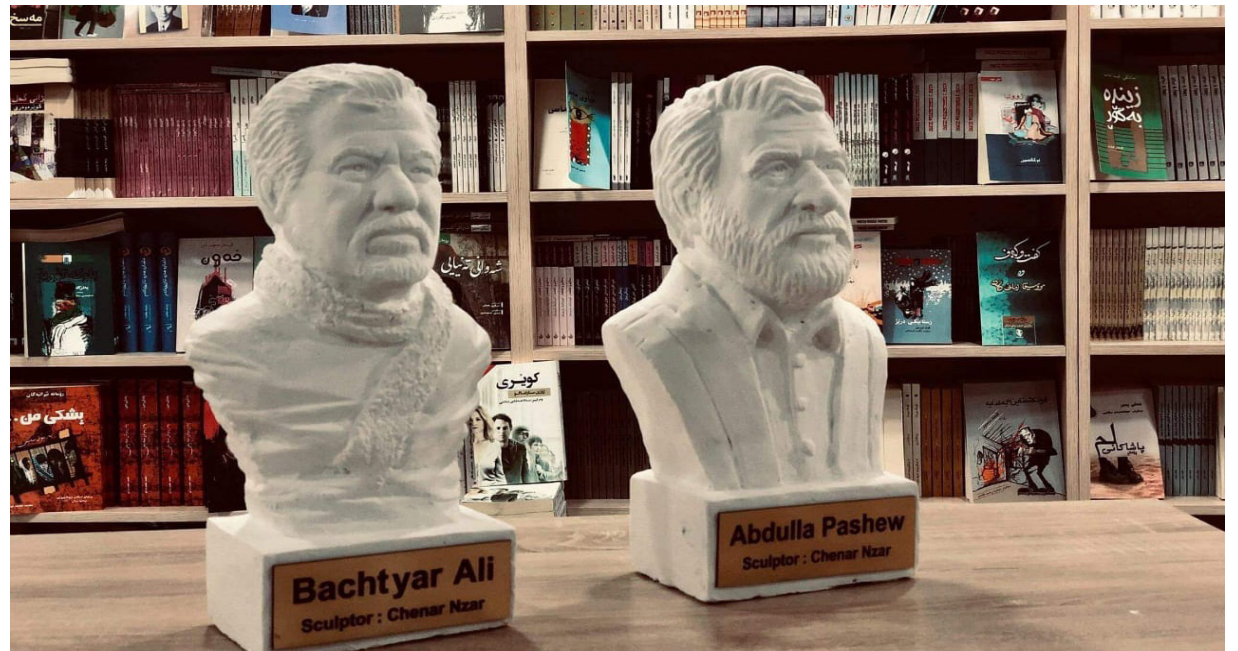
By Aram Kaftan

Darkness is shrinking. A new cultural center, Rahand, is opened at the capital of culture, Sulaimani. The center's main aim is to provide a place for readers, writers, and intellectuals. The center offers a great welcoming door to all people despite their differences. It will be recognized as a stage for critics. Rahand is anticipated to cause a revolution in the field of translation by delivering only top-notch translations of authentic Kurdish literature.

Even though there are other cultural centers in the region, Rahand will outshine others by pushing the literature process to a new and a better level. The

center is not only a platform for literary translations and publications, but it also offers several courses for people who seek to learn, reading strategies and writing mechanisms by well known and experienced writers. Moreover, book and discussion clubs will be soon announced with the aim of providing an appropriate context for book lovers and activists to get together and exchange ideas.

Another service of Rahand Cultural Center is providing books from all publication houses; most published books from all over Kurdistan could be found at Rahand. Hence, English and Arabic



writings will be available in different forms, such as novels and poetry collections.

Aram Sdiq, the general administrator of Rahand, stated in an interview to Xendan press, "The center

is an open door for all readers and writers from anywhere throughout Kurdistan. We have places for seminars and reading books. A cafeteria will be open soon inside the center. We hope that we can

make different works and serve all readers without differentiation. I hope everyone supports Rahand in increasing the number of readers and social awareness throughout the center."

HIGHLY OKAY PODCAST LIVES UP TO ITS NAME

By San Mahmood

If you're like me, you spend a large chunk of your spare time browsing YouTube, hoping to find that one video or podcast that will be both entertaining and relatable to you. Lately, my friends and I have been listening to podcasts a lot, which we realized, podcast listening and viewing was more popular than we thought. According to Podcasting Sights, 50% of the US are fans of at least one podcast and 60% of Americans are familiar with podcasts and what they are. After having talked about it amongst ourselves, and having countless arguments we wish we had recorded, me, and a few of my friends decided to make our very own podcast, probably the first one in the region!

The Highly Okay Podcast is a new, original, and independent podcast made by a few AUI-S students, San, Shad, and Rezhwan, along with Aya, who is a pharmacy student in UOS. The podcast was started with

very little equipment, but high ambitions. We shot Episode #1 of the Highly Okay Podcast by interviewing a French Masters student, Sara, who was visiting a friend in Sulaymaniah at the time. We talked to her about her experience in Kurdistan, French culture, and many other topics. We are still very new to the business and we are aiming to reach a larger audience of Anglo-Kurds in the near future, and hopefully an international audience, eventually. Since our first episode, we have had an interesting variety of guests such as Artists, poets, singers, and even local celebrities such as Shlovan. We discuss serious topics spanning from education, politics, and gender issues, as well as the more lighthearted, and funnier conversations on a segment we have made, called #TheLessYouKnow.

With this podcast, it is our aim to introduce podcast listening to our local region and make it a regular daily activity for them. Being one



of the first, if not the very first Podcast made in the region, we want to use our voices to spread positivity, knowledge, and relatable content, which in the process, we hope to make our listeners and viewers laugh with us. So, if you'd like to support your fellow students

and you haven't checked it out already, I highly recommend you go on YouTube and look up Highly Okay to view our episodes and hopefully have you share your thoughts and comments with us. Only with your feedback, can we grow and improve our content and

production quality. So, if you are a listener and would like us to grow and make better content, I urge you to join the movement and share our work and spread the word, so that more people can have a Highly Okay day.

TUZ KHURMATU KURDISH IDPS PREFER CAMPS TO THEIR HOMES



By Rebaz Majeed

Hiwa thought it is just another regular crossfire between the two opposite militias who control parts of the town.

That night, the sound of clashes took longer than usual. Later, Amanj Hiwa, a young Kurdish resident in Tuz Khurmatu, realized that it is an operation by Shiite militias backed by Iraqi security units on Kurdish Peshmerga forces in Tuz Khurmatu, aiming to push out the Kurdish groups and control the town.

When Hiwa heard that the Kurdish Peshmerga forces are withdrawing from Tuz Khurmatu, he and his family, alongside the thousands of Kurdish families, left the town and headed to the Kurdistan region of Iraq. “I remember that night very well,” he says.

A long time has passed, Hiwa, his wife and his 8-years old son, currently live in Surdash camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Sulaimaniyah province, 180 km far away from his hometown.

Tuz Khurmatu is a disputed territory between the Iraqi government and Kurdistan regional government, and it has a multi-ethnic and multi-sectarian population among Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, Shiites, and Sunnis.

Regardless of the harsh circumstances and a low standard of living in the camp, Hiwa refuses to go back to his town, after he left back in 2017.

“We don’t have enough food here. We don’t have enough money. I work as a mechanic in this camp. On average, I receive one car a day to work on it. That is not enough,” Hiwa says. “Nights are too cold. My child got sick last week. He plays in mud with his friends. It is not healthy. The children might pick up something poisonous and eat it,” he continues.

“But I will not go back to my hometown, Tuz Khurmatu,” he adds.

Even though many Kurds have returned to the town; yet some of them refuse to do so. They consider the current

administration, which is massively controlled by the Shiite Turkmen, to be discriminating against the Kurds who have returned to the town.

The night where the Kurdish population of Tuz Khurmatu left the town, according to Amnesty International’s Report, tens of houses, which belonged to the Kurdish residents, were exploded and hundreds were looted.

The conflict between the Sunni Kurds and the Shiite Turkmen of Tuz Khurmatu has emerged in the past few years. “When Kurds were in power, they did the same to Turkmen,” Azad says, a Kurdish resident of Tuz Khurmatu who has returned to the town after leaving it for months.

“When the Kurds were controlling the city, some of them were beating the Turkmen people, humiliating them, and now that they are in our places, they do the same to us. They say you did this to us and now we are taking revenge from you,”

Azad continues.

“Now, the security forces humiliate us. They ask for things: money and gold. We don’t have a gun to defend ourselves. They come to our houses, and we can do nothing. There is no one in the town to protect us. When we go and complain to an official, “haven’t you done the same too?” He replies,” Azad adds.

The new mayor of Tuz Khurmatu, Hasan Zein al-Abideen, who replaced the former Kurdish mayor, said on August: “The return of Kurdish internally displaced people is a priority... we will facilitate their return.”

There are still around 200 Kurdish families from Tuz Khurmatu living in Surdash camp for IDPs, according to Imad Salim, the head of Tuz Khurmatu IDPs in the camp.

Khalid Najmaddin is an old man in his 60s from Tuz Khurmatu, who wears traditional Kurdish clothes. He sees no possibility of returning to his hometown.

“I don’t trust the security there. For example, I don’t

have a car. If tomorrow something happens, let’s say ISIS attacks, I cannot save my life and my family’s.”

“I have a mature daughter. I have to protect her. So that is not by returning to Tuz Khurmatu, not knowing what will happen. The villages around are all full of ISIS militants,” Najmaddin says.

“The current administration discriminates against the Kurds. If they know you are a Kurd, they do anything to make you uncomfortable,” Najmaddin adds.

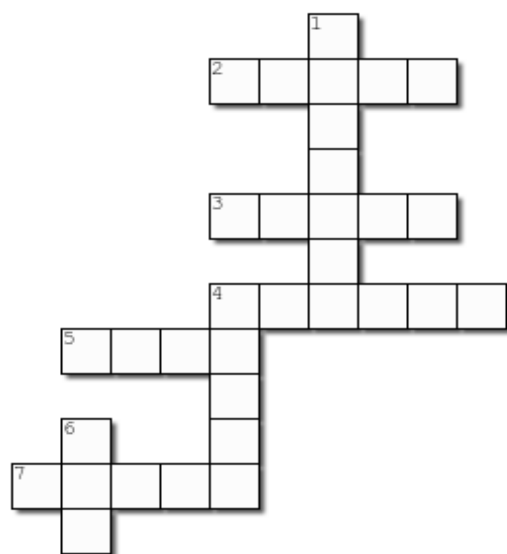
“The Mayorship takes any step in its disposal to protect the brotherhood of Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, whether Shia or Sunni,” Zein al-Abideen says.

In Surdash camp, as Hiwa was working on an old car’s engine, he said “of course I like to be at my home. I like to go back, but it is not the right decision to make.”

“We, the people, don’t understand politics so much, but we always become the victims of it.”

ENTERTAINMENT

Complete the crossword below



Horizontal

2. She is instructor and at the same time she is the head of Kashkol organization.
3. He is an IT instructor and students say getting a high grade in his class is quite difficult.
4. He is an IT student, he was AUIS VOICE designer two semester ago, and his name starts with the letter B.
5. She is an instructor in AUIS, and she was student in AUIS, she finished her master degree in Harvard University.
7. He is an instructor and taught CIV 101 last semester, and he is from Australia.

Vertical

1. She is a Psychologist in AUIS.
4. He is an AUIS instructor, and he teaches CIV 102.
6. He is Social Sciences Department Chair.

					5			2
3		9	2					
		7					1	
					1	5	6	7
7								3
9	6	4	5					
	9					1		
					7	2		8
5			8					

SUDOKU

◀ The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once

LAME JOKES

Q/ What is the advantage of having a homeless girlfriend?

A/ You can drop her off anywhere

Q/ why can't a bike stand up on its own?

A/ Because it is two tired!

Q/ what do you call a watch on a belt?

A/ A waist of time

Q/ Why can't you trust trees?

A/ Because they are shady

Q/ Have you ever watched the movie "Constipated"?

A/ It has not come out yet.

Q/ Why was the cellphone wearing glasses?

A/ Because he lost all his contacts.

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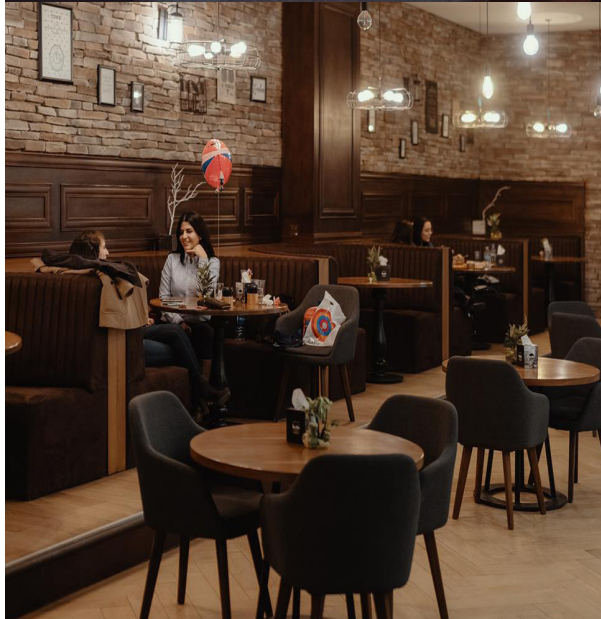
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