

Lebanon: Misleading Text Messages disseminated by supporters of Siniora government

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Text Message Calls Lebanon Protest 'Open Zoo'

Supporters of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's government have begun a campaign to discredit the masses demonstrating near the PM's office in downtown Beirut. Text messages were disseminated across the nation on Sunday to March 14 Forces - the coalition led by Siniora - suspected supporters.

"Visit our new OPEN ZOO in Riad el Soloh [downtown Beirut where the demonstration is located] for FREE; be aware they eat people," the text message read.

"The disdain for the poor and the Shia by the elite of Beirut and Lebanon who support the March 14 coalition can be seen in this text message," Sean C. Lee, an American analyst in Beirut told AHN news.

"Last year's independence intifada [Cedar Revolution] was seen as a democratic revolution, but now, some of these same people who participated in those protests view the demonstration in downtown as a freakshow," Lee added.

It is unknown how many Lebanese and foreign customers received the message, but it highlights the already tense political situation facing the nation.

The demonstration led by Hezbollah, the leading Shiite party, and the Free Patriotic Movement, a Christian party led by Michel Aoun, will enter its third consecutive night and protesters are adamant that they will stay in their tent city until Siniora steps down.

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