

# THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

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## Arslan warns that 'game of nations' could destroy Lebanon

BEIRUT: Lebanese Democratic Party head Talal Arslan warned Lebanese leaders Sunday against getting involved in the game of nations, which he said could destroy Lebanon.

"We are in the heart of a fierce round of the game of nations. If we do not behave with the highest degree of wisdom, we might lose everything," Arslan told public delegations visiting him at his residence in Choueifat, southeast of Beirut. "We will lose ourselves as Lebanese."

Arslan hailed the recently revived National Dialogue and said the all-party talks should strengthen the home front "even if relatively" in the wake of the global war fought between major powers in the Arab world.

"Today the picture is clear. They have launched war on Syria. And we in Lebanon suffer from a lack of immunity to begin with," Arslan said.

In this regard, he warned against Western companies' designs on "the huge reservoir of natural gas that extends along the Syrian-Lebanese-Palestinian seashore" and said that the companies are in league with Israel.

"The only way [for these companies to succeed] is to plunge the peoples [of the region] into internal wars, fighting and bloodshed so that they can confiscate the wealth," Arslan added.

He said the "giant" natural gas field off the coast of the Levant is the third in the world in terms of size after the Siberian fields in Russia and those in Saudi Arabia.

Arslan said that Russia along with the Shanghai alliance, China, several Central Asian countries, India and Iran are exerting efforts to decrease world tensions by resorting to the United Nations so that disagreements do not deteriorate into a direct nuclear confrontation between the Atlantic and Shanghai camps.

"For this reason, we stress the need for internal calm and for supporting the Russia-China move, especially as Lebanon has been asked to participate in an international conference," Arslan emphasized.