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LEBANON: Amnesty International condemns killing of politician Saleh Aridi

Amnesty International condemns the murder yesterday of Lebanese politician Saleh Aridi. According to reports, he was killed when a bomb targeted his car in Baysur, the village south-east of Beirut where he lived. Several other people were injured by the blast.

Amnesty International condemns deliberate attacks on civilians and calls for all such attacks to be investigated, promptly and thoroughly, and for those responsible to be brought to justice in accordance with international standards for fair trial.

Saleh Aridi, in his 50s, was a senior member of the Lebanese Democratic Party which draws its support mainly from Lebanon's Druze community and is led by government minister Talal Arslan. The party is in the March 8 Alliance, a coalition of political parties considered to be pro-Syrian.

The killing is the latest in a series of attacks on Lebanese politicians and journalists since October 2004, but the first against a figure from the "pro-Syrian" opposition. It is also the first such killing since the Doha Agreement in May 2008, which brought together the March 8 Alliance and the March 14 Alliance, the former ruling coalition, which is considered to be anti-Syrian, into a national unity government.