



 International Relations

France's Vaulx-en-Velin names a street after "Beit Sahour"

An official ceremony during an international solidarity event with Palestine seals a friendship between the two cities dating back to 2006.

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■ Expatriates Week

Seven days of meetings, visits and celebrations brought the city together with its sons and daughters from the United States. **pp. 5-6**



■ An ambulance for the city

An agreement to buy and equip a \$130,000 ambulance, launching an emergency service for the people of Beit Sahour. **p. 11**



■ Sahouri Faggous Festival

The Old City celebrates the Sahouri faqqous as a symbol of the farmer's bond with the land and of support for local produce. **p. 7**



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Community & Education

Months of work in service of the city

Beit Sahour Municipality presents the first issue of its newsletter, covering May to October 2026: widening relations, renewed streets, and a city celebrating its heritage and its people.



8
Sep

The Mayor meets the Jordanian Ambassador

The meeting with Ambassador Essam Al-Badour in Ramallah covered the Ush Ghurab issue, promoting religious and cultural tourism, and a possible twinning with a Jordanian city.



6
Aug

Tree pruning across the city

Health and Electricity Department workers pruned trees in neighbourhoods across the city, keeping streets tidy and clearing branches that threaten power lines.



By the numbers

100

years since
Beit Sahour
Municipality was
founded

22+

local institutions at
the expatriates
networking
workshop

\$130,000

total value of the
ambulance project

100

days: the Municipal
Council's emergency
projects plan

2

new services on the
E-SADAD system



2
July

Pest control across the city

The Services and Health Department continued its routine pest control programme, alongside waste collection, weed clearing and washing the market square.



10
June

Power network upkeep on Istih Street

Electricity Department crews, with the Jerusalem District Electricity Company, maintained the network on Istih Street to improve efficiency and keep the service running.

A street named **Beit Sahour** in the heart of France

At the “Écho de Palestine” event hosted by the French city of Vaulx-en-Velin on 3 October 2026, a street was officially named “Beit Sahour”, in the presence of Mayor Laith Hazim Qumsiyeh and Council Member Mrs. Lina Al-Qazaha.



The Palestinian and French delegations at the new street sign



The Mayor at the “Beit Sahour” street sign

Beit Sahour Municipality took part in “Écho de Palestine” alongside wide official and public participation, including Vaulx-en-Velin Mayor Mr. Abdelkader Lahmar and members of his council, French members of parliament, political and public figures, and large crowds from Vaulx-en-Velin and neighbouring towns.

The event marked a milestone in relations between the two cities, with an official ceremony naming a street “Beit Sahour” – a deeply symbolic gesture affirming the Palestinian city’s place in the hearts of the French city.

The street was inaugurated in the presence of the Palestinian and Nicaraguan delegations, in a programme that also named another street after the Nicaraguan city of Sébaco and included planting an olive tree.

The “Écho de Palestine” programme combined political, cultural and artistic

discussions with displays of Palestinian products and cuisine, introducing attendees to aspects of Palestinian culture and heritage.

Mr. Qumsiyeh expressed his gratitude and appreciation for Mr. Lahmar and for Vaulx-en-Velin’s council and residents, stressing that the Municipality sees its international relations as a practical tool for development and the exchange of expertise, and that it is keen to expand cooperation with Vaulx-en-Velin in culture, tourism, sport, education and development.

For his part, Mr. Lahmar expressed his pride in the bond between his city and Beit Sahour, and Vaulx-en-Velin’s commitment to developing it through joint initiatives and projects, so that the street name remains a lasting testament in French public space to the friendship between two cities and two peoples.



2 October

Raising the Palestinian flag over Vaulx-en-Velin City Hall, with Mayor Laith Hazim Qumsiyeh and his counterpart Mr. Abdelkader Lahmar, in a message of solidarity with the Palestinian people and their right to freedom and self-determination.



“Naming a street in a French city after Beit Sahour is more than naming a place: **it stands for a human bond between two cities**, and a new bridge between the Palestinian and French peoples.”

Beit Sahour Mayor Laith Hazim Qumsiyeh – Vaulx-en-Velin, 3 October 2026

Beit Sahour and Fuheis activate their twinning

An official visit to the Jordanian municipality of Fuheis on 29 September 2026 affirmed the deep fraternal ties between the two cities.



Mayor Laith Hazim Qumsiyeh and Council Member Mrs. Lina Al-Qazaha visited Fuheis Municipality, where they were received by the head of the municipal committee, Eng. Imad Al-Hiyari, and council members.

The visit reflects both sides' wish to activate the twinning agreement signed in 2008 and build an effective, lasting partnership. Talks covered cooperation in municipal, cultural, development, youth and tourism fields, exchanging expertise,

and joint programmes and initiatives.

The delegation toured Fuheis, including its tourist street and the Greek Orthodox Church, to see the religious and cultural heritage the town shares with Beit Sahour. The visit ended with an exchange of commemorative shields, underlining a shared commitment to turn the twinning into practical programmes and projects.



Our network of friendly cities



Vaulx-en-Velin · France

Bilateral ties since 2006, a street named "Beit Sahour" since October 2026, and a joint Green Zone project between the two municipalities.



Fuheis · Jordan

A twinning agreement signed in 2008, now being activated through joint programmes.



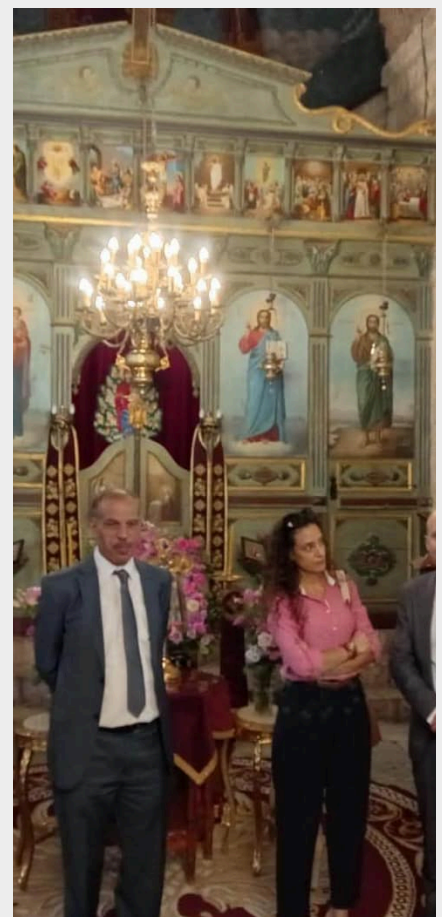
Jordanian cities

A possible new twinning discussed with the Jordanian Ambassador to the State of Palestine.



Greek, Finnish and Italian cities

Prospects for twinning and cooperation raised during visits by the Greek Consul General, the Finnish Ambassador and the Italian Consul General.



At the Greek Orthodox Church in Fuheis.



"Beit Sahour Nights" festival · The square of Virgin Mary's Well

In Focus

Beit Sahour Expatriates Week A city welcoming its own

The week opened in partnership with the Wasata Centre for Youth Work, the Shepherds Scout Group, the Arab Orthodox Cultural Club and the Baqoun Folklore Dance Group, attended by clergy, representatives of the Higher Presidential Committee for Church Affairs, local institutions and Beit Sahour's diaspora.

Events began by inaugurating the roundabout near the Shepherds Secondary School as the "Beit Sahour USA Association Roundabout", honouring the association's support for

the city's people, institutions and projects.

At the official ceremony at the Arab Orthodox Cultural Club, Mayor Laith Hazim Qumsiyeh welcomed the city's sons and daughters from abroad, hoping the week would become an annual tradition. In a symbolic gesture, he presented the key to the city to Mr. Munir Bannoura, president of the Beit Sahour USA Association: Beit Sahour's doors will always be open to its people, wherever they are.

The first edition, 22-28 July 2026, organised by Beit Sahour Municipality and the Beit Sahour USA Association, with support from Arab Bank.

The programme included a poem presented through video conference by Dr. Mazen Badra, a traditional dance performance by the Baqoun Folklore Dance Group, a song by local singer Mrs. Safa' Qumsiyeh, and a documentary film about the city, its Old Town, and its local institutions and events, directed by Mr. Rami Rishmawi.

Over two nights, the "Beit Sahour Nights" festival lit up the Old City, from a procession and ribbon-cutting in the square of Virgin Mary's Well to evenings of dabke, traditional song and children's shows.



From left: cutting the ribbon to open the "Beit Sahour Nights" festival; the festival crowd in the Old City; traditional songs; participants on the festival stage.

The week **day by day**

22

July · Wed

Roundabout inauguration, official ceremony and the key to the city.

23

July · Thu

Visits to Al-Malath Charitable Society, the Women's Union and the Elderly Club.

24

July · Fri

Visits to the Islamic Charitable Society, Al-Waha Centre and St John of Damascus Church; networking workshop.

26

July · Sun

First night of the "Beit Sahour Nights" festival, sponsored by Arab Bank.

27

July · Mon

Second night: children's shows, Al-Waha Centre and the Elderly Club.

28

July · Tue

Closing ceremony at Al-Nawas Hall with the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities.



A networking workshop of 22+ institutions

Dar Dakkart hosted a workshop led by Dr. Natalie Tawil, director of the Wasata Centre, where local institutions presented their history and programmes to the Beit Sahour USA Association, building bridges with the city's diaspora.

Closing ceremony

The week closed at Al-Nawas Hall in the presence of Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mr. Hani Al-Hayek, who praised the association for strengthening expatriates' ties to their home city.

The ceremony screened "Beit Sahour Centennial" by Rami Rishmawi, honoured Elias Boulos, winner of the centennial logo competition, and showed a Radio Bethlehem 2000 documentary, before honouring sponsor Arab Bank and donors from the city.



Beit Sahour's doors **will always be open** to its people, wherever they are.

From the message accompanying the key to the city

Sahouri Faqqous Festival

Celebrating land and farmer



Sahouri faqqous

On the evening of 23 June 2026, the square of Virgin Mary's Well in the Old City hosted the annual festival, supporting farmers, celebrating the quality of local produce and strengthening national identity.



? What is Sahouri faqqous?

A variety of Armenian cucumber grown on Beit Sahour's land, and one of the best-known heritage symbols and crops of the City of Shepherds. Its festival is held every June in the Old City.

The festival was organised by Beit Sahour Municipality with the Palestine Wildlife Society and the YWCA of Bethlehem, attended by representatives of the Ministry of Local Government, heads of neighbouring municipalities and councils, official and civil institutions, farmers, and crowds of residents and visitors.

The festival aims to preserve cultural heritage, highlight the symbolism of the Sahouri faqqous and the farmer's bond with the land, support local

produce, boost the economy and revive the Old City, through an exhibition of heritage, women's and food products that this year saw wide participation from the city's women.

In his speech, the Mayor described the festival as a quintessentially Sahouri heritage and cultural signature, an occasion to preserve the city's farming heritage, and a model of cooperation between local institutions and the public and private sectors.

The Baqoun Folklore Dance Group took the stage, followed by songs from student Adnan Al-Hourani, accompanied by his teacher Wassim Qassis of the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music, and student Ronza Iyad Khair; national and folk songs by the women of the Palestinian Heritage Troupe; tales from storyteller Mariam Muammar; and a children's show by Amo Mini.



From left: the Baqoun Folklore Dance Group; the local produce exhibition; a musical performance; the festival crowd in the Old City.

Beit Sahour in dialogue with the world

Since the new Municipal Council was elected, the Municipality has received diplomatic delegations offering congratulations and learning about the Council's vision for the next four years and the city's main challenges.



30 Aug Ramallah

The Vice President of Palestine receives the Council

The Mayor and council members briefed H.E. Mr. Hussein Al-Sheikh on the city's situation and its infrastructure and service needs. He stressed the importance of supporting local authorities and strengthening the authentic Christian presence in Palestine.



4 Aug Finland

The Finnish Ambassador's first visit

Ambassador Tarja Kangaskorte spoke about cooperation on investment initiatives, education, women's empowerment and human rights, and twinning with Finnish cities.



20 July United Kingdom

The British Consul General in Jerusalem

Consul General Helen Winterton was briefed on the Ush Ghorab lands and on the slump in tourism and its impact on restaurants, oriental antique shops and hotels.



10 July Italy

The Italian Consul General in Jerusalem

The meeting with Mr. Domenico Bellato discussed expanding ties with Italian cities and exchanging expertise in urban planning, local development and tourism.



4 June United States

U.S. Chargé d'Affaires a.i. in Jerusalem

Mr. David Brownstein was briefed on the Green Zone project with Vaulx-en-Velin, praised the Municipality's efforts, and ended his visit by tasting the Sahouri faqqous.



1 Sep Greece

The Greek Consul General in Jerusalem

The two sides discussed joint projects to develop infrastructure and support residents' resilience amid difficult economic and political conditions.



Ush Ghorab: on the table at every meeting

In his meetings with diplomatic delegations, the Mayor put the Ush Ghorab lands at the top of the agenda, stressing that they **are the only remaining area for Beit Sahour's urban expansion**, and outlining the Municipality's efforts to protect them, recover confiscated land and curb settlement expansion.

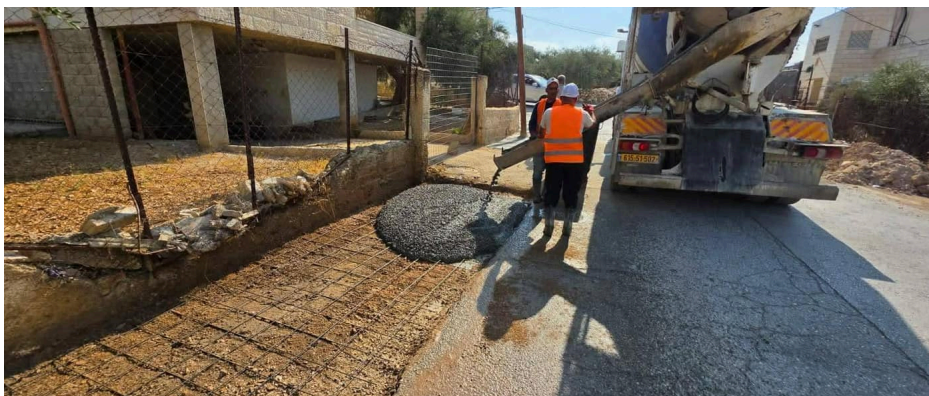
On 18 June 2026, the Mayor and council members sounded the alarm over the "Ush Ghorab" settlement, calling for popular and international action.

Together for a more beautiful city and better services

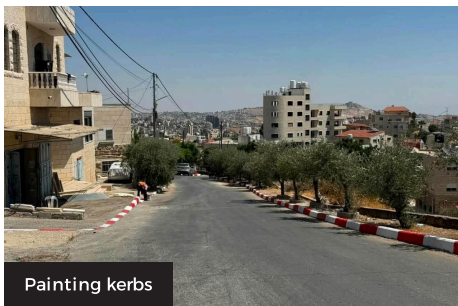
Since 17 August 2026, the Municipality has been carrying out the “Rehabilitation, Maintenance and Beautification of Roads and General Cleaning in Beit Sahour” project, under the Recovery and Job Creation Programme funded by the Municipal Development and Lending Fund.



Pouring concrete shoulders



Painting kerbs



Building stone terrace walls

The project is part of the Municipality's efforts to strengthen local authorities' resilience, provide temporary jobs, raise the standard of basic services and improve the city's appearance.

Municipal maintenance staff and workers hired under the programme are active in several neighbourhoods, including the Plastic Factory area – Wadi Hanna Saad and Haret Al-Rishmawi, where extensive kerb painting was carried out to improve road safety, alongside pouring concrete

shoulders and building stone terrace walls.

The Municipality asks residents to cooperate with work crews and follow safety guidance during the works.

New streets in two days

Among the emergency projects of the 100-day plan, the Municipality rehabilitated and patched a number of city streets; resurfacing was completed and the streets reopened in just two days, carried out by Khoyout Al-Shams Contracting.



What does the project include?



Concrete shoulders



Pavements



Stone walls



Kerb painting



Planting



Cleaning



By the numbers

\$156,000

programme funding from the Municipal Development and Lending Fund

32

temporary jobs: 30 workers and two engineers

NIS 83,000

Municipality's own funds for patching internal roads



Streets reopened after rehabilitation under the 100-day plan.

Street lighting more efficient and safer



Replacing light fittings in the Beit Bassa area

Electricity Department crews continue routine maintenance and upgrading of the lighting network, including replacing old light fittings along the stretch from the Beit Bassa junction to the Catholic housing estate.

With crews from the Jerusalem District Electricity Company, maintenance was carried out on Istih Street, and the electricity network was maintained and renewed in several areas on 14 September. On 23 September, department workers removed a large number of disused electricity and lighting poles to widen pavements and ease pedestrian movement.



Removing disused poles from the city's streets.

A clean, **healthy and beautiful** environment



The Services and Health Department continues to collect waste, clear weeds from streets and pavements, wash the market square, prune trees and control insects and pests. The Maintenance Department planted flowers on roundabouts and public squares, and the Municipality held tree-planting activities with students from a local school and with Beit Sahour youth.



New on E-SADAD

The Municipality has added two new services to the e-payment system, saving residents time and effort:

- **Paying rent**
- **Paying building permit fees**

To obtain a service number (first time only), please contact the Municipality; the same number can then be used for all future payments for that service.



A humane campaign for stray dogs

Civil Defence volunteers, working with the Municipality, are gradually collecting stray dogs and moving them to safe areas away from homes. Please keep away from the cages, do not tamper with them, and keep children away.

An ambulance for the people of the city

On 22 September 2026, the Municipality signed an agreement to purchase an ambulance, launching an emergency ambulance service for the city's residents.

The agreement was signed by Mayor Laith Hazim Qumsiyeh and representatives of Bethlehem Bible College and Gargour Trading Company.

The college, together with the Good Shepherd Society and the

Friends of the Shepherds Foundation in the United States, is raising donations to cover the costs, while the Municipality secures customs and tax exemptions. The fundraising campaign is ongoing.



\$130,000

Total cost of buying the ambulance and fitting it with medical equipment



Shade and water for the Health Centre

Visiting the Beit Sahour Health Centre on 14 June, the Mayor thanked the young men of the Al-Masalha family for donating a canopy and water cooler for patients; the Municipality installed the canopy.



"Creative Voices": students lead change

Agreements signed on 22 August with Holy Land Trust and the Greek Catholic Patriarchal School for three community initiatives led by Grade 10 students.



Scholarships for local students

On 31 July, the Mayor and the president of the Beit Sahour USA Association met Bethlehem University's administration to discuss scholarships for the city's young people.



Tiberias Boys' Elementary School

On 3 September, the Municipality gave Tiberias Boys' Elementary School a projector and an interactive whiteboard, funded by its Education Fund.

Smart Parking

Encouraging residents to use the smart parking system and organising car parking.

Our Streets Are for Everyone

A youth-led awareness campaign for responsible use of streets and public facilities.

Comfort Is a Right

Upgrading the Beit Sahour clinic courtyard with shades, benches and trees for patients.



Beit Sahour Municipality

Shepherds' Field | حقل الرعاة

 facebook.com/Beitsahour.Municipality

 www.beitsahour.ps

home of
shepherds