

Sidon excavation aims to uncover more ancient ruins

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SIDON: The Directorate-General of Antiquities disclosed on Thursday that it will resume excavation at the Frères' archaeological site in the old city of Sidon in collaboration with a delegation of the British museum.

Earlier excavation procedures at the site led to the discovery of several of the city's underground layers, which dated back to 1,000-4,000 B.C.

The head of the British museum delegation, Claude Doumit Serhal, told *The Daily Star* that archaeological teams would also conduct excavation works at the neighboring site of Sandaqli in order to conduct comparative research among the two sites' layers. Electricite du Liban's Sidon facility was formerly located at the Sandaqli site.

According to Serhal, the ruins that have been discovered in recent years have highlighted Sidon's role as the host of multiple civilizations throughout history. Excavation works are expected to kick off prior to the establishment of Sidon's historical museum in the same area, which would boost the city's status as a center for tourism and antiquities.

In June 2009, the cornerstone for Sidon's first archaeological museum was laid at the coastal city's Freres archaeological site.

The project will be executed and supervised by Lebanon's Culture Ministry and funded by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, which has allocated around \$5 million for the construction of the museum.

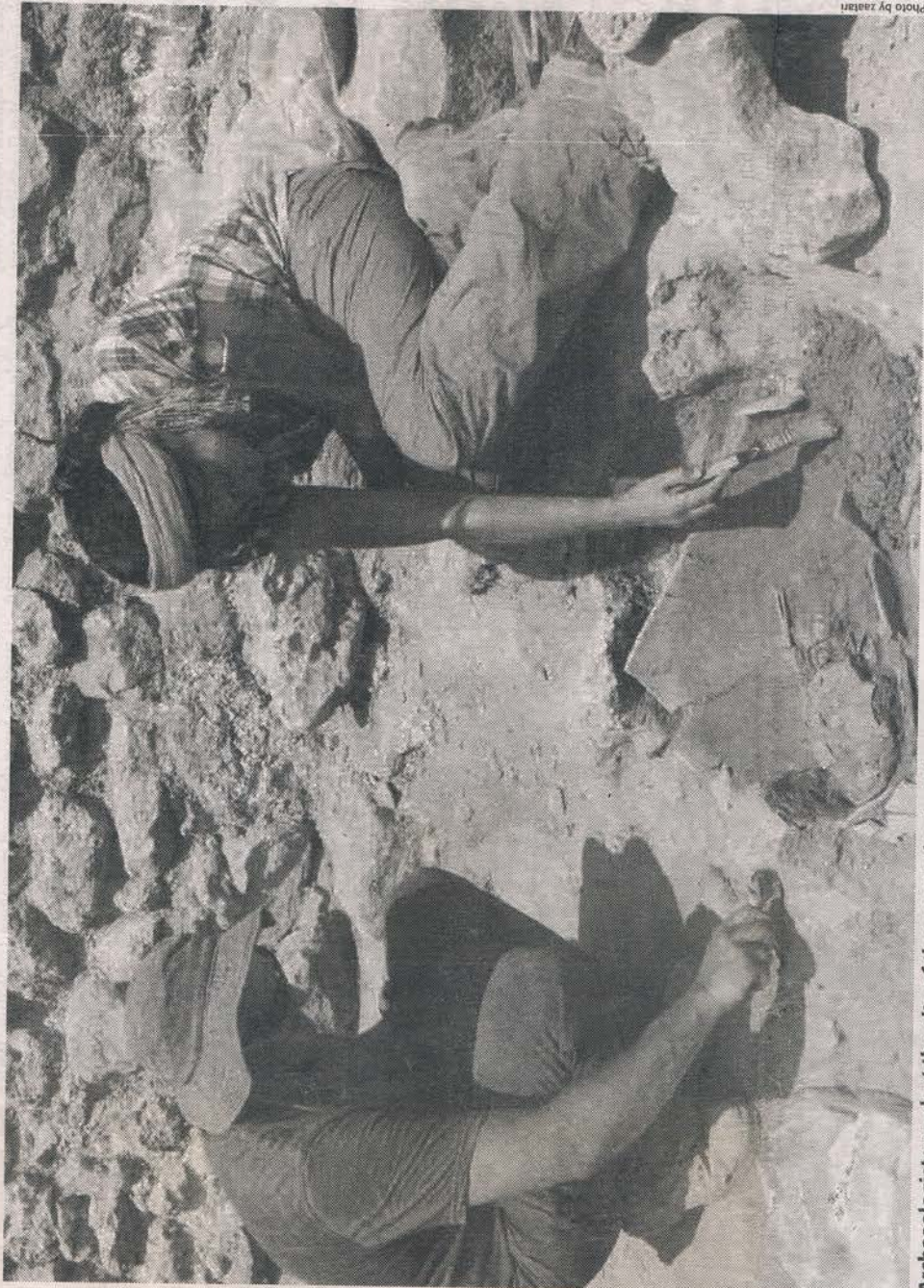


Photo by zaatari

Archaeologists work at the site of the excavation in Sidon.

The laying of the cornerstone took place at the same excavation site where the British Museum delegation has been active in revealing the city's past.

According to Serhal, excavation at the old Freres site disclosed the presence of six old layers that dated back to 3,000

B.C., eight others to 2,000 B.C. and five to 1000 B.C.

Serhal stressed that the discovery of historical sites in Sidon will promote the city's status among other worldwide archaeological locations.

Serhal added that the British Museum delegation, in collabo-

ration with the Lebanon's DGA, have resumed work at the Freres location for the eleventh consecutive year and was recently granted permission to start digging at the Sandaqli site as well.

The work team in charge of restoration works and comparative research will include 90 in-

dividuals, according to Serhal, who expressed her hope that the excavations would result in the discovery of new layers and important findings.

Sidon is one of the most important Phoenician cities, and boasts the Phoenician temple site of Eshmoun just to its north.