

Students win Michel Chiha Awards for their analyses of his work

BEIRUT: Six high school students were presented with the Michel Chiha Award in a weekend ceremony at Le Bristol, after winning an annual literary competition organized by the Michel Chiha Foundation.

On March 28, grade 12 students from Lebanon's public and private schools chose one of two pieces of Chiha's work and analyzed it either in Arabic, French or English.

The works of two students were then selected in each language. Three students were awarded a first prize of LL3,500,000, and three others a second prize of LL2,500,000.

The first prizewinners were Mahmoud Tenyan from Dar al-Nour school in Koura for Arabic, and Rim Zarghouni and Albert Najjar from College Notre-Dame

de Jamhour, who won for French and English, respectively.

Ahmad Abu Taleb from the Mar Elias High School in Sidon won second prize for Arabic, Melody Haddad from College Notre-Dame de Jamhour for French and Charbel Qurbani from Besancon Sisters School Baabdat for English.

Since 1954, the Michel Chiha Foundation has worked to expose new generations to Chiha's writings and ideas. The next competition on March 19, 2016, will be open to both grade 11 and 12 students.

Chiha was a major figure in crafting the Lebanese Constitution before independence, and helped direct Lebanon's political future through his influential editorials in the newspaper *Le Jour*.

Culture Minister Raymond Arei-

ji, Information Minister Ramzi Joriege, Minister of State for Administrative Development Nabil de Freij, MPs Marwan Hamadeh and Henri Helo, and Former Minister Michel Edde were among those present at the event. Both Hamadeh and Areiji, who spoke at the event, lauded Chiha's important role in Lebanon's history and respect for the country's different constituents.

"We meet today to remember and honor a Lebanese figure which passed away around half a century ago," Areiji said.

"His significant contribution to drafting the articles of the Lebanese Constitution at the start of the 1920s was a result of his deep understanding of Lebanon's components and of the philosophy of the formula of a diverse entity." - *The Daily Star*