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**QAA: Lebanese soldiers stand guard, foreground, as investigators, background, inspect the scene next to a damaged ambulance that was attacked by one of the suicide bombers. — AP**

**5 DEAD IN LEBANON-SYRIA BORDER BLASTS**  
 SUICIDE BOMBERS TARGET CHRISTIAN VILLAGE OF QAA

**BEIRUT:** A group of suicide bombers detonated their explosives' vests in a northeastern Lebanese village near the border with Syria yesterday, killing five people and wounding at least 15, a Lebanese military official and paramedics said. The blasts occurred in the predominantly Christian village of Qaa, only few hundred meters (yards) away from the border. The state-run National News Agency said four suicide bombers were involved in the rare multiple attack. No group immediately claimed responsibility.

The villagers became suspicious of the men as they were passing through the village around 4 am local time, an eyewitness in Qaa said. When civilian security men who guard the village called out to them, they threw a hand grenade before successively blowing themselves up among civilians.

A Lebanese military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, said one suicide attacker blew himself up in front of one of the homes, while three other attackers followed, detonating their suicide vests one after the other as people gathered in the area. Four members of the military were among the wounded, the official added. An investigation is underway.

Qaa and the nearby Ras Baalbek are the only two villages with a Christian majority in the predominantly Shiite northeastern Hermel region, where the Lebanese Shiite Hezbollah group holds sway.

The group has sent thousands of its fighters to Syria to fight on the side of Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces against predominantly Sunni rebels trying to topple him. The area along the Syria border has been struck by bombings claimed by Sunni extremists on several occasions since Syria's conflict began in March 2011, leading Christians of Qaa to set up self-defense units to protect against potential attack by Muslim extremists from neighboring Syria.

**Stepping up operations**

Since mid-2014, the Lebanese army stepped up operations and patrols in the areas, leading to a drop in bombings and shelling targeting the area. Qaa's mayor, Bashir Matar, described in an interview with the Beirut-based pan Arab channel Al-Mayadeen how the fourth attacker was gunned down. Matar said it was unclear what had triggered the first explosion but once people started gathering, another explosion occurred followed by a third one.

"As we were treating some of the wounded, I saw the fourth suicide attacker coming toward me. I shouted at him," Matar said. "We opened fire toward him and he blew up." Lebanon has in recent years faced deadly spillovers from the Syrian civil war next door, and Lebanese authorities have been on high alert, tightening security in recent days.

George Kitane, the head of paramedics at the Lebanese Red Cross, confirmed the death toll and said the 15 wounded were rushed to hospitals in nearby areas. He added that several others were treated on the spot. One of the four explosions struck an ambulance for the village's archbishop, killing its driver, residents said.

The explosions occurred about 150 meters away from a Lebanese customs border point. The eyewitnesses spoke on condition of anonymity for fears for his safety. Lebanon's Al-Manar TV, which is owned by the militant group Hezbollah, said six people were killed and blamed the attack on the Islamic State group.

Previous attacks in Lebanon have been claimed by the IS group. The area of Mashraa Qaa - a predominantly Sunni area that is near village of Qaa - is home to a large number of Syrian refugees who have fled the war in Syria. Qaa is located about 70 kilometers north of the eastern Lebanese city of Baalbek. — AP

**CAMERON'S SUCCESSOR: WHO, HOW AND WHEN?**

**LONDON:** Prime Minister David Cameron's decision to resign after he lost the campaign to keep Britain in the EU triggered a leadership contest in his Conservative party, the winner of which will replace him in Downing Street. He had already said that he would step down before the next election in 2020, and a number of Conservative lawmakers have positioned themselves as potential successors. Britain's next prime minister will have the task of negotiating the country's exit from the European Union. Here are the key steps following his resignation:

**Cameron out**

Cameron had called the referendum and campaigned hard for a "Remain" vote in Thursday's vote, so his departure was inevitable, but is a humiliating end to his career. The 49-year-old became Britain's youngest prime minister in nearly 200 years in 2010, and last year was re-elected with a Conservative majority. Cameron will hand over the leadership and the keys to Downing Street by the latest at the Tory party conference in October.

**Who can succeed Cameron?**

A committee of senior Conservative lawmakers will meet on Monday to formally start the leadership process. Here are some potential candidates:

**Boris Johnson:** Instantly recognizable with his mop of golden hair, Brexit figurehead Boris Johnson can claim much of the credit for propelling the "Leave" side to victory. The 52-year-old former London mayor has the popular touch, and his relentless campaigning for a Brexit has

endeared him to many eurosceptic Conservative voters. It has also boosted his national profile, although he has critics among Conservative MPs and some accuse him of only backing the "Leave" camp out of political self-interest.

**Michael Gove:** The justice minister was a close friend of Cameron's and his decision to defy him and campaign for a Brexit was a blow to the prime minister. The 48-year-old former journalist presented the more sober, cerebral face of the "Leave" campaign. His low point was comparing economic experts warning about the effects of a Brexit to the Nazis who smeared Albert Einstein in the 1930s. He later apologized.

**Naming a PM**

In Britain voters elect parties and not prime ministers, so a change of the leadership at the top of the governing party does not require a new election to be called. Those hoping to succeed Cameron must first submit to a vote by Conservative MPs. The two most popular candidates will then be put to a vote by the party's 150,000 members.

**Leaving the EU**

Cameron said the new prime minister will have to launch a procedure to leave the EU by invoking Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, which defines the conditions for a voluntary and unilateral exit. There would then be a period of negotiation leading up the exit, since Britain and the EU need to define their new bilateral relations. The premier will also have the task of uniting a country profoundly divided by the EU vote, and dealing with the potential secession of Scotland. — AFP

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