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BIRD COMMUNITY AT 2006-2007 IN NEW DAMIETTA

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ABSTRACT

In order to make adecision involving the environment and the wildlife it contains, it is necessary to first obtain some ideas of species present, and their characters and abundance.

Based on our knowledge, this study was the first to survey resident and migratory birds in New Damietta regions. Birds were surveyed from beginning of March, 2006 to the end of February, 2007. Sixty six species were censused, they were belonged to 12 orders and 27 families. The recorded species were 26 of resident breeding birds, 15 species of passage migrants, and 25 species of winter visitors.

A new record was found in the present study that is Great-Backed Gull, Larus marinus. It is a winter visitor bird species. With the reclamation of this area, it is expected a great change in its bird community, especially the species related to human either resident or migratory. Collectively, a more thorough knowledge of bird community will be needed to determine how species might be affected with reclamation of New Damietta region specially the coastal area and to identify species that may require special attention for research and management in future.

Keywords: Bird -Resident birds- Migratory birds - New Damietta region

INTRODUCTION

Egypt has a considerable range of habitat and vegetation which support in turn a diversity of fauna. It lies at the junction of four bio-geographical regions: Sahara-Sindian which represented in the vast deserts; Iran-Turanian which occupies a small area in Sinai highlands; Mediterranean which occupies a small area along the Mediterranean coast and afrotropical. The Nile supports most of the country's wetlands which are some of Egypt's most importance habitat supporting the greater diversity of density of bird species [Baha El Din (1999)].

Egypt has a strategic position geographically along the migration routs of palearctic species which winter in Africa and hence internationally important numbers migrate through Egypt [Porter& Cottridge (2001)].

The first major work on the ornithology of Egypt since Shelly's book (1872) was that of [Meinertzhagen (1930)] which included considerable information not only

on the distribution of birds in Egypt, but also on their habitats. Another work in Egyptian avian fauna was at the book "birds known to occur in Egypt" by [Tharwat (1997)]. Publications dealing with the ornithology of the Red Sea and Eastern Desert are those by [El-Negumi et al., (1950); Goodman (1984); Baha El Din & Saleh (1982) and Saleh (1984)].

Only one study has been taken at Damietta Governorate by SEAM at 2004, this study has reported that 32 resident breeding birds inhabiting the governorate.

In order to make a decision involving the environment and the wild life it contains, it is necessary to first obtain some idea of species present and their abundance. This information can be used to determine possible effects of habitat changes and thus aid in decisions regarding wildlife management, land use, and land development. Bird surveys are the primary tool used to provide valuable information on avian aspects of ecological communities. These surveys can both quantitative and qualitative measures such as species presence, seasonal abundance, migrants, or breeding status.

New Damietta region is considered significant because it provides important habitat for wildlife in the Mediterranean Sea coastal area, but it is also sustaining a considerable amount of human recreation. Due to this overlap of wildlife habitat and human use, as well as the potential for further development, it has become crucial to maintain at least a basic inventory of the wildlife present, including birds, and their ecological requirements.

Study Area:

Fig. (1) a map of Damietta Governorate. New Damietta region is a west northern part of Damietta governorate. It is located between 31° 41′ 42″ N latitude and 31° 27′ 52″ E longitude. This region includes Damietta Port and New Damietta City, in addition to their countryside area. The port and the city have been planned on coastline area which is bordered by some scattered marshes (wetland) and dense palm and Guava trees. Hence, this region has the same 4 distinctive habitats of Damietta, which are: marine and coastal habitat (shore of the city), wetland habitat (several scattered marshes neighboring the city), arable land (dense surroundings of palm and Guava trees), urban landscape (New Damietta City).

To represent different habitats, several locations were selected in region of New Damietta as a study area: marine and coastal locations, wetland habitat, urban landscape (building locations, parks and gardens, sub urban locations, cultivated locations).

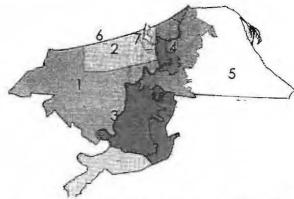


Fig. (1): Map of Damietta Governorate showing New Damietta region [SEAM (2004)].(1) Markaz Kafr Saad,(2)New Damietta region, (3) Fareskour city, (4) Damietta city, (5) Manzala Lake, (6) Mediterranean Sea, and (7) Damietta port.

Materials and Methods

In the present study, a bird survey was conducted for a year; beginning in March, 2006 and ending in February, 2007. This provided 4 seasonal bird surveys; spring, summer, autumn and winter. Each location was visit 2 times monthly.

Observations were conducted on morning of the day (6-9 AM). Additional hours were spent on the site during the same day and the point observations were conducted.

The purpose of these incidental observations was to provide a more complete characterization of the types of birds that inhabit New Damietta region. The birds were identified according to [Tharwat (1997) and Bertel et al., (2004)].

RESULTS

Avian Community Composition:

66 bird species were recorded in different habitats of New Damietta region from the beginning of March, 2006 to the end of February, 2007 Table (1), (2), and (3). They were belonged to 12 orders and 27 families. Based on the number of species, the abundant orders are Passeriformes (25 species), Charadriiformes (16 species), Coraciiformes (6 species), Ciconiiformes (4 species), Gruiformes (4 species), and Columbiformes (4 species), while the other 7 orders (Acciptiformes, Falconiformes, Galliformes, Cuculiformes, Strigiformes, and Caprimulgiformes) represented by only one or two species. Based on the bird status, the avian community of New Damietta region was distributed into 26 resident species, 15 species of passage migrants, and 25 species of winter visitors in a percent of 39%, 23%, and 38% respectively Fig. (2).

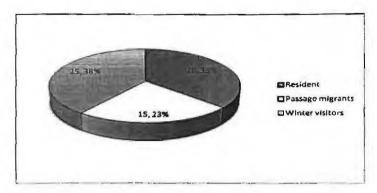


Fig. (2): Distribution of bird community at New-Damietta region censused at March, 2006 to Feb., 2007.

Resident Species:

Of total of 66 censused species, only 26 bird species (39%) were resident birds including 7 bird species of passerines and 19 bird species of non passerines at a percent of 27% and 73%, respectively Fig. (3) Table (1) and plate (1). Concerning the resident passerines; according to the bird activity, only one species, great grey shrike, was restricted to the cultivated habitat, while the other 6 species (crested lark, sand Martin, Egyptian barn swallow, hooded crow, common bulbul, and house sparrow) were distributed in different habitats at the city except marine habitat. All passerines, except great grey shrike and sand Martin, were abundant and highly distributed in the sampled habitat and distributed uniformly during different seasons of the year. The most abundant species was house sparrow allover the year, both hooded crow and Egyptian barn swallow increased greatly in summer and spring.

Concerning non passerines; from 19 species, 6 species (Squacco heron, sengal coucal, pied kingfisher, white breasted kingfisher, moorhen, and water rail) were recognized restricted to wetland habitat, 2 species (cattle egret and black winged kite) were restricted to cultivated habitat, 2 bird species, spotted red shank and herring gull, were found in marine habitat, while the other 10 species were found distributed in various habitats. All the resident non passerines were greatly abundant in different habitats and also uniformly distributed allover the year except Squacco heron and Senegal coucal.

Many species were stable during all seasons of the year, while some species such as hoopoe and kestrel increased in summer and spring but decreased slightly in winter and autumn. Cattle egret was noticed in folks on air, most species were seen in paired or small folks except kestrel, black-winged kite and both species of kingfisher are usually recorded single. All species are noticed on land, trees, electric wires or dives, except barn swallow was usually in folks at flight.

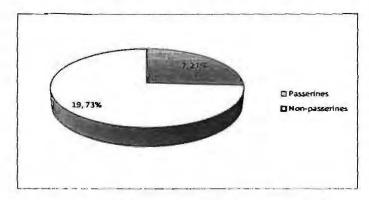


Fig. (3): The percent between resident passerines and resident non-passerines of 26 bird species censused in New-Damietta region (March, 2006 and Feb., 2007).

Passage Migrants:

15 species (23%) of the bird community observed in New Damietta region were passage migrants Table (2) and plate (2). These passage migrants were 9 species from order Passeriformes and 6 ones were non passerines at a percent of 60% and 40%, respectively Fig. (4). All the passage migrants were detected in autumn. Turnstone and sanderling were the first two recorded species which were seen together in folks. They were actively foraged on small aquatic invertebrates from sandy area of the shore. The rest of passage migrants were observed on vegetation of the sand dunes at coastal habitat. The most abundant species were migratory quail, turnstone, and sanderling, while the rest non passerines including corncrake, nightjar, and European bee eater were very rare. The second abundant group was passerines including Richard's pipit, wheatear, Isabelline wheatear, black-eared wheatear, nightingale, thrush nightingale, while barn swallow, red breasted flycatcher, and red-backed shrike were very rare. All passage migrants were noticed foraging at the shore except European barn swallow was noticed inside the city in urban land habitat.

Table (1): Survey, frequency, and intensity of resident bird species habitat, Marine different habitats at New-Damietta region (March, 2006 to Feb., 2007). M: Various habitats. Scientific nume الإصم بللقة العربية S H Common name Family Ciconiiformes Egretto garzetta Little egret البلشون الأبيض R W Rare Ardidae الراق الأبيض R Rare Ardeola rolloides Squacco heron habitat, U: Urban Hubideus ibis R Cattle egret ابو قردان VB Abundant Acciptiformes Elanus caeruleus Black-winged kine العداة ذات الجناح الأسود R Cu Rare Acciptridae Kestrel الموسق Falcoalformes Ö R Va Folco tinnunculus Rare (Falconidae) مرعة الماء Rollus aquaticus R W Water rail Rare Gruiformes landscape, S: status, Coastal habitat, W: Wetland habitat, دجاج الماء Rallidae Gallinula chloropus Moorhen R Ca Rare Charadriiformes Hoplopterus spinosus Spur-winged plover الزفزاق R Va Common Charadoidae تورس أمستر التدم Laridae Laries urgentatus Herring gull R M Abundant Columba livia الحمام الجبلي Columbiformes Rock dove R Va Rare الحمام المنزلي Columbidae Columba I. domestica Feral pigeon R Va Abundant Streptopelia decaacta Collared dove اليمام المطوق R Va Abundant اليمام البلدي Columba aegyptiaca Palm Dove R Va Abundant Cuculiformes Cuculus acgypticus Sengal Coucal الكوكو R W Scarce (Cuculidae) H: Habitat, Strigiformes (Strigidae) Athene noctua Little Owl ام قويق R Va Rare Pied Kingfisher سنواد المسأف الأبقع Ceryle rudis R Co Rare Cornciiformes Halveyon suvrnensis White-breasted التارند R Co Rare Alcedmidae Kingfisher Meropidae **Uрира sp** Hoopee الهدمد R Va Rare Alaudidae Galerida cristata Crested lark أنبرة منوجة R Va Rare ... Ripario riparia Sand martin Va Rare عصفور الجنة المصري Hırımdinidae Hirmdo r savigniu Egyptian barn swallow Va Common Cu: Cultivated intenisity. Lantus excubitor Great grey shrike نقناش البادية R Co Scarce Corvidac Hooded crow Corvus corone cornex المفراب البلدي R Va Common ولميل شاع Pycnonotidae Pycnonotus barbanis Common bulbul Scarce R W,U Passeridae Passer domesticus House sparrow العصقور الدوري R Va Abundant

Order



Plate (1): photos of respectively resident bird species censused in New region at March, 2006 to Feb., 2007.

Damietta

Table (2): Survey, frequency, and intensity of passage migrants distributed in different habitats at New-Damietta region (March, 2006 to Feb., 2007). M: Marine habitat, Co: Coastal habitat, W: Wetland habitat, Cu: Cultivated habitat, U: Urban landscape, S: status, H: Habitat, I: intensity. Va: Various habitat

Order Family		Scientific name	Common name	الإسم باللغة العربية	S	H	i
Galliformes (Phasianidae)		Coturnix coturnix	Migratory quait	العندان	PM	Co	Common
Gruiformes Rallidae		('rex crex	Comcrake	مرعة الفلة	PM	W	Scarce
Charadriiformes Charadriidae		Arenaria interpret	Tunisione	قنبرة الماء	PM	Va	Common
Scolopacidae		Calulris alba	Sanderling	المدروان	PM	Va	Common
Caprimulgiformes Caprimulgidae		Capromilgus europaeus	Nightjai	البخاخ	PM	Co	Scarce
Cornciiformes Meropidae		Merops apiaster	European bee-eater	الوروار الأوروبي	PM	Co	Rare
Passeriformes	Hirundinidae	Hirundo rustica rustica	European barn swallow	عصفور ألجنة الأوروبي	PM	U	Rare
	Motacillidae	Anthus novaeseelandiae	Richard's pipit	ابو فصية	PM	Co	Scarce
	Laniidae	Lanius collorio	Red-backed shrike	دقناش أكحل	PM	Co	Scarce
	Turdidae	Oenanthe oenanthe	Wheatear	ابلق ابو بلیق	PM	Co	Rare
		Oenanthe isahellina	Isabelline wheatear	ابلق اشهب	PM	Co	Rare
		Oenanthe hispanica	Black-eared wheatear	أبلق أسود الأذن	PM	Co	Rare
		Ficedulo prava	Red breasted flycatcher	خاطف الذباب أحمر البطن	PM	บ	Scarce

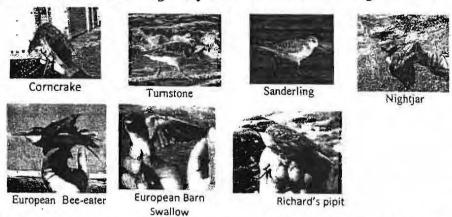


Plate (2): photos of respectively passage migrants censused in New Damietta region at March, 2006 to Feb., 2007

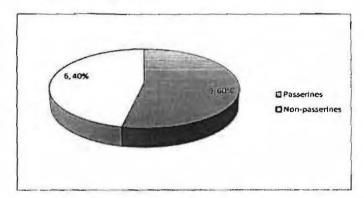


Fig.(4): The percent between non passerine passage migrants and passerine passage migrants of 15 bird species censused in New Damietta region (March, 2006 to Feb., 2007).

Winter Visitors:

Table (3) and plate (3). They were belonged to 6 orders Ciconiiformes, Acciptiformes, Gruiformes, Charadriiformes, Coraciiformes, and Passeriformes, at a percent of 64% of non passerines and 36% passerines Fig. (5). Most of these species were recorded early in September and continued nearly to the end of February. These species were distributed in different habitat based on their foraging habit. All passerines (yellow wagtail, white wagtail, icterine warbler, whinchat, stonechat, and Spanish sparrow) were observed in various habitats except redstart, black redstart, and robin were restricted to urban landscape.

Concerning non passerines, 10 species (Little Ringed Plover, Kentish Plover, Great Black-backed Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Audouin's Gull, Common Gull, Black-headed Gull, Mediterranean Gull, Little Gull, and Sandwich Tern) were restricted to the marine habitat, 3 species (grey heron, marsh harrier, and coot) were restricted to

wetland habitat, stone curlew was restricted to urban landscape, while the rest two species (European kingfisher and European hoopoe) were observed in various habitats

The observation showed that all the winter visitors began to appear nearly at the middle of September and increase gradually to reach high level during the winter and began to decrease again at the beginning of March. The most abundant species were gulls (great black-backed gull, lesser black-backed gull, Audouin's gull, common gull, Mediterranean gull, black-headed gull, and little gull), and plovers (little ringed plover and Kentish plover) but the other species (grey heron, marsh harrier, coot, European kingfisher, and European hoopoe) were very rare. All passerines (yellow wagtail, white wagtail, icterine warbler, whinchat, stonechat, redstart, black redstart, and Spanish sparrow) were abundant except robin.

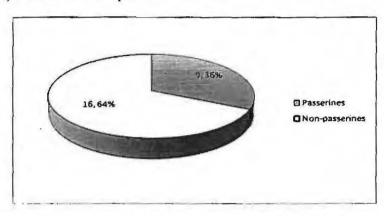


Fig. (5): The percent between winter visitor passerines and winter visitor non passerines of 25 bird species censused in New Damietta region (March, 2006 to Feb., 2007).

Table (3): Survey, frequency, and intensity of winter visitor bird species distributed in different habitats at New-Damietta region (March, 2006 to Feb., 2007). M: Marine habitat, Co: Coastal habitat, W: Wetland habitat, Cu: Cultivated habitat, U: Urban landscape, S: status, H: Habitat, I: intensity. Va: Various habitats.

Order Family		Scientific name	Common name	الإسم باللغة العربية	5	H	1
Cicunifformes Ardeidae		Ardea emereu	Grey heron	البلشون الرسادي	. WV	W	Scarce
Acciptiformes Acciptridae		Clear oerugmaxux	Marsh harrier	ظفراع	WV	w	Scarce
Gruiformes Rallidae		Fishen atro	Coat	النر	wv	W	Common
Charadriffermes	Charadriidae	Charadrus dubues Charadrus diesandenus	Little-ringed plover Kensish plover	قطفاط مقوح مسجو فطفاط أبو رزرس	wv	*	Scarce Scarce
	Scolopacidae	Tringa erythropus	Spotted red shank	طوطوی آمسر المثاق ارقط	wv	М	Rare
	Burhinidae	Burhmus ocahenenus	Stone curlew	الكروان	WV	U	Scarce
	Landac	Larus marmus	Great black-backed gull	بورس السك	WV	М	Common
		Lorus fuscus	Lesser black-backed	دغية تورين	WV	М	Abundant
		Larin audoumn	Audouin's gull	ادوين نورس	wv	M	Common
		Lorus comes	Common gull	ئورس شاع	WV	M	Rare
		Larus melanocephalus	Mediterranean gull	نورس البحر المتوسط	wv	M	Common
		Larus rulibundus	Block-headed gull	نورس آسود الراس	WV	M	Common
		Larus minutes	Little gull	تورس مىنير	WV	M	Rare
	Sternidae	Sterna sandwicensis	Sandwich tem	غرننا	WV	M	Rare
Coracillorme	Alcedinidae	Alcedo otthes	European kingfisher	حبواد السماك الأوروبي	wv	Co. W	Rare
		(Ірира хр	European hoopoe	الهداد الأرزوبي أبو الصلاة الصائر البطن	wv	Va	Scarce
	Moiacillidae	Matacillo flava	Yellow wagtail	أبو قميلاة استر البطن	WV	w	Common
		Motocilla alha	White wagtail	أبر قسادة أبيض	wv	Va	Abundanı
	Sylviidae	Hippolais icterina	leterine warbler	خنشع لوموني قايمي أحمر	WV	Va	Scarce
	Turdidae	Saxuola ruberta	Whinchat	كابني أحدر	wv	Cu, U	Scarce
		Saxicula tarquata	Stonechni	کلومي مطرق	wv	Cu, U	Scarce
		Phoenicurus phoenteurus	Redstart	العموراء	WV	U	Scarce
		Phoemeurus ochrurus	Black redstart	التمزراء السوداء	WV	U	Scarce
		Eruhacus rubecula	Robin	أبو المثاء	WV	U	Scarce
		Luxemia megarhynchox	Nightingale	elia_B	wv	Cu, U	Scarce
		lasemia luscinio	Thrush Nightingale	عملوب الشهر	wv	Cu, U	Scarce
	Passerular	Passer hispanialensis	Spanish sparrow	المصفور الأسبائي	wv	W.	Abundani



Plate (3): photos of respectively winter visitor bird species censused in New Damietta region at March, 2006 to Feb., 2007.

DISCUSSION

In order to make a decision involving the environment and the wildlife it contains, it is necessary to first obtain some ideas of species present and their abundance. These surveys provided both quantitative and qualitative measures such as species presence, seasonal abundance, migrant, or even breeding status. In general, this study is the first extensive quantitative survey of resident and migratory birds undertaken to date in the region of new Damietta. Collectively, the structure of bird community was 66 species in New Damietta region at March 2006 to Feb. 2007. Of such bird community, 26 species were resident breeding and 40 species were migratory. Of migratory birds, 15 species were passage migrants and 25 species were winter visitors.

The study of bird community in Damietta Governorate at 2004 by SEAM reported that 32 resident breeding bird species inhabiting the governorate. In the present study, 26 species only of resident breeding birds were recorded in New Damietta region. By reviewing the species, it was found that the most resident species recorded by SEAM inhabiting Manzala Lake which is far away from the study area of New Damietta. In the present study, 7 species were recorded herein and not included in SEAM report, these species are Little egret, Spotted red shank, Herring gull, Sand martin, Great grey shrike, Hooded crow, and House sparrow.

During February 2002, winter surveys were carried out for 25 species of water birds at Manzala Lake [SEAM (2004)]. In the present work, 11 species of these water birds were recorded in marine and wetland habitats of New Damietta region. In addition, new record of 30 migratory species were surveyed than that presented by [SEAM (2004)].

However, most if not all, bird species that recorded in this work were reported by [Tharwat (1997)] in Egyptian avian fauna at the book "birds known to occur in Egypt" that published by Publication of National biodiversity unit. No 8, 1997, A.R.E, Cabinet of Ministers, EEAA, Department of Nature Protection.

Only one new record was found in the present study for Great-Backed Gull, Larus marinus. This species was not recorded by [Tharwat (1997)] nor by [SEAM (2004)]. This species is a migratory bird. It is widely distributed in west Europe and the Baltic [Bertel et al., (2004)]. Hence, the present study is considered the first complete report of bird community in the study area.

By communication with many volunteers, they stated that a great change in the bird community was observed since the reclamation of this area. The main observation was the great increase in the intensity of urban birds and the decrease of the water birds in both marine and wetland areas. This in agreement to the report by [Marzluff (1997)], who suggested that settlement can change ecosystem processes, habitat, food, predators and competitors, and disease. These effects lead to significant changes in the population biology of birds in urban areas with resulting effects on the structure and composition of bird communities [Marzluff (2001)]. Because urban gardens and parks became more increasingly distributed in New Damietta, they are likely to become increasingly important to conservation as the urban landscape deteriorates, as they are arguably the main contributor to urban biodiversity in many developed countries [Cannon (1999) and Chamberlain et al., (2004)] have shown that the likelihood of many bird species

occurring in gardens is dependent on the surrounding local habitat rather than the garden habitat. This implies that if there is a continuing degradation of the urban environment then further declines bird population will increase.

Many of the resident and migratory human-related birds are observed in the study area. This may be attributed to the urbanization which is likely to directly affect arthropods, the primary food for many birds, especially during reproduction [McIntyre (2000)]. Urbanization can create a complex environmental gradient, from undisturbed natural areas to highly-modified urban landscapes that can be useful in exploring relationships between environmental heterogeneity and the diversity and abundance of species [McDonnell&Pickett (1990)]. Local bird abundance, demographic rates, and ecological processes may be a function of the larger urban landscape [Bolger (2001)]. Therefore studies of foraging, breeding, competition and predation of avian species need to be carried out along this gradient in order to compile the complete picture and reveal the key functional elements of an urban landscape and the bird communities within New Damietta.

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الملخص العربي الطيور في ٢٠٠٦ - ٢٠٠٧ بمنطقة دمياط الجديدة – مصر

جمال عبد الرحيم عبد الله'- سهام السيد منسى'- صبحى السيد حسب النبي'- نجلاء فتحي العرباتي

من أجل اتخاذ قرار تجاه البيئة والحياة البرية التي تحويها، يجب أو لا معرفة الأتواع الموجــودة بهــا وصفاتها وكذلك أيضا مدي انتشارها.

واستنادا لمعلوماتنا، فإن هذه الدراسة تعد الأولي من نوعها في مسح الطيور المقيسة والمهاجرة بمنطقة دمياط الجديدة. تم حصر الطيور ابتداء من مارس ٢٠٠٦ وحتى فبراير ٢٠٠٧، تم رصد ١٦ نوع من الطيور، منها ٢٦ نوع من الطيور المقيمة و ١٥ نوع من الطيور المهاجرة العابرة و ٢٥ نوع من الطيور الزائرة الشتوية. تم تسجيل نوع جديد من النوارس بالمنطقة وهو نورس السمك (زائر شتوي).

من المتوقع أن يحدث ترايد في عدد الأتواع المتعلقة بنشاط الإنسان مع التزايد المستمر في إعمار في هذه المنطقة.

وخلاصة القول أنه يجب أن يكون هناك المزيد من الدراسات والمعرفة حول مجتمع الطيور وذلك ليتم تحديد الأثواع التي يمكن أن تتأثر بإعمار المنطقة وكذلك معرفة الأثواع التي تحتاج لمزيد من البحث والاهتمام مستقبلا.