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Presidential elections investigation

PROSECUTOR GENERAL ORDERS INQUEST INTO CLAIMS OF FRAUD

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE WILL LOOK INTO ALLEGED ELECTORAL VIOLATIONS

By Nouran El-Behairy

Prosecutor General Abdel Meguid Mahmoud sent a letter to Minister of Justice Ahmed Mekki on Sunday, instructing him to start investigating claims of presidential election fraud.

Counselor Adel Al-Saeid, the spokesperson of the prosecutor general, announced that Mahmoud ordered Mekki to assign a judge to investigate possible electoral violations and fraud.

"All the cases were gathered along with the one filed by Ahmed Shafiq and we sent them to the Ministry of Justice to start the investigation" Prosecutor General Abdel Meguid Mamoud told Daily News Egypt.

Former presidential candidate Ahmed Shafiq filed a case in October demanding an investigation into the results of the presidential elections.

The case was filed by Shafiq's lawyer Shawky Al-Sayed. He asked the prosecutor general to consider violations that include claims of ballot fraud at the Amriya print house. He also referred to reports that stated Copts were prevented from voting in some governorates.

Mohamed Abu Hamed, ex-parliamentarian and a supporter of Shafiq

said the decision was expected, as many people filed cases claiming fraud; an investigation is necessary to support or refute these allegations.

"What's important is the serious intention to carry on with the investigation and discover the truth" Abu Hamed said.

Abu Hamed added that he regrets Shafiq filed the case rather late and that it would have been better following the elections, before Mohamed Morsy became president.

"Nobody is above the law, even the president" he said.

Ahmed Abo Baraka, a lawyer of the Muslim Brotherhood said this was a normal but useless procedure, "every accusation should be investigated, even if it is false."

Baraka said the case was filed by "a fugitive, wanted for corruption cases" referring to Ahmed Shafiq, and that it aims to stir up public opinion and get media attention.

Mahmoud recently clashed with the president's office, following a decision to appoint him envoy to the Vatican. Mahmoud's refusal prompted Islamist groups to protest and demand Mahmoud's removal.

The crisis was resolved after negotiations between Mahmoud and Minister of Justice Ahmed Mekki.



Voters lines up to cast their vote in the presidential elections

Hasan Ibrahim

Egyptian economy in draft constitution

By Mohamed Salah Eldin

The fundamental philosophy of Egypt's economy was discussed on Sunday during a debate on the first

chapter of the draft constitution.

The first section on the main principles underpinning the state, titled "the state and society," contains the clauses on the economic structure of the country.

Article 13 to article 27 give guidelines on the economic system established in the constitution.

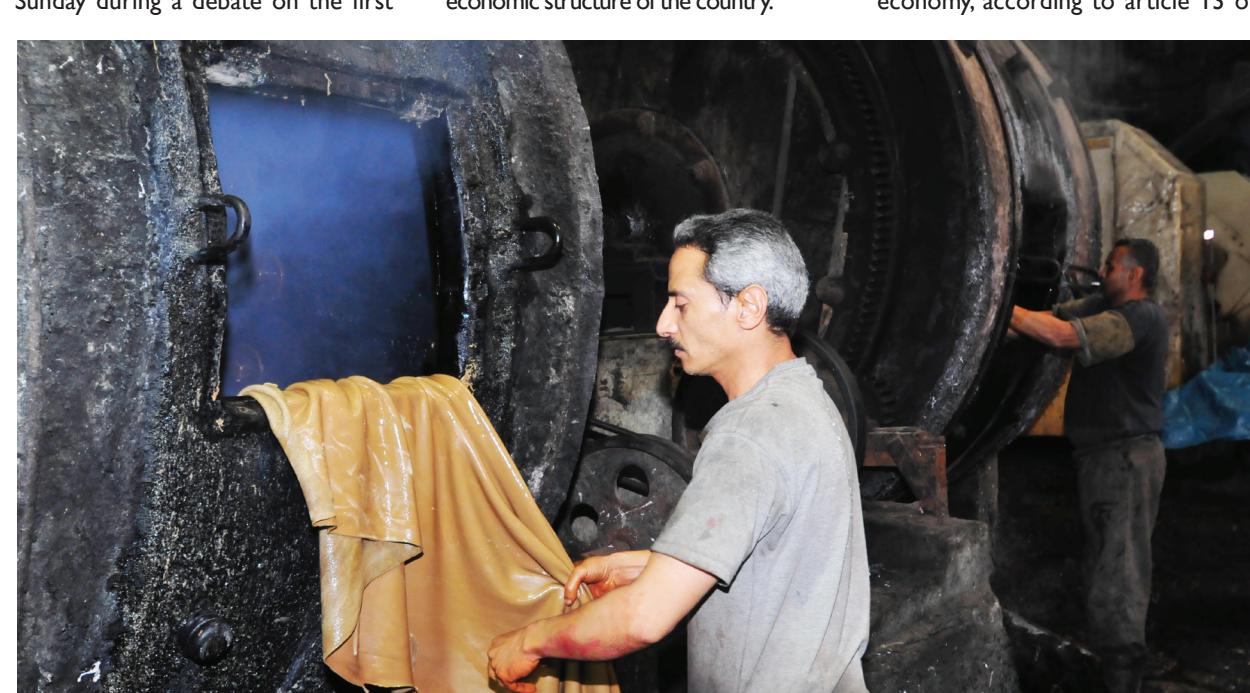
The objective of the national economy, according to article 13 of

the draft released by the Constituent Assembly, is to achieve balanced sustainable development, protect the production and income increase, and guarantee social justice, solidarity and welfare. The article also undertakes the protection of consumer and labour's rights, the fair distribution of wealth, and eradication of poverty and unemployment.

The preliminary draft pledges state protection of agriculture, natural resources, the Nile river, water resources, water surfaces, and beaches. It also obliges both the state and society to protect public funds and private property, confirming that expropriation is prohibited unless it serves "national interests."

The coordinator for Citizens against Price Hikes commented the draft saying that "this constitution is not in favour of the poor, the orientation of the current regime is clear, it is in favour of the rich," citing the electricity crisis and the increase in prices as proof of his claims.

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Hasan Ibrahim

A fair pay for labour? Clauses under discussion include the economic structure of the country

Currencies	Buy	Sell
CHF	6.3248	6.6302
USD	6.0975	6.1275
EUR	7.6337	8.0022
GBP	9.5496	10.0106
SAR	1.617	1.6373

Egyptian Stock Exchange		
	Closing	Daily Change
EGX 30	5,610.35	-0.02%
EGX 70	512.48	-0.29%
EGX 100	849.24	-0.27%
EGX 20	6,433.38	-0.39%

Commentary

Ziad Akl writes:
The Muslim Brotherhood is more likely to be won over by Salafis regarding the constitution not just because it is a strong popular demand ... but also because of the incompetence of liberal political maneuvering

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Civil society organisations currently operate in a volatile atmosphere. Twenty months after the revolution they are still waiting for the draft of the new law which will regulate them and define their relationship with the government. After a security crackdown on several non-governmental organisations following the revolution and the accompanying damage to their reputation, these groups are trying to withstand nationalisation and further security in-

tervention and regain their reputation. Daily News Egypt meets members of civil society who continue to work to create a new legal framework that will grant NGOs the autonomy they need to contribute to social development. They speak out about their experience with the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs, security violations, and their efforts in proposing new bills.

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Hasan Ibrahim

The nationalisation of Egypt's civil society



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Constituent Assembly approaches final deadline

Continued from page 1

Members of the assembly's Islamist majority are trying to complete the process in as little time as possible in order to meet the deadline, while liberal members such as assembly spokesperson Wahid Abdel Meguid say the deadline is a guideline and there are no legal consequences for missing it.

The bloc led by Moussa argues that nine days is not enough time to finalise the constitution, especially with many articles subject to heated debate. They are asking for the modification of the time plan to allow for more time to seek consensus.

The freedoms committee of the

lawyers union held a press conference on Sunday demanding the assembly include their profession in the constitution as part of the judicial authority.

The committee also called on the assembly to include the right of citizens to have defence lawyers accompany them throughout the judicial process from the moment they are arrested until trial.

They also called for the grand imam and mufti of Al-Azhar to be elected and not appointed.

Committee coordinator Tarek Ibrahim said a delegation from the committee would meet assembly Chairman Hossam El-Gheriany and present these suggestions to him on Sunday.

Gama'a Islamiyya spokesperson Tarek Al-Zumur presented the assembly on Sunday with a memo detailing the demands of the Coalition to Support Shari'a, calling for the implementation of Shari'a in the new constitution and its enshrinement as the principle source of all legislation.

The coalition composed of 17 Salafi parties and groups staged a large protest on Friday calling for the implementation of Shari'a. Al-Zumur's memo consisted mainly of that demonstration's demands.

The coalition is calling for constitutional articles to have an added phrase explicitly stating the adherence of whatever the article's content is to Shari'a law.

Ministry of Communications details difficulties in porn ban

by Basil El-Dabh

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) claimed that a ban on pornography was completely unfeasible in a statement on its website.

The prosecutor general ordered ministries on Wednesday to enforce a ban on pornography on the web.

"Firstly, the [MCIT] confirms its full respect for the provisions and the judiciary and its commitment to its implementation," said the statement.

The MCIT laid out a number of insurmountable issues facing the government in banning adult content websites.

"The issue of blocking pornography is a global issue and very complex, and the process of blocking it requires a full inventory of names of those sites which are estimated in the millions," read the statement.

The ministry mentioned that a committee responsible for exploring methods to block pornographic websites was put together by the past People's Assembly. The committee traveled to "an Arab country" whose government had taken measures to restrict websites.

"However they found that these countries have not succeeded in fully blocking these sites as was hoped. Although some countries spent tens of millions of dollars to censor, they were unable to do so because of users' abilities to circumvent these restrictions and gain access to the sites," said the MCIT.

The statement claimed that the government had worked with internet service providers a few years ago to implement "Family Internet" options for customers, ensuring that Internet consumers have the option of blocking offensive content or pages they might want to keep away from children in their households.

The MCIT affirmed its commitment to educating Egyptian society and taking part in "awareness programs," warning of the danger of pornographic sites, saying it was willing to cooperate with government, media, civil society, and private sector institutions.

It also said they and the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) could provide advertising materials targeted at young people discouraging them from accessing such sites.

The prosecutor general ordered a ban on internet pornography last week, stemming from a 2009 court ruling that had not been implemented.

Prosecutor General Abdel-Meguid Mahmoud ordered the ministries of the interior, telecommunications, and information to enforce the ban.

Earlier this year Salafi MPs, including Al-Nour MP Younis Makhyoun, called for ministries to uphold the court's ruling and ban any websites compromising the country's moral and religious values.

Activists criticised the move to attempt censoring websites, arguing that such a precedent could be used to restrict freedom of expression and lead to the blocking of websites expressing certain political and social perspectives.

The MCIT said it had arrived at many of its findings supporting the likelihood of a pornography ban after the 2009 court ruling, when it first started researching possible ways to enforce the Administrative Court's decision.

While some Arab countries have attempted to restrict their citizens' access to online pornographic material, Egypt has not yet taken concrete steps to do the same.

Suez schools steeped in sewage

Students say they have had enough

By Connor Molloy

Students and their families have staged a sit-in outside the Northern Educational Directorate to demand a resolution to a foul situation at four schools in the area that have been inundated with standing sewage and ground water.

"It's not in the classrooms," said Ahmed Refaei, director of the Northern Educational Directorate. "But it is in the playground and around the walls of the schools."

On top of the bad smell in the area, the sewage has attracted creatures, such as mosquitoes, bugs, and dogs which could bring diseases to the students who must traverse the effluent daily.

"This has been the situation for



Pool of standing water affecting one of the schools in Suez

Doctors' partial strike enters week seven

Continues tactic of group resignations



Egyptian doctors on strike carry a symbolic coffin during a march under the slogan "funeral of Egypt's health" in central Cairo (File photo)

By Hend Kortam

The partial doctors strike enters week seven on Monday, continuing the tactic of group resignations.

The strike began on 1 October.

"Doctors' strikes in countries all over the world last a long time," said Mohamed Shafiq from the media committee of the strike governing committee. "In Germany, it lasted four months and three months in Israel," he said. "This is a battle of patience."

Shafiq said doctors are escalating the strike through group resignations but, "this takes a lot of time and effort." The doctors started collecting group resignations last month.

In addition, the doctors are trying to win over the public by holding demonstrations. Last week, a symbolic funeral commemorating the "death" of health was held in Cairo. "We will also hold a demonstration with a symbolic trial of the people responsible for the deterioration of health care," Shafiq added.

The doctors on strike are rallying for the support of political and social groups "to expand the battle." Shafiq said that this way the strike becomes a more general issue rather than the issue of the doctors only. He said the Revolutionary Socialists, the

Strong Egypt Party and 6 April Youth Movement are among several political groups who have shown support for the strike.

"But no escalation that could

harm the patient will be taken," he added. As part of the strike, the doctors have made sure that all internal departments in public hospitals, including the emergency departments, are fully running. The only department which the strikers don't run is the outpatient clinics.

Doctors on strike, have faced intransigence both on the administrative and financial level. "Over the past ten days, we received many reports of doctors who have not received their bonuses and doctors who were threatened that they will be moved to another hospital or will not be allowed to continue their placements," Shafiq said.

"This is not legal but they are using the language of the most powerful.

The consultants who are supposed to be teaching the young doctors are using their authority over them," Shafiq said. The consultants are generally against the strike because they largely run and benefit from the outpatient clinics, which the strike targets.

Shafiq explained that the legal

team of the committee governing the strike, which includes volunteer lawyers, barely manage to help all doctors nationwide who need legal aid.

"This effort should come from the Doctors' Union, which has a legal committee which gets paid to do this, but a union general assembly with a Muslim Brotherhood majority is not helping," he said.

The doctors' strike began following a decision by the general assembly of the Doctors' Union, which convened in September. The doctors' three main demands were a gradual raise in the budget allocated for health, intensifying punishment of people who attack hospitals, which have repeatedly come under attack in the past few months, and passing a wage law which offers doctors a minimum wage.

A dispute occurred in the union's general assembly when it came to forming the committee which governs the strike. The head of the union and many board members wanted the strike committee to include them automatically and did not want to run for election to the committee. They walked out of the assembly in protest. Following this, over 1,000 doctors elected the strike governing committee which most doctors follow.

ANHRI condemn threats on journalists

By Luiz Sanchez

The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI) has denounced threats made by a group calling themselves the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (PVPV).

The group last week called on Saeed Shoail and his wife Islam Azzam, both journalists, calling on them to "stop their attacks on Islam, leave secularism and return to Islam."

In its statement, ANHRI called the threat an attempt to "muzzle their mouths and prevent them from writing." The PVPV also demanded their attacks on Islam, leave secularism and return to Islam."

"The right of litigation is an inherent right of every citizen," the ANHRI statement read.

Tamer Mowafy, the head of the ANHRI research unit, said at this current time, there is very little information about the current situation. "All we really know is that she [Azzam] received the letter," he said. "We do not know why she received the letter specifically but it will be revealed through investigations." Shoail had filed a complaint but has yet to receive word an investigation has started. "We do not have any proof this threat was even sent by a real group," Mowafy added, saying that anyone can write a letter and attach a logo to it.

Originally the letter was delivered to Al-Ahram newspaper where Azzam works. The letter was addressed to her and demanded she "commit to the attire of Islam, stop working as a writer and mixing with men and return to rais-

ing your children full-time."

"We as a community of Virtue and Prevention of Vice have much to do in case of non-compliance with the aforementioned points," it continued.

ANHRI condemned the letter and said "the Egyptian authorities are responsible for protecting [the two journalists]," adding they must "immediately reveal those responsible for this threat."

The statement also warned the authorities of disregarding "such terrorist acts that seek to create a state within a state which interferes with the personal lives of citizens and uses the threat of violence to take the freedoms guaranteed to them by the constitution and the law."

In 2006, Shoail interviewed the former Brotherhood general guide. During the interview Azeef cursed Egypt and Shoail included this in his transcript. He said he had considered filing a lawsuit against Azeef at the time but decided not to because he did not want to seem affiliated with the National Democratic Party. "Now that the Muslim Brotherhood holds the authority I decided to proceed with the lawsuit," Shoail said.

"I hold [President Mohamed] Morsi politically accountable for this threat because this letter gives people permission to threaten my wife's life," Shoail said. He continued by saying the Brotherhood was also responsible for encouraging extremism and fanaticism because they are not taking the right measures to confront extremists.

Two months ago Shoail received threatening text messages but said he did not think much of it. The letter was unprecedented because it mentioned his daughters, he said.

Alex workers steadfast in strike

Around 3,000 workers are staging a sit-in at Alexandria's Bolvera spinning and weaving factory, while another 300 are at the house of the governor. They are demanding a return to state ownership for a factory they say is wracked with corrupt management.

Saturday is the 10th day of the strike. In addition to the sit-ins, workers have also blocked road blockages and started hunger strikes in an effort to increase exposure for their cause.

This Saturday was a big test for the strike as management threatened to again withhold monthly wages from the striking workers. After a four day

delay, management gave in and pressure from workers led to payments on Saturday.

Another of the strikers' demands is to reinstate workers who were fired in 2007. One of those workers is Said Shehata. He has a filed suit against the factory regarding his dismissal, but has been on the ground as part of the strike since day one.

"Currently the administration seems disinterested," said Shehata. "They just want us to knock our heads against the walls."

The demand of a return to state

control is because of the corruption that has come from private ownership of parts of the company. Said Azzedine of the People's Committee for the Defence of the Revolution in Alexandria said, "Pieces of the company are being sold at bedrock prices."

This echoes a sentiment of the striking workers who are also demanding a halt to the selling process, which Shehata describes as "fraudulent".

"The company is trying to sell the assets cheaply, they could be selling for more."

The strikers also demand the return of land sold to an investor, a bonus for spinning workers that was not given to those in Bolvera, and an investigation into the management's squandering of funds. Lastly, the workers said they previously had a union and they now want it to be reinstated.

If the demands are not met?

"We will gather as many workers as we can, aiming for 5,000," said Shehata. "We will take busses and we will go to Cairo, to the Presidential Palace. But of course we will do our best to work things out before then."

Fatal train crash in Fayoum

COLLISION RAISES CONCERN ABOUT CONDITION OF EGYPT'S TRAINS

By Hend Kortam

A head-on train collision in Fayoum left three dead and dozens injured on Saturday night.

Mahmoud Abdel-Meguid, head of the operations room in the governorate of Fayoum, confirmed three people died and 43 were injured in the incident, which occurred at 6pm.

Of the injured, "19 received first aid treatment and were discharged," Abel-Meguid said. He added that six were taken to Cairo, five were moved to a hospital in Giza's Al-Haram suburb and 18 remain hospitalised in Fayoum.

"We were expecting more injuries... we got ambulances from Beni Sueif and 6 October but we handled the situation in record time," he said.

Heba Yassin, the media spokesperson of the Popular Current said, "we hold Hesham Qandil's government fully responsible for the crash.

"It seems that Morsy and his government are busy with the constitution and the elections but this should not come at the expense of the people's demands and the rights of the poor," she added.

"We condemn the negligence... the trains were on the same line for one and a half hour and no one warned the drivers," she said. She described what happened as "disrespectful."

Yassin offered her condolences to all the families of the people who died in the crash, who she described as martyrs. She demanded that officials be held accountable for the



Crowds gather at the scene of a train collision in Fayoum

crash, "starting from the minister of transportation all the way to the head of the Railways Authority and everyone who led to the spilling of blood."

Yassin said that the medical care that the injured received in the Fayoum General Hospital and the Fayoum University Hospital was very poor and the situation would have been worse if it weren't for the people of Fayoum who donated blood.

Yassin said she was upset with the conditions of the trains and their lack of

maintenance, which has left them "rickety and dilapidated." She also described the trains as, "the only method of transportation for Egypt's poor to travel."

The Karama party has similarly issued a statement offering condolences to the families of the injured and dead, adding that paying attention to the demands of the people and providing them with food and humane methods of transportation is the core of Sharia's (Islamic jurisprudence). The party demanded an investiga-

tion into the crash and that Prime Minister Qandil improves public transportation in Egypt. The party also warned that the "Metro suffers from grave negligence."

According to the state-run news agency Mena, Qandil is following news about the crash minute by minute. However at the time of writing there was no official statement from President Mohamed Morsy, Qandil or the official spokesperson for the president, Yasser Ali.

ElBaradei speech criticised by Al-Nour spokesman

ElBaradei called Islamists "clowns" and said his plan would do more than give people "a kilo of sugar and a litre of oil"

A member of the Al-Nour Party high board, Youssry Hamad, has criticised the chairman of the Al-Dostour Party Mohamed ElBaradei for comments he made during a speech on Friday. Addressing his party, ElBaradei said they were "more Islamic than the clowns of religion who call people infidels and secularists as they please and act as if they have moral authority over us."

Hamad responded by saying El-Baradei's statements could be punishable by law, saying "some politicians forget in the midst of politics the principles, rules and protocols

around appropriate language."

ElBaradei had no respect for other ideologies and opinions, Hamad said. As an educated man "who has a doctorate in law, and worked in international institutions, [ElBaradei's] use of obscenities, vulgar language and contempt for others in Aswan is punishable by law." He further said that people are unsure what it is El-Baradei wants as his political stance is unclear.

Under Egyptian law, "if a person insults another person with no reason they must be punished," according to Hamad.

"The law does not allow for people to insult one another with no basis."

Hamad said he was not looking to pursue legal action against ElBaradei, but wanted to make him aware that he could face legal action for attacks on people's ideology and character. "I can discuss these things with you without resorting to an attack on your character," Hamad said.

ElBaradei's criticism was directed at Islamists who use terms such as "infidels" when describing non-Muslims. Hamad said he does not agree with the use of the word infidel when

describing others. "Everyone has the right to express their thoughts and ideology in a way that does not lead to personal attacks," he said.

Al-Nour is a Salafi party which has been pushing for the amendment to the constitution regarding Shari'a law. Despite their desire to have Shari'a as the principle source of legislation, Al-Nour rejects protest as a means to achieve this. The 9 November Shari'a Friday protest drew thousands, but Al-Nour leadership was absent.

"Protesting is not the way for us to achieve our goals," Hamad said.

Groups voice anger in front of Shura Council

Protesters raised issues with constitution, press freedoms and housing

By Ahmed Abou Enein

Dozens of protesters gathered in front of the Shura Council, the upper house of parliament, on Sunday to voice different grievances and demands.

The largest gathering was of judges from the State Litigation Authority, who were protesting changes to the section on the judiciary in the draft constitution.

Protesters said the drafting committee, headed by assembly Chairman Hossam El-Gheriany, was trying to revoke the status of the State Litigation Authority, which handles cases against the government, as a full judicial body.

"There is pressure being exerted on the drafting committee with the goal of excluding us from the judicial institution," said Ahmed Abdel Kabeer, a judge with the authority.

He added that the initial draft of the section on the judiciary, written by the system of governance committee, included them as a judicial body but that amendments introduced by the drafting committee stripped them of judicial standing.

"We demand the initial draft presented by the system of governance committee be implemented," said Abdel Kabeer.

The judges held up a banner rejecting "the personal vendetta of the Constituent Assembly chairman



Protesters gather outside the Shura Council to voice various demands

against the State Litigation Authority."

Journalists from the state-owned Al-Gomhuria newspaper and their supporters gathered in front of the Shura Council as well, protesting what they said was the council's refusal to implement a judicial order restoring chief editor Gamal Abdel Rehim to his position.

Abdel Rehim was suspended from his position by the Shura Council and Supreme Council of Journalism head Ahmed Fahmy, after the paper published a news report that former Supreme Council of the Armed Forces Chairman Field Marshal Hussein Tanawi was banned from travel.

An administrative court ruled against Fahmy's decision and ordered him to reinstate Abdel Rehim, which he has yet to do. The protesters were chanting against Fahmy and the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood, of which he is a member. Fahmy is related to President Mohamed Morsy by marriage.

"Oh enemies of freedom how many victims do you want?" and "Bread, freedom and proper journalism," were the most prevalent chants. This is the second protest by Al-Gomhuria journalists in front of the Shura Council.

They said they would give the council three days to implement the

court order or else they would protest in front of the presidential palace in Heliopolis.

A group of protesters from Damietta demanded housing after being evicted because they could not pay rent following the 25 January 2011 Revolution.

"After our eviction we lived in tents on the street for a while but then we found empty apartments that belong to the urban development authority and we squatted in them. The military governor at the time visited us and expressed sympathy for our cause and granted us permission to stay there until the issue is resolved," said Ibrahim Fouad.

Fouad added that they presented the presidency, transport ministry and prime minister's office with reports on the situation but got no responses.

"We demand the formation of a committee from civil society, human rights organisations and the transport ministry to study similar situations instead of just accusing us of being thugs," said Fouad.

"I call on President Morsy to stop the government from fighting the people and call on the Muslim Brotherhood to leave the Freedom and Justice Party alone. I call on the party to work for Egypt and not the Brotherhood."

EGP 11 billion recovered from former regime members

The assistant prosecutor general for the public prosecution office announced on Saturday that EGP 11 billion of state apparatus has been recovered in the form of cash and land, state owned Al-Ahram reported. The public prosecution service is also pursuing a further EGP 50 billion.

Egypt State Information Service said the state "has succeeded in restoring EGP 11 billion of funds that were looted under the former regime of ousted President Hosni Mubarak."

The spokesman for the public prosecution, Adel Al-Saeed, confirmed that the funds that have been returned are the result of an investigation conducted from February 2011 until last month.

State-run Al-Ahram reported Al-Saeed saying, "efforts are underway to restore another 50 billion pounds after convictions have been handed down in some complaints against ex-regime members."

Since the January 25 revolution,

the public prosecution has conducted a number of investigations which resulted in a number of former regime officials being referred to the judiciary.

The assets of Hosni Mubarak and other former regime figures have been frozen in the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Spain. A Ministry of Justice spokesperson confirmed "a law has been drafted aimed at facilitating the return of funds."

The precise value of the assets which were allegedly stolen by former regime members is unknown.

In September, British Prime Minister David Cameron promised President Mohamed Morsy he would work towards unfreezing \$160 million of Egyptian assets, according to AP. In October, the Swiss foreign minister, Didier Burkhalter made a similar pledge to return an estimated \$700 million worth of assets. The return of these assets is dependent on the outcome of the trials of former regime members.

Family claims they were tortured by police

By Joel Gulhane

In the early hours of Friday morning a doorman, his wife and their two children were arrested in Nasr City and claim to have subsequently been tortured at the police station.

On Sunday evening the family were awaiting release from the police station after their bail was paid. This follows a complaint made by a policeman against the family on the grounds that they obstructed his work.

Hend Nafaa, co-founder of the Nation without Torture campaign said, "the policeman attempted to enter a building and the doorman stopped him because he was under orders by his boss to not allow anybody in to the building after midnight." Nafaa continued, "the policeman went away and returned with some of his colleagues and arrested the doorman and his family."

Nafaa said the family had claimed they were taken to the police station and tortured. She said, "the family are still in the police station because the policeman has filed a report to the prosecutor general claiming that they resisted him." As a consequence of this the family had to pay bail of EGP

500 and were set to be released later on Sunday night. Nafaa reported that a lawyer from the Hisham Mubarak Centre for Law was at the police station to assist the family.

These allegations of police torture come the day after the assistant Interior Minister for Legal Affairs, Abdel Mawla, announced a change in police ideology in order to make human rights the foundation and goal of the force, according to state-run news agency Al-Ahram.

Last week Mostafa Abdel Maguid went missing and appeared later the same day showing signs that he had been tortured. Due to his psychological state it was unclear who had abused him. Abdel Maguid had previously been arrested by the police in August when he claimed he was abused and raped while in custody.

The El-Nadeem Centre for rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture published a report outlining cases of torture carried out by police during President Mohamed Morsy's first 100 days in office. The report included allegations of 88 incidents of torture by police, allegedly as a result of police using firearms or torture in police stations.

6 April spurned by Ministry of Health

By Basil El-Dabbah

The 6 April Youth Movement have claimed the Minister of Health Mohamed Ahmed Mostafa has rebuffed the group's attempts to meet with him, while Mostafa's office has denied being contacted by 6 April members.

Mohamed Adel, a leader of 6 April, said his group have made repeated efforts over the past week to take up the health issues in the areas of Nahya in Giza and Sharabia in Cairo.

"The people need central hospitals built in these areas and we need the ministry to approve plans to build them," said Adel. He indicated there were small health centres in both neighbourhoods, but they were not nearly enough to cope with the health issues in the poor areas of Cairo and Giza.

The 6 April member pointed to Mostafa's work with the old regime and alleged track record of corruption as reasons for his avoidance of the revolutionary youth group.

In a statement on the movement's website, Amr Said of the 6 April political bureau warned that the large gap in health sector coverage was an example of Prime Minister Hesham Qandil ignoring problems of citizens, and that a further pattern will lead to "inevitable disaster if there was no direct intervention to resolve the crisis and immediate demands."

The 6 April Youth Movement insisted that residents had collected more than 5,000 signatures and donated enough money for the construction of a new hospital and were only lacking ministerial approval to start construction.

Both Adel and Said accused the Minister of Health of being complicit in the handling of the crisis at Ismailia's general hospital, where the hospital director allegedly transferred government money from the governorate and committed other corrupt practices in the running of the hospital.

The office of the Minister of Health on Sunday denied being recently contacted by the 6 April Youth Movement.

Correction

In our article 'Obama re-election impact on Egypt' published on 8 November we misattributed quotes to Gameela Ismail, instead it should have read Jermene Nasr, a founding member of Al-Dostour party

Israel 'prepared to escalate' over Gaza violence: PM

Jerusalem (AFP) - Israel is "prepared to escalate" its response to a flare-up of violence along its border with the Gaza Strip, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned on Sunday.

"The world must realise that Israel won't sit by idly in the face of attempts to attack us. We are prepared to escalate our actions," he said at the start of his weekly cabinet meeting.

His comments came after more than 12 hours of violence along Israel's border with Gaza, sparked when militants Saturday evening fired an anti-tank missile at an Israeli jeep east of Gaza City, injuring four soldiers, one of them severely.

Retaliatory Israeli air strikes and shelling during the night killed six Palestinians; four civilians and two militants.

The army said at least 36 rockets fired from Gaza had landed in Israel during the flare-up, with a new barrage on Sunday morning injuring four people in the Israeli town of Sderot, several kilometres from the border.

The flare-up is one of the most serious since Israel's devastating 22-day operation in the Gaza Strip

over New Year 2009.

The attack on the Israeli jeep was claimed by the armed wing of the left-leaning Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The army said three of the wounded soldiers were in hospital on Sunday, one with severe injuries while two others were moderately injured. A fourth was lightly wounded in the attack.

The Israeli military said it had attacked seven different targets overnight, including arms dumps, a weapons-making facility and two rocket-launching sites "in response to recent events."

"The army is acting and will act forcefully against the terror organisations in the Gaza Strip. They are receiving strong blows from the army," Netanyahu said on Sunday morning.

It remained unclear whether Israel would launch a larger-scale operation against the Gaza Strip, as it did in December 2008, just six weeks shy of general elections.

The operation cost the lives of 1,400 Palestinians, half of them civilians, and 13 Israelis, 10 of them soldiers.



A Palestinian man is treated for his wounds following an Israeli military air strike in Rafah town in the southern Gaza Strip

IAEA says Iran clean-up of Parchin site 'ongoing'

By Prashant Rao (AFP)

Baghdad - Possible clean-up activities at an Iranian military base where the United Nations atomic agency wants to probe evidence of suspected nuclear weapons research are "ongoing," the watchdog's head said on Sunday.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Yukiya Amano nevertheless expressed guarded optimism on a visit to Baghdad about talks with Iran next month, ahead of the expected release on Friday of the IAEA's latest report on the Islamic republic's controversial nuclear activities.

Western powers believe the nuclear programme is at least in part aimed at developing atomic weapons, but Tehran insists it is for peaceful purposes.

"Yes, the activities at Parchin are ongoing, but I am not in a position to discuss the details today," Amano told reporters after being asked whether

Iran was continuing its clean-up of the sprawling military site near Tehran.

Western nations have accused Iran of removing evidence of past suspected weapons research activities at Parchin.

The IAEA wants Iran to grant access to Parchin, which it visited twice in 2005 but wants to examine again.

Since the summer, some buildings at the base have been covered in massive tarpaulins to prevent surveillance by western satellites.

Amano also said he believed there was "good reason" that Iran would cooperate with the IAEA over the issue of Tehran's nuclear programme.

"It is in the interests of Iran, and for the international community, and that is why I believe that there is some good reason that Iran will get cooperative for us. At the same time, the situation is very difficult and worrying. I do not want to speculate."

The IAEA said on Friday after a four-

month hiatus, caused in part by the United States election campaign, that it would hold talks with Iran in Tehran on 13 December.

The agency wants to press Iran to address what the watchdog calls "credible" evidence suggesting that until 2003, and possibly since, Iran conducted research work "relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device."

Iran denies working or ever having worked on a nuclear weapon, and says that the IAEA's evidence, set out in a major report a year ago, is based on forgeries.

In particular the IAEA wants Tehran to give inspectors access to the Parchin base.

Western nations have accused Iran of removing evidence there and the IAEA said in August that activities spotted from space would "significantly hamper" its ability to inspect the site.

A parallel diplomatic push by six

world powers has been aimed at persuading Iran to scale back parts of its current nuclear programme, in particular uranium enrichment.

Efforts on both "tracks" have, however, been effectively put on hold because of campaigning for the US presidential election that incumbent Barack Obama won on Tuesday.

The last high-level talks between Iran and the P5+1 (Britain, China, France, Russia, the US and Germany) were held in Moscow in June.

The UN Security Council has imposed four sets of sanctions on the Islamic regime, which coupled with unilateral western restrictions on its oil sector and banks have begun to cause major problems this year for its economy.

Israel, the Middle East's sole if undeclared nuclear-armed state, has refused to rule out military action against Iran to prevent its arch-rival from also acquiring nuclear weapons.

Yemen tribal chief with 'Qaeda ties' under house arrest

Aden (AFP) - Yemeni tribal chief Tareq Al-Fadhl, in the spotlight for his alleged ties to Al-Qaeda, has been placed under house arrest in the port city of Aden, according to a local official and a tribal leader.

The announcement came late Saturday just hours after two of Fadhl's aides were killed in clashes with pro-army militiamen who have been surrounding his home in the southern province of Abyan since last week.

"Fadhl has been transferred with his family to Aden under the protection of the army," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Tribal leader and militia commander Hussein Al-Waheshi said tribal mediators, "secured a deal for the transfer of Fadhl to Aden where he will live under house arrest."

On 5 November, hundreds of the militiamen, known as the Popular Resistance Committees, who fought

alongside the Yemeni army to oust Al-Qaeda from southern towns last May, surrounded Fadhl's home.

They wanted the known warlord, who has fought in Afghanistan, to turn himself into the police.

Waheshi had earlier said the local security committee agreed that Fadhl should "surrender to the public prosecutor who issued an arrest warrant last month over threats to kill leaders of the [southern] Socialist Party."

Al-Qaeda militants took advantage of the weakness of Yemen's central government during an uprising last year against now ousted president Ali Abdullah Saleh to seize large swathes of territory in the south, including Zinjibar and other Abyan towns.

But after a month-long offensive in May launched by Yemeni troops, most militants fled to more lawless desert regions of the east.

Sri Lanka troops accused of jail 'massacre'



Nimali Perera, the wife of a Sri Lankan inmate killed during a prison riot weeps outside the police morgue after an autopsy in Colombo

Colombo (AFP) - Sri Lanka's main opposition party Sunday demanded an independent inquiry into a prison riot that left 27 convicts dead, alleging many were shot by security forces in a cold-blooded "massacre".

The United National Party (UNP) called for a parliamentary investigation into the riot that erupted on Friday evening at the maximum-security Welikada prison in the capital Colombo.

"This is nothing but a massacre," UNP spokesman Mangala Samaraweera told AFP. "Most of the convicts appeared to have been killed in cold blood. We want a parliamentary select committee to go into this."

Troops were deployed to quell the riots and the military retained a heavy presence at the sprawling prison complex Sunday.

During the riot, armed inmates climbed onto the roof and fired at troops and police. A handful escaped and hijacked a three-wheel rickshaw taxi which was stopped by heavy gunfire from security personnel.

Prisons Minister Chandrasiri Gajadeera told parliament Saturday that 27 inmates were killed and 43 others, including 13 police commandos, four soldiers and two civilians, were injured.

He said there would be an internal

inquiry into the riot, which was sparked by a police commando raid for contraband inside the prison on Friday.

The violence continued until early Saturday with some prisoners raiding a jail armoury and grabbing about 80 weapons, including automatic rifles.

Prisons chief P.W. Koddipli said guards were searching the site Sunday for a small number of guns which were still missing. Officials declined to say if any prisoners had escaped during the unrest.

Friday's violence was the worst prison riot in Sri Lanka since 1983, when more than 50 ethnic Tamil prisoners were massacred at the same jail by Sinhalese convicts during anti-Tamil riots that gripped the country.

There was similar violence at the same penitentiary in January when 25 inmates and four guards were injured.

The authorities have yet to release autopsy reports on the dead. Colombo police chief Anura Senanayake said most of those killed were hard-core criminals, some of them serving life terms.

The opposition UNP also demanded answers from the government on how the armed forces were deployed at the weekend, when emergency laws were no longer in operation after the end of the country's ethnic war in 2009.

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Syrian opposition groups agree in principle on unity plan

Damascus (AFP) - Syrian opposition groups meeting in Doha agreed in principle Sunday on a plan to unite against President Bashar Al-Assad following marathon talks and pressure from international backers.

The putative deal is based on an initiative that envisages the formation of a transitional government, a military council to oversee rebel groups on the ground and a judiciary to operate in rebel-held areas.

It came as forces loyal to President Al-Assad suffered a fresh blow, with two suicide car bombings tearing through an officers' club in the southern city of Daraa, cradle of the nearly 20-month uprising.

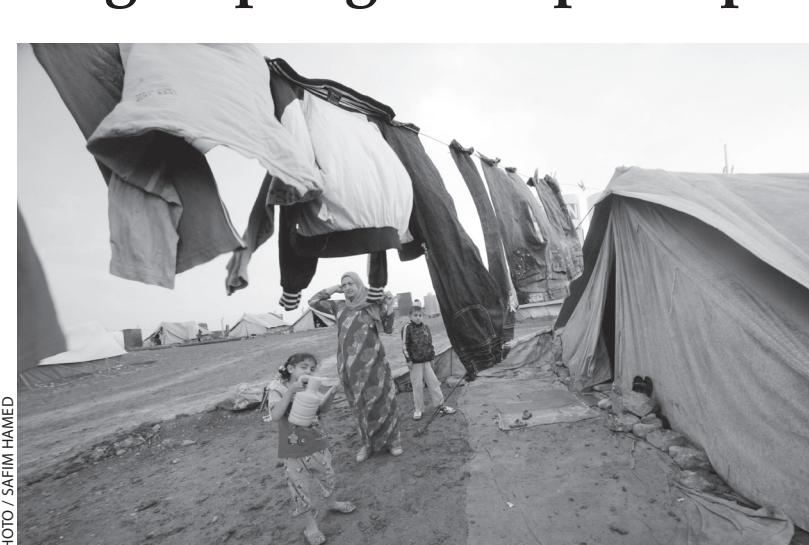
"We have agreed on the main points of the formation of a Syrian national coalition for the forces of the opposition and the revolution. We will continue our discussions on the details on Sunday," opposition figure, Suhair Atassi, told AFP early Sunday after 12 hours of talks in Doha.

"We were on the point of signing [the accord] but we preferred to give some time to study the internal rules at the request of certain parties," said fellow delegate Riad Seif, reportedly seen by Washington as a potential new opposition chief.

The participants were set to resume their talks at 0700 GMT.

In Damascus, Syria's Information Minister Omran Al-Zohbi called on Saturday for a national dialogue and said the army was fighting to boost the chance for talks.

"The only way to succeed in Syria



A Syrian-Kurdish refugee family stands outside a tent close to a clothes line at the Domiz refugee camp, 20 km southeast of northern Iraqi city of Dohuk

is to sit down at the table to launch a national dialogue," Zohbi said. "The opposition must accept the choice of dialogue and... the army, by facing down terrorism, is protecting this dialogue."

Saturday's attacks killed 20 soldiers and possibly many more, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

"The two bombings were the result of suicide attacks, carried out by two men who drove vehicles loaded with explosives into the garden a few minutes apart," observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

But the army had so far failed to enter the strategic rebel-held town of Maaret Al-Numan, where fighting intensified after soldiers in the besieged nearby military base of Wadi Deif received supplies.

cus neighbourhood of Daf Al-Shawk, while state television said a rocket wounded two girls in the capital's Christian district of George Khoury.

Elsewhere, the army retook a stretch of the Damascus-Aleppo highway used to send its reinforcements to main northern battlefields, said the observatory.

Regime forces had "gradually advanced over the past 10 days to regain control of several villages that fell in [early] October to the rebels to the west of the Damascus-Aleppo highway," Abdel Rahman told AFP.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, more than 37,000 people have died since the uprising against President Al-Assad erupted in March 2011, first as a protest movement and then as an armed rebellion.

News of a potential deal among the disparate Syrian opposition groups came with the Syrian National Council (SNC) under increased Arab and western pressure to accept a unity plan, amid growing frustration among other dissident groups.

Once regarded as the leading opposition representative but increasingly derided in Washington as dominated by out-of-touch exiles, the SNC had already twice asked for a postponement of the talks on plans for a broad-based government-in-waiting.

The plan, which is based on an initiative by Seif, would see a 10-member transitional government elected by a new 60-member umbrella group drawn from civilian activists and rebel fighters inside Syria, as well as by the exiles who have dominated the SNC.

On Saturday the SNC had put forward its own proposals and its new leader George Sabra told reporters in Doha that "the SNC is older than... any other initiative" on the table, adding that no opposition group should be forced under the banner of another.

Another senior SNC official Ahmad Ramadan said, "we are being submitted to pressure to accept being part of a new formation, in exchange for international promises but with no guarantees."

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, more than 37,000 people have died since the uprising against President Al-Assad erupted in March 2011, first as a protest movement and then as an armed rebellion.

Egyptian economy in draft constitution

Continued from page 1

The representative of the consumer group confirmed that neither his organisation nor the other consumer rights' groups were represented in the Constituent Assembly.

According to El-Asqalani social justice can be achieved through fair trade, just distribution of wage, and just taxation.

Fair trade, according to him doesn't harm the consumer or the producer, and it must be adopted in any country that seeks to implement a free market economy, through legislation that protects the poor and preserves the interest of the rich.

The political marketing coordinator of the youth committee at "The Free Egyptians" party Hazem Helal stated that the Constituent Assem-

bly excluded many experts. He added the few words in article 13 are not enough to achieve social justice. The article according to him did not contain any mechanisms or action plan to realise the principal demands of the 25 January revolution.

He added his youth committee demands a revision of this section and a reformulation that supports the development of the Egyptian economy internally and externally, the attraction of investment and the promotion of all income sources such as agriculture, industry, commerce and tourism.

The head of the Economic committee of Al-Noor party, Tarek Shaalan, said "Egypt's problems are very complicated and I cannot come up with one set of actions that fit them all, that's why we suggest an economic vision foreseeing parallel systems".

The parallel systems, according to Shaalan, allow the applying of different laws in different zones to address issues such as subsidies, pensions, unemployment and the rental law.

"We have to create new cities following new codes and standards, like the European code, with special taxes and employment systems," said the economics expert. "These new cities and zones should be run according to flexible laws that don't impose minimum or maximum wages, or employment security in the public sector, and that allow special taxation systems and the abolition of subsidies."

To achieve these goals, the Islamist party proposes an article that allows the passing of special laws, and is "currently lobbying with other parties to include it in the new constitution," said Shaalan.

IMF: Small contraction in Iran economy over oil ban



AFP Photo

Western sanctions on Iran barely made a dent on its economic performance

Dubai (AFP) - Economic performance in Iran has shown a small contraction because of a Western ban on oil exports whose impact is spilling over into other sectors, the International Monetary Fund said on Sunday.

"The projection that we have shows small contraction in Iran economy during 2012 ... and an increase in inflationary pressure in the same period," the IMF's head of Middle East and Central Asia, Masood Ahmed, told AFP in Dubai where he presented the Fund's Regional Economic Outlook report.

IMF figures released last month forecast an economic contraction in Iran of 0.9 per cent this year, and mild growth of 0.8 per cent in 2013.

The figures compare to 2.0 per cent growth in 2011 and 5.9 per cent in 2010.

"This deterioration reflects both

lower oil production, which is in part because of the external constraints and the spillover impact of that on the rest of the economy," he said.

According to IMF projections, Iran's oil exports have dropped to 1.25 million barrels per day this year, compared with 2.14 million bpd last year.

He pointed out that the drop took place even though "other parts of the economy have done well, such as agriculture."

"It is important to remember that the economy is quite a diversified economy in Iran. The oil as a share of the GDP is not as large as other oil exporters," Ahmed said.

Agriculture contributes some 10 per cent of the Islamic republic's GDP, while industry, including oil, accounts for about 40 per cent, and services amount to about half the output.

The IMF official pointed out that the projections did not take into account the sharp depreciation in Iran's currency, the Rial.

"These projections were done before the very significant depreciation of the currency and the related increased uncertainty, which will likely have a further negative impact on the economic performance in the year ahead," he said.

Sanctions on oil exports have caused a shortage of foreign currency in Iran, sparking the collapse last month of the Rial and sending inflation soaring.

The IMF put Iran's inflation this year at 25.2 per cent, compared with 21.5 per cent last year.

An EU ban on oil imports from Iran came into force in July. Previously, European countries imported about 20 per cent of Tehran's oil exports.

Marassi celebrates Alamein Battle 70th Anniversary



Marassi, the world international North Coast destination, was honored to be part of the international Alamein Battle 70th Anniversary celebration as the British Embassy held its cocktail reception at Marassi Club house

attended by the British, French, Australian and New Zealand Ministers of Defense together with a number of Ambassadors, diplomats and veterans from different countries. H.E. Ambassador James Watt, the British Ambassador to

Egypt, hosted a gala dinner at Marassi Club House ballroom in honor of his guests.

The guests commented on the beauty of the place and the unprecedented white sands of Sidi Abd el Rahman bay.

Turkish company to build industrial compound in Sinai

By HEND EL-BEHARY

Minister of industry and Foreign Trade, Hatem Saleh, has discussed with the Turkish company KCG, the company's desire to build an industrial compound in Sinai with an investment of \$400 million.

KCG is one of the largest international Turkish companies working in the field of textiles and energy.

The compound will work on energy generated from Maghara mining coal, which is expected to fill the needs of the compound. Maghara generates 300 megawatts of energy, half of the energy will initially be used to build a new cement factory.

Saleh and the representatives discussed ways to expand the company's business in Egypt.

"The company had finished establishing a new factory for textiles production for the local market with investments exceeding \$20 million," Saleh said.

"Egypt is looking forward to increasing Turkish long-term investments in Egypt, and it's very necessary to double those investments and promote interregional trade, to create good relations between both sides" Saleh said.

Yashar Koshkshak, head of KGC, expressed his appreciation towards the Egyptian government especially the Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade, for their support of all Turkish companies working in Egypt.

"There will be many companies willing to invest in Egypt in the near future especially when political and economic stability return," said Koshkshak.

Magdy Toulba, an economy expert, told Daily News Egypt that he agreed with promoting Egyptian-Turkish relations, saying, "Egypt needs to build relations with countries like Turkey, Brazil, India and Russia."

"Brazil was about to be bankrupt 15 years ago; however they build their own strategy to overcome this without depending on loans, Egypt needs to follow suit," said Toulba.

Toulba added he didn't encourage relations with western countries, because they are building huge financial entities in investments which only benefit a specific sector. In addition he didn't accept westerns dominance of investments.

"Egypt could be a broker for the entrance of investment to the whole of Africa," said Toulba.

Daily EGX30 index performance

Company Name	Reuters Code	Sector	Last Price	Close Price	Returns			Daily Performance		Turn Over (EGP Mill.)	Volume Trade	Market Cap (EGP Mill.)
					Daily	YTD	12-Mths.	Max. Price	Min. Price			
Commercial Bank	COMI	Banks	38.3	38.52	-0.21%	105.99%	44.76%	38.61	38.00	4.44	115,305	23,052.98
NSGB	NSGB	Banks	43.85	44.02	-0.92%	116.74%	69.31%	45.00	43.75	7.727	175,540	19,706.30
Ezz Steel	ESRS	Basic Resources	9.19	9.25	-0.32%	147.99%	55.20%	9.37	9.17	4.51	487,599	5,041.50
MRRIDIVE	MOIL	Industrial Goods and Services and Automobiles	1.05	1.05	0.00%	-13.12%	-34.49%	1.06	1.04	2.381	370,094	376.32
AIC Contracting	AIND	Financial Services excluding Banks	0.51	0.51	0.00%	-1.92%	-17.74%	0.52	0.50	0.99	1,937,352	272.66
Amer Group Holding	AMER	Financial Services excluding Banks	0.67	0.67	0.00%	21.82%	-16.25%	0.67	0.66	1,431	2,141,701	2,036.60
EK Holding	EKHO	Financial Services excluding Banks	1.21	1.20	-0.83%	22.45%	17.65%	1.21	1.20	0.85	116,118	1,015.55
EFG-Hermes	HRHO	Financial Services excluding Banks	11.14	11.12	-0.45%	11.09%	-16.70%	11.25	11.04	9.048	813,436	5,342.55
Pioneers Holding	PIOH	Financial Services excluding Banks	4.58	4.59	0.00%	106.76%	47.12%	4.68	4.53	6.03	1,313,518	2,295.00
Citadel Capital	CCAP	Financial Services excluding Banks	3.86	3.86	0.26%	51.37%	18.04%	3.91	3.79	12.075	3,130,017	2,516.82
Raya Holding	RAYA	Technology	5.58	5.66	-1.39%	62.64%	34.44%	5.82	5.56	1.30	228,875	368.64
Telecom Egypt	ETEL	Telecommunications	13.80	13.94	-1.48%	5.53%	-5.23%	14.09	13.80	0.854	61,247	24,155.06
Orascom Telecom Media And Technology	OTMT	Telecommunications	0.57	0.58	0.00%	67.98%	54.51%	0.59	0.57	7.42	12,801,802	3,042.50
Orascom Telecom	ORTE	Telecommunications	3.59	3.61	0.84%	108.86%	92.10%	3.66	3.57	10.082	2,796,262	18,779.57
Sidi Kerir Petrochemicals	SKPC	Chemicals	13.3	13.34	-0.30%	12.01%	6.55%	13.39	13.30	0.28	20,756	7,024.50
Egyptian Financial and Industrial	EFIC	Chemicals	10.67	10.70	-0.09%	20.09%	-7.68%	10.90	10.51	2.468	230,686	742.22
AMOC	AMOC	Oil and Gas	76.65	76.83	-1.15%	14.77%	17.05%	77.41	76.58	0.40	5,183	6,691.69
Juhayna Food Industries	JUFO	Food and Beverage	7.69	7.62	5.39%	95.38%	62.13%	7.92	7.20	6.415	841,529	5,104.77
Orascom Construction Industries (OCI)	OCIC	Construction and Materials	256.01	257.76	0.40%	28.14%	8.72%	259.70	255.77	5.74	22,262	53,642.85
Delta Construction & Rebuilding	DCRC	Construction and Materials	6.94	7.06	-0.14%	-8.19%	-28.47%	7.20	6.94	0.756	107,044	163.36
Modern Co. for Water Proofing	WATP	Construction and Materials	2.09	2.11	-0.47%	-8.26%	-11.72%	2.15	2.08	0.67	319,553	216.24
Palm Hills	PHDC	Real Estate	2.58	2.61	-0.38%	139.45%	90.51%	2.65	2.56	20.364	7,808,045	2,746.60
TMG Holding	TMGH	Real Estate	4.62	4.66	-1.48%	57.43%	33.52%	4.75	4.59	8.30	1,779,783	9,760.65
National Real Estate Bank	NRPD	Real Estate	23.32	23.70	-3.11%	20.80%	-11.57%	24.25	23.27	4.372	184,518	95.46
Six of October	OCDI	Real Estate	20.15	20.21	0.20%	153.58%	47.73%	20.63	20.00	3.61	178,670	1,828.94
El Kahira Housing & Development	ELKA	Real Estate	5.61	5.61	-0.38%	44.59%	20.39%	5.73	5.55	0.497	88,634	530.63
Arab Cotton Ginning	ACGC	Personal and Household Products	3.84	3.92	-1.01%	85.78%	37.06%	4.02	3.84	8.10	2,067,023	1,072.43
Oriental Weavers	ORWE	Personal and Household Products	23.									

Commentaries still overwhelmed by Shari'a Friday

Following reports of clashes between Islamist and liberal protesters in Tahrir Square last Friday, columnists continue to write about the persistent request to apply Islamic jurisprudence in Egypt. In a similar framework, more than one writer has explored the constitutional article that relates to Al-Azhar, asserting that views of prominent Sheikhs will be taken into consideration in any issue that relates to Shari'a. Many columnists express their fear that Al-Azhar would use this article to interfere in politics.

Amr Al-Shobaki
Shari'a Friday: a fabricated battle
Al-Masry Al-Youm newspaper



Al-Shobaki condemns extremist Salafis who call for the literal implementation of Islamic jurisprudence when they are hardly qualified to talk on behalf of Islam. Last Friday was a tedious repetition of the one that preceded it. Thousands of Islamist protesters gathered in Tahrir to demand the application of Shari'a, which according to the writer, nobody has really neglected in day-to-day life anyway. Calling for a literal practice of Shari'a is a fabricated battle for Salafis, according to Al-Shobaki.

Regardless of the right to peaceful protest, the columnist finds it meaningless for thousands of extremists to persistently call for something that is a delusion. The rise of Salafis stemmed from the security vacuum after the 25 January revolution that ousted Mubarak but did not impose harsh penalties on radical thinking. Claiming to be the guardians of Islam, Salafis have seemingly forgotten that what they call for is no more than a narrow explanation of Islam and its tolerance, Al-Shobaki notes. Those who fight in a fabricated battle have failed to present a single model of a true Muslim, which cares more about corruption and fighting poverty than yelling for Shari'a.

Two hours with the Salafis
Emad Al-Din Hussein
Al-Shorouk newspaper



Reflecting on his 120-minute meeting with Salafis last Friday, Hussein makes a number of observations on this Islamist trend. One of the main features of Salafis is the diversity of their schools. A lot of liberals deal with Salafis as if they are one block, ignoring that many of them are open-minded but their openness is often overshadowed by the extremist majority. Hussein states that during his meetings with hundreds of Salafis in Tahrir Square on Shari'a Friday, many clearly stated their opposition to what they describe as "liberal media". He was asked, "how can you speak on behalf of democracy when you can hardly believe in its concepts?"

The columnist then recalls a group of Salafis who went to vandalise a large mural of the revolution's martyrs and then attacked by a number of liberals who chanted against the Muslim Brotherhood and the general guidance bureau. For Hussein, protesters with liberal inclinations contributed to the tension between the two groups on Friday. If the day is known to be organised by Salafi groups, the writer wonders why would a liberal protester go there if not to seek a clash? According to the writer, the main problem with Salafis is their lack of political experience. Many of them cannot differentiate between the number of

Islamists in the dissolved parliament and that in the Constituent Assembly. Most of them blindly focus on Islamic Shari'a as a matter of life and death.

The constitution battle in Egypt
Ahmed Mansour
Al-Watan newspaper



Persistent attempts to hinder the work of the Constituent Assembly seem endless, Mansour says. The main challenge to the constitution is the staunch endeavor of those inside the assembly to cause pointless conflicts around so-called controversial articles. Many of those who failed to join the assembly believe that the body is incomplete without their presence. Mansour chides some members who seek exposure by speaking negatively about the draft constitution on evening talk shows and radio programmes. If one follows the debates around the constitutional drafts, the writer states it seems quite childish of those who pop up in the media to speak about nothing but empty arguments.

Mansour spoke with a group of assembly members who assured him that those who quarrel are merely seeking attention. Putting off the final version of the constitution might lead to the dissolution of the entire assembly. Mansour says many members, who are pushing for this, claim they are safeguarding the revolution and its goals. However, the further delay of the constitution will lead to more chaos and a prolonged period without a governing constitution. The number of pitfalls for the 25 January revolution has exceeded all expectations. The constitution is one of the products directly linked to the uprising. If one is not produced soon, the revolution is in serious danger, writes Mansour.

A call to Al-Azhar
Moataz Billah Abdel-Fatah
Al-Watan newspaper



The constitutional article that would enable prominent Al-Azhar Sheikhs to state their opinions on issues related to Islamic jurisprudence worries Abdel-Fatah. Unlike many who clash over article 2 that relates to the application of principles or regulations of the Shari'a, the writer scrutinises the danger of the Al-Azhar article because it implies the intervention of Al-Azhar scholars in shaky political issues. If Al-Azhar Sheikhs are to be considered issues of Islamic jurisprudence, the writer questions which institution will be calling on them for interference.

The article states that their opinion "will be taken into consideration" and this implies that the positions of Al-Azhar Sheikhs will always be deemed vital due to the significance and weight of the institution in Egypt. The writer asks if the presidency is the institution that is supposed to call upon Sheikhs for their comments or if there will be a certain number of parliamentarians who can also call upon certain Sheikhs and request their opinions? Abdel-Fatah then recalls the Iranian constitution, which includes a similar article but states that the parliament cannot issue laws that contradict the official religious school of thought. Indeed the Iranian constitution is not our model, but the writer stresses the risk of involving an independent religious institution in political games. If Al-Azhar joined the political arena, the writer believes that many political powers would be more vulnerable to pointless conflicts.

Liberals vs Salafis: The fight to contain the Muslim Brotherhood?

Power comes with great responsibilities, especially when Egypt is in such a devastated state. It is easy to criticise and fight to do so. Criticism which is not constructive, nor aims to contribute to better governmental performance, is just a waste of time.

The ongoing debate on the identity of Egypt and how Islam will play out in the constitution is still a waste of time. It is not only a waste of time because the vast majority of Egyptians clearly want it, as indicated in the Gallup poll and the ability of Islamists to mobilise. Ironically, even though two of the greatest organised branches of Islamic politics in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and Al-Nour Party, were not among the initiators of last Friday's pro-Shari'a protest in Tahrir, still numbers were big enough to fill the square.

A minority are not giving in to this popular demand and playing devil's advocate, playing off Shari'a as a post modern invention that's completely hollow of meaning and has no realistic application in reality. At times clearly shifting their discourses to appear more Islamic, while rejecting the dominant discourse on Islam, and at the same time not providing their interpretation of what Shari'a would entail in their view. Among the ways of playing off Shari'a is done by attempting to pit down the "moderate" MB against "extremist" Salafis.

Prior to the revolution the underdog was the "banned" MB, whom Mubarak and other dictators of authoritarian Arab regimes always warned the world of. Overnight this changed; the alternative academic and media discourses that were obscured by dominant media narratives suddenly came to light. The MB was able to root itself in the political arena, as if somehow the MB was somehow being rediscovered.

Salafis are starting to get mixed reactions from the west. It is healthy to create a discussion on the movement rather than just accept the dull uninformed sweeping generalisations of pseudo academia (see my earlier column *Thou Shall Fear Salafis*). Egyptian English language media is overwhelmingly anti-Islamist and more so anti-Salafi, which is not the case in Arabic media outlets. Salafis now are being blamed for wanting to have an amendment in the constitution with a clear support for Shari'a, never mind that Egyptians (including Egyptian women) voted for the MB who promised to fulfil the same demand.

What Egyptian English language media (which with no doubt is liberal) shows, is a manifestation of an implicit fight over the MB, by Salafis and liberals. Both are trying to claim that the MB is closer to them. As the MB tries to play a political parental-like role attempting to reconcile the

different sides, it will be eventually forced to take a stance on the issue.

The MB however has not been as popular with liberals as before, due to its late vigorous attempts to penetrate state institutions and gradually take control of matters, though it still has a long way to effectively do so. This makes it understandable why Dr Amr Hamzawi's latest comments in Harvard Arab weekend lectures were very negative towards the MB, despite his earlier much more objective academic works written on Islamists. Even if the MB wanted to take a less defined stance on Shari'a, liberals are not giving them a chance to do so and have been lately opposing anyway. Furthermore liberals can no longer get away with having two different discourses, one geared towards the west and one geared for local political success, as both discourses are exposed in social media as well as in televised talk shows, as well as their overall inconsistency in their discourses. More than ever, the MB is having a much harder time asociating with liberals.

The political arena indicates that the MB is more likely to be won by Salafis regarding the constitution not just because it is a strong popular demand and the MB obviously being an Islamist group but also because of the incompetence of liberal political maneuvering.

This does not mean that Egypt after the constitution will be an "Islamic state" overnight; rather it is a temporary symbolic gesture that may enable a later gradual implementation. The implementation of Shari'a no doubt will be marginalised by a focus on economic development and defiantly accompanied by clashing visions on how the implementation should take place.

These clashing visions will include how to build institutions that will implement Shari'a and how to adjust current ones for doing so, furthermore the end result of this institutional governance model has still not been drawn. Thus for a long time it will be a work in progress.

Mustafa Salama is a political researcher with focus on Islamic movements
salama_m@aucegypt.edu



REBEL ECONOMY WRAP

IMF "deal or no deal"

Speculation over when an agreement between Egypt and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will be finalised has reached boiling point, with various forecasts being made. The most likely at the moment sees the nation securing the loan in December, and the first tranche of \$4.5 billion (state-run newspaper Al Ahram said last week the loan amount was reduced from \$4.8 billion, probably because of currency fluctuations) to arrive in January 2013.

Ashraf Swelam, the former economic adviser to failed presidential candidate Amr Moussa, says the debate is healthy, in this opinion piece featured in Ahram:

"The back and forth isn't in itself a bad thing. For one, it shifts the focus from the political to the economic sphere which is in dire straits. In addition, public debate of the sort unfolding around the issue of the IMF deal is characteristic of democratic societies, and as such it should be celebrated and encouraged."

But he does repeat a mantra often spoken about the Egyptian government; be more transparent about your negotiations.

"The complete absence of information about the details of the agreement... in turn opens the door wide open for unfounded suppositions and conspiracy theories."

Swelam also repeats the political bullet points brought up under his tenure as economic adviser to Moussa. Hasn't the day come for Egypt to seriously consider decentralisation and the financial and administrative empowerment of local communities? And, how are we going to address the mounting challenges of water, food, energy and environmental security?

His economic programme includes reviewing past privatisation deals, shifting emphasis to the private sector and moving money-losing state-owned institutions under a mega state-owned holding company with a chief executive. Such a programme would signal a move to a more profit-driven, capitalist model.

That certainly won't sit easy with those (and there are many of them) against the IMF loan, who associate the international bank with harsh austerity measures it used to impose years ago.

The BBC exposé on Mubarak's billions has been translated into English. This is a thrilling (though at times sensationalist) BBC documentary about the Mubarak-era and Egypt's stolen billions.

(NB Without stating the obvious, it should be noted that though many journalists work to high levels of integrity and morality, sometimes mistakes happen and reporters are careless. This has led the BBC's director general, effectively the BBC's editor-in-chief, George Entwistle to resign over the weekend after a BBC Newsnight film alleged child abuse by an unnamed Conservative politician, which was proved to be unfounded. Such a huge accusation is a dangerous one to make. So, former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak may be accused of having \$70 billion stashed away in hidden accounts, but that would also make the man accused of chronic "mediocrity" the richest man on Earth. Doesn't quite gel.)

Egypt's inflation rate widened significantly to 7 per cent in the 12 months to October, from 6.2 per cent in September, according to the government statistics agency. Though food prices rose, which is the standard cause for rising inflation, this time fuel prices played a big role.

The increase in natural gas and butane prices was the main driver behind the rise in inflation, staging a

monthly increase of 57.8 per cent in October from September, and 175 per cent since October 2011.

The government had signalled it would start raising the price of energy consumed domestically and this indicates it may have already happened.

Egypt is struggling with a gas shortage because of an addiction to energy subsidies that has wiped out its resources domestically and forced it to use energy at home that it could have exported for much-needed hard currency.

One way to counter that is to immediately raise the price of fuel.

Though just anecdotal, there have been instances of increasing electricity bills and gas bills in households. Perhaps the government is quietly enforcing targeted price hikes in some areas to avoid public anger.

... Some welcome relief came to Egypt when it completed its first licensing round since the 2011 revolution in a sign that international oil firms are (mostly) undeterred by a payment backlog of billions of dollars.

Royal Dutch Shell, RWE and TransGlobe Energy were among energy companies that won concessions in Egypt.

The results for this tender were seven months after the closing bids, after the date had been delayed to 29 March from 30 January to allow more companies to take part.

Though it is an indication that Egypt's energy reserves are too lucrative to miss out, it does not mean the country is out of the woods just yet. Delays on tenders were because international interest was not that high after Egypt built up a backlog of payments to oil producers and premiums for fuel imports skyrocketed. It's another consequence of a deep crisis impacting the energy sector in Egypt.

... Iran, a country that has had to cope with severe international sanctions, has temporarily banned the import of some "luxury goods" including foreign-made cars and mobile phones to save billions of dollars for essential products in the face of worsening sanctions.

The currency has slid dramatically over the last 15 months as exports have fallen because of tighter and tighter western sanctions.

The government has responded to a wave of dollarisation, where Iranians have scrambled to convert their savings into dollars (and euros), by restricting access to hard currency, rationing the dollars which it supplies to companies and individuals through the central bank, and setting up an official foreign exchange centre.

If you thought transparency wasn't good enough in Egypt, take Iran where among the "secrets" held by the government is the level of reserves.

The reserves stood at \$106 billion at the end of last year, according to the IMF. But some analysts estimate they may have dropped by several tens of billions of dollars as the sanctions have cut oil income, according to Reuters and Bloomberg.

Farah is a business journalist and founder of Rebel Economy, a blog focused on how regional economies are rebuilding after the Arab Spring.

Published by Business News for Press, and Distribution under License from the Supreme Council of Journalism
12 Haroon St., Dokki, Cairo, Egypt
Tel: +202 37486853 | Fax: +202 37486936
info@thedailynewseypt.com

The nationalisation of Egypt's civil society

LEGAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS RESTRICTIVE

By Sarah El Masry

Civil society organisations (CSOs) have a history in Egypt that dates back to the 1800s. They form the broader umbrella group under which organisations and associations outside the state and business exist to advance certain rights and agendas. Over time CSOs have grown to vary structurally from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), labour unions and professional syndicates. In Egypt, there are now as many as 36,000 CSOs, according to Abdel Aziz Hegazy, the head of the General Union for Civil Society Associations and Foundations, which covers nearly all aspects of social development. Contrary to popular belief, CSOs are not strictly confined to human rights and women's issues but also encompass social entrepreneurship, culture and literature initiatives, political organisation and awareness campaigns.

By default, CSOs are designed to serve individuals' interests and influence the government's decisions and policies. Therefore, autonomy from the government is a fundamental attribute of civil society. Historically the Egyptian government infringed on this autonomy through the creation of a legal framework that allowed for governmental control, and despite the revolution in 2011 it continues to exert that control. The revolution came with hope for change in some sectors in Egypt, but so far this change is yet to extend to CSO law reform.

Government infringement is manifest in the law that governs civil society, namely the infamous law 84 from 2002. Ever since it was passed, CSOs have challenged its articles to resist intervention by the government and security apparatus. The situation deteriorated with the security crackdown on NGOs during the 18-day uprising, the most notable incident being the security forces raid on the Hesham Mubarak Law Centre in early February 2011. In December of 2011, the military and security forces raided five NGOs, three of which were foreign.

Many civil society members regarded the crackdown as a way of getting back at NGOs for supporting the revolution and encouraging revolutionary youth to stand up to the old regime, training them and spreading political awareness. However, the government justified the raids by saying it was acting to stem the flow of illegal foreign funds, which were being used to undermine state security. The raids capitalised on underlying anti-American sentiments and tarnished the reputation of NGOs, both local and foreign. The public was left with the impression that NGOs were treacherous entities seeking to destabilise Egypt and impose western freedoms and values. This narrative created the perfect environment for imposing a restrictive legal framework for the operation of CSOs.

Current legal framework and problems

When law number 84 was passed, CSOs were apprehensive that it would allow for greater governmental intervention in their operations. Many commentators considered the law "totalitarian."



The Constituent Assembly met with representatives from NGOs

their long history of intervention in our activities. They see us as an enemy rather than as a partner. As long as this perception is there, it will hinder the operation of CSOs."

Another challenge to the new bill is the supremacy of the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs. The ministry seems to be above judicial orders.

Ezzat explained that since the revolution, many projects that NGOs propose are not accepted, with no justification provided. So they had to resort to the Dispute Settlement Committee to resolve disagreements with the ministry. "However, it seems that the ministry did not abide by the rulings of the committee," she said. "It has to consent to follow the ruling so the law is not there to regulate, this shows you the ministry's dominance over civil society."

The status of the Muslim Brotherhood

The vague legal status of Muslim Brotherhood raises a question concerning the new law.

According to a statement in July on Ikhwanweb (the Brotherhood's official English website), the Brotherhood sought to be registered as an NGO to acquire a legal status. However, the papers the Brotherhood presented were incorrect and it remained unregistered.

Some recent statements from the FJP indicated that the Brotherhood will not be registered until there is a democratic law that makes particular allowance for the organisation. The FJP bill served that purpose. This is problematic if it results in special treatment for the Brotherhood, placing it above other foundations and associations.

The FJP bill proposed two clauses. The first related to the classification of the Brotherhood as an entity. While not exactly an NGO, the Brotherhood is more than an association due to its political wing. The FJP bill therefore, the clause created the category of "umbrella institution" which the Brotherhood would fall under if the bill was accepted by the upcoming parliament.

According to Zaree, the FJP also proposed a second clause regarding "regional unions" to supervise the operation of NGOs. He said: "These unions are usually elected and since the Muslim Brotherhood wins most elections, it would boil down to them supervising NGOs which again would endanger the independence of civil society."

According to commentators from CSOs, the FJP bill contained articles that were partially liberating to civil society, but it did not manage to remove all of the 2002 restrictions.

Zaree commented on the FJP's performance in negotiations. "I saw the FJP responding in a good way [when parliament was in session], but you have to count for the change in the political atmosphere now the president is from the Brotherhood and parliament is dissolved... their situation might differ. The new law might have fewer restrictions, but it would still have restrictions and we would not get exemplary legislation."

Future prospects

CSOs have a long struggle to overcome. They have proposed to the Constituent Assembly a set of principles to be added to the constitution preserving their autonomy. However, the draft constitution only emphasised the principle of establishing CSOs and NGOs, not giving much space to greater detail. Even if the principles are included in the constitution, "the spirit of implementing the law has to be regained," according to Sallam.

At the moment, what is needed is national dialogue that incorporates CSOs, political parties, unions and associations in the discussions of the new bill, along with the ministry. To judge from precedent, consensus may be a tall order, but common ground may be reached.

Ezzat said, "we demand freedom, but on the other hand we commit ourselves to certain duties such as making publicly available our financial statements and the minutes of our meetings."

An atmosphere of trust has to be reclaimed in order for the third sector to work effectively.



Security forces stand outside one of the raided NGOs

AFP PHOTO

Mona Ezzat is a member of the New Woman Foundation and the coordinator of the Freedom of Association campaign, which launched in 2007 to document state interference in CSO activities. Well-versed in the problems CSOs workers encounter, she said, "there are many institutions that we have to deal with; the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs on one hand and the approval of the governor to carry out a project on the other." According to her, the hassle is doubled when an organisation is carrying out a project in more than one governorate because more time is needed to get permissions.

These are minimal administrative issues compared to the other provisions in the law. Ezzat explained that the ministry has overall control over the formation of CSOs. Article 42 of the law gives the minister the right to dissolve any organisation following consultation with the General Union for Civil Society Associations and Foundations.

Ezzat further criticised Article 11 which states that an organisation can be closed if it threatens public order. "We don't want the ambiguous and elastic nature of the articles in the 2002 law," she said.

Ihab Sallam, a lawyer and project manager at a lawyers association called United Group, has a particular issue with Article 3 of the law, which outlines the rules for establishing an organisation and notifying the government of its formation. The article is restrictive, requiring the organisation to choose a name related to its mission and purpose and to decide in advance the geographical scope of its work, which prevents possible expansion.

Sallam also takes issue with specific penalties for CSOs and their workers which are outlined in chapter 5. "We have a separate penal code that is inclusive. Why do we need to include penalties again in the law for CSOs? It scares people away from working in civil society."

These represent some of the problems in the 2002 law beyond the problems

the law requires the ministry to approve permissions within 60 days; however this period can be prolonged for up to 10 months according to Allam. He explained that whenever the 60-day period is about to end, the ministry extends it. It forces some individuals to circumvent the law by registering their association as a company under a different ministry. Then after a while they open centres to offer the same social services as an CSO.

For Ezzat, "the philosophy underpinning the law needs to change drastically."

Daily News Egypt spent over a week trying to contact and meet with the le-

gal adviser at the ministry, but he was not available for comment.

These complaints illustrate the lack of autonomy the 2002 law forces CSOs to operate under. However this situation could be worsened under the new bill proposed by the government in post-revolutionary Egypt.

A door for corruption

The Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs is the body responsible for CSOs, supervising them, granting them permits, ratifying their charters and closing them down if they act illegally. It handles security policies and pensions as well.

"The ministry wants to put civil society under its wing because if you removed this responsibility, the ministry would have nothing to do," said Mohamed Zaree, Egypt Roadmap programme manager at the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies. "Its intervention in the operation of CSOs is a source of sustenance and a door for corruption."

"An employee at the ministry would want the law to be stricter so that he could get money out of the bribes that CSOs workers would then pay to get their papers done. That's why the ministry is fighting for keeping the civil organisations under control."

Though the ministry states that all actions taken against NGOs are for the sake of national security, CSOs believe that ministry rhetoric alienates them from society and treats CSOs as if they were acting disloyally. As Zaree put it, "the ministry uses rhetoric such as national sovereignty to win ground."

Allam shared the sentiment saying, "the impression we are getting from the ministry is that we are thieves... it regards us [CSOs] as an economic source from which it can profit."

In addition to the rhetoric and the tight grip the ministry maintains over CSOs, it sometimes rejects projects without giving justification. As a result, "many of us go to court, but by the time the trial starts, the time is up for your project, especially if it has a political nature. For example awareness campaigns before presidential or parliamentary elections," said Allam.

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Zaree said he believed it was obvious that the ministry is seeking to continue to maintain state control over CSOs, following the path laid down by former President Gamal Abdel Nasser and his 1964 law which gave the state authority over civil society. "It's as if the bill is kind of a military plan," he said, commenting on the secrecy.

All the bills seem to conserve the legacy of the 2002 law and this is something CSOs are not willing to tolerate.

Zaree added, "we want a democratic law that regulates the relationship between CSOs and the ministry without impacting our independence. We do operate within the legal framework of the government and the judiciary is welcome to monitor and supervise us, but that's the extent of it."

Challenges

The challenges of creating a satisfactory new law are many. The most important question is whether the government has the political will to do so and the willingness to adopt a less antagonistic approach towards CSOs.

Zaree narrated events at a recent press conference during which the ministry bragged about rejecting EGP 96 million because the sources of the funding were associated with Israel. According to him this was the same tone utilised by the old regime: accusing NGOs of having ties to Zionists and of receiving money from Israel. "Why don't we see the government refusing money from the European Union or UNESCO?" Zaree asked. "Israel has ties to one and is a member of the other." To his mind, the government simply makes dramatic statements about national sovereignty as a way to justify intervention in the operation of CSOs.

These bills and amendments were discussed throughout the second half of 2011. When parliament met, CSO representatives held meetings with the committee of human rights to discuss the bills submitted to parliament. The ministry submitted its own bill in March, but it was rejected by parliament.

In April the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice party (FJP) submitted its bill to be discussed by parliament's human rights committee. Towards the end of May another draft was produced, but the government had reservations. These reservations were discussed in two sessions. The second session was on the day that the parliament was dissolved, forestalling further progress.

However, the ministry recently announced that discussions would continue until consensus is reached among the different stakeholders. CSO representatives and activists are sceptical about the possibility of reaching a consensus however.

The ministry's approach in handling the drafts and bills submitted to parliament was characterised by a lack of transparency. The ministry did not even make the latest bill public.

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He added, "our objections to the committee go back to the security hostility towards civil society and



ART & CULTURE

Art should make a statement and Culture is what surrounds us.

EVENTS

MUSIC

Ahmed Harfoush and the Jazz Project

Ahmed Harfoush's newest venture debuts tonight at Jazz Mate. Supported by a group of changing musicians, Harfoush will perform jazz classics that will be preceded by a short introduction describing the history of the song by music professor Adam Miller.

Jazz Mate
6 El Gezira El Wusta Street
Zamalek, Cairo
Tel: (02) 2737 0521
12 November 9pm

21st Festival and Conference of Arab Music

The 21st Festival and Conference of Arab Music honours the Arab musical heritage through a weeklong event at the Cairo Opera House and the Al-Gomhouria Theatre. Tickets are available from both ticket offices.

Cairo Opera House
El Borg Gezira
Zamalek, Cairo
Tel: (02) 2739 0114
12 November 8pm

Toyboys

Cairo Jazz Club hosts DJs Youssef Sami and Diya Nouman tonight. Put on your dancing shoes and dance the night away on their funky tunes. Reservations are recommended.

Cairo Jazz Club
197 26th of July Street
Mohandiseen, Cairo
Tel: (02) 3345 9939
12 November 10pm

THEATRE

Le'bit El Moot

Independent theatre group Fananists performs Le'bit El Moot, The Game of Death, directed by Mahmoud Kaheela for two nights in the Rawabet Theatre.

Rawabet Theatre
3 Hussein El Me'amar
Downtown, Cairo
Tel: 01275070727
12 November 8pm

EXHIBITIONS

The Last Statement of a Revolutionary Artist

Al Masar Gallery celebrates the life and work of the late Mourin Canaan with the solo exhibition The Last Statement of a Revolutionary Artist which includes his X Condition collection.

Al Masar Gallery
157B 26th July Street
Zamalek, Cairo
Tel: (02) 2736 8537
12 November 11am-9pm

Nihal Wahby

Nihal Wahby explores the idea of freedom and 'emancipation' on both a collective and individual level. From the serene 'Tower of Hopes and Dreams' to the hypnotic 'The Path', this combination of exhibition and installations should not be missed. We've already been and we loved it!

Hanager Center
Cairo Opera House
El Borg Gezira
Zamalek, Cairo
Tel: (02) 2739 0114
12 November 7pm

This is Egypt: Sherif Karas

By Adel Heine

Photography in Egypt is often seen as a means to a commercial end, disregarding the fact the people behind the camera are artists. This is Egypt, as seen by talented photographers.

Sherif Karas started taking pictures 15 years ago with his father's camera and has never stopped. He developed his eye much earlier though, "when I was a child I would always choose the most expensive item in a store, not because it was expensive but because it was the best one," Sherif said. "Both my parents are interior designers and my father is a painter, so I grew up in a house where arts and culture were important. I had no talent for painting though and I lacked the tool to translate what I saw until I picked up a camera."

Karas wanted to study cinematography and had his portfolio prepared but a decision to only accept students who studied the scientific curriculum in the year he was slated to start put an end to this ambition. "I decided to educate myself; I read all the books I could find and bought all the photography magazines at the Cairo Book Fair every year."

In 2005 Karas exhibited his work in the Sawy Culture wheel and he has been working professionally ever since. "I specialise in fashion and portrait photography, I love taking portraits," Karas said. "Photography is about light and shadows and I love using these to capture the details that make up people's faces."

Karas recently returned from a photography trip deep in the rural Upper Egyptian countryside. "My great, great grandfather grew up in the rural village



Portrait of a man from Upper Egypt

of Um El Gossor, 50km from Assiut, but he left and moved to Cairo where our branch of the family has lived ever since. Not long ago I travelled with my family to visit our relatives in the village and I decided to come back and bring my equipment to take images of the people, the land and the village."

The image Karas selected for our This is Egypt series is a portrait of one of his

relatives from the village. "The countryside of Said, Upper Egypt, and its people, represent Egypt for me. Not the conditions they live in, but their attitude to life and the way the deal with each other. Their dignity and acceptance of each other as people is much more civilised than the way we deal with each other in the cities. I think that the culture you can find in rural Said is the real Egypt."

Egyptian experimental movie wins in Los Angeles

Egyptian actor, producer and filmmaker, Hesham Abdel Hamid, has made a film about the Egyptian revolution which he calls the first experimental "silent" film on the uprising. The film, titled *No*, was given the Award of Excellence in the Indie Fest film festival in Los Angeles.

"The film deals with oppression of all kinds and not exclusively with the revolution but rather takes it as a starting point. The film is a cry for freedom and against oppression," said Abdel Hamid.

"The name *No* symbolises a cry of protest against all forms of discrimination, be it colour, sex or religion. The film has been well-received by critics," added Abdel Hamid. Others like Gaber Asfour and Mohamed Hassanein Heikal praised the innovative film.

The film carries with it a powerful message of everything Abdel Hamid believes in, both in politics and cinema: "it is well within our rights as human societies to rebel and overthrow oppression."

The film is an experimental, silent one-man show that Abdel Hamid describes as an "ultra-modern Charlie Chaplin."

Abdel Hamid is planning on screening the 72 minute film in Egypt soon. "The film has been shown on a small scale in Cairo and Alexandria but I plan on screening it when I come back to Egypt from Canada. I hope the state and its relevant institutions do not put constraints on the film and allow it to be shown as is."

Indie Fest was founded to give a platform to independent filmmakers and help them gain credibility while entertaining local audiences and Abdel Hamid says he was very happy that an Egyptian film was featured. "The film festival may not be the biggest but that makes it even nicer that Egypt is represented in the independent cinema genre which has become almost non-existent in the country."

"We used to have a cinema such as the Odeon, which showed experimental films and there never used to be this dichotomy between mainstream and independent art house. We create categories in Egypt such as 'youth cinema' which makes you think that there is 'old people cinema' as well. In other countries there is no such rivalry. We should have at least one cinema that shows experimental films since it would not pose any danger to the popularity of mainstream entertainment," said Abdel Hamid.

Abdel Hamid is generally weary of the media and those who control it in post-revolutionary Egypt. "Most of the media is still the same. After clapping and making noise for Mubarak as a saint, they now make the same noise but negatively for Morsy. There is no real credibility."

The director added that he was happy that the film won the award and that Egyptian films are being recognised abroad.

Movie previews



Looper
Looper is the latest must see sci-fi film. Starring Bruce Willis, Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Emily Blunt. With just the right kind of general Hollywood ridiculousness but with a clever and tricky plot, Looper is a film to keep an eye out for.

The film is set in 2074, where time travel is possible but inevitably made illegal. Criminal organisations use it to get rid of anyone they want gone without a trace, using assassins called loopers. The target is sent 30 years into the past where a hired gun is waiting to kill him. Things get complicated when they want a looper to kill an older version of himself. Though it sounds like the traditional action film paradigm,

the reviews for this film have all been positive and the film is the perfect mix of action and intelligence.

We are not sure why Gordon-Levitt is obsessed with films that are designed to make stupid people feel smart (read: *Inception*) but the film is not concerned with audiences obsessing over an infallible plot line. Anthony Lane of the *New Yorker* said, "the reasoning behind all this may not reward prolonged inspection, but Johnson [the director] is smart enough to press onward with his plot, leaving us with neither the time nor the desire to linger over the logic." Go see it!

Cairo: IMAX, Galaxy Cineplex, Galaxy, Golden Stars, Stars Cinema
Alexandria: Green Plaza

The Possession

The Possession is a new thriller/horror film that relies on old but time-tested methods of creeping you out. Drawing inspiration from both *The Exorcist* and an actual haunted box, the film's plot revolves around something called a Dybbuk, which is a mythical, restless and evil spirit in Jewish folklore. The film's script is



based on an actual Dybbuk box that was sold on eBay with an accompanying horror story (no, we do not care if you want to know).

The film follows Em, a young girl who forms a connection with the spirit inside the box and subsequently becomes possessed by it. What follows is not difficult to guess, and the film has received mixed reviews from critics, with Lou Lumenick of the *New York Post* saying, "the script, credited to Juliet Snowden and Stiles White, adheres so closely to formula that it is possible to predict not only which characters will end up dead, but in what order." Stephanie Zacharek

of *Film.com* said, "the first half of *The Possession* is suitably atmospheric and reasonably creepy." Well, at least you can get one half (read: you can make out in the second).

Our personal favourite, however, comes from Rafer Guzman of *Newsday*, "another horror movie about a little girl possessed by a demon? Seriously?" Our sentiments exactly.

Cairo: Stars Cinema, Galaxy Cineplex, Galaxy, IMAX
Alexandria: Amir and Green Plaza

Here Comes The Boom

We hate to say it but a film written by Kevin James for Kevin James is likely to leave you, the viewer, out of the loop. The film is about a former collegiate wrestler turned high school teacher (James) who needs to raise money for the music programme at his school. The most obvious way to do this, of course, is to become a mixed-martial arts fighter at 42.

This transforms James into the "unlikely" hero he is, in a typical underdog story where everyone thinks he is crazy but somehow loves and supports him. James undoubtedly also ends up getting the girl (Salma



Hayek, too) and rallying the entire (yes, entire) school around him. With such a heartwarming story fit for the likes of the glorious Zee Aflam, the Arabic channel that shows a continuous flood of subtitled Bollywood movies, you would think the film would garner favourable reviews, but unfortunately most critics say you should avoid this film and one even says it falls flat on its face, just like its protagonist.

Cairo: Galaxy, IMAX, Stars Cinema, Golden Stars, Galaxy Cineplex
Alexandria: Green Plaza

Courtesy of Bey2ollak Facebook page

Weather



Monday, November 12

Alexandria	24°C / 18°C
Aswan	28°C / 18°C
Cairo	26°C / 71°C
Hurghada	27°C / 19°C
Luxor	28°C / 16°C
Sharm El-Sheikh	29°C / 19°C
Suez	22°C / 13°C

Monday, November 12

أبريل ودر أصوات ودر