

Middle-East New-Media • A Weekly Coverage • Editor: Orit Perlov

4-10 June 2012
Newsletter - Issue No. 15

Egypt:

First Came Pharaohs Then Came the Mamluks

Hello Dr. Mursi Goodbye Mr. Shfiq

The Six Days War Defeat

The Economic Avalanche On Its Way

Xenophobia: The Fear from Foreigners

Misogyny: The Fear from Women

Dr. El-Baradei on CBC - "The Angry Prophet"

Politicization of the Revolution

Syria:

The Yemeni Solution

After The #HoulaMassacar Here Comes The #QubairMassacre

The Turkish Spin: Abdulbaset Sieda is the New Kurdish Leader of the SNC

Lebanon:

Is Saudi Arming the Sunnis Militias In North Lebanon?

Hezbollah's Fear of the Future

Iran:

The Nuclear Fatwa

Platform for Future Iran

Libya:

The Future is More Complex Than That of The Battlefield

Tribes vs. States – The Airport Fiasco

Libya Upcoming Election

Tunisia:

The Salafist Shadow

Egypt

First Came Pharaohs Then Came the Mamluks



Arabist

In Egypt, a Pharaoh Falls and the Mameluks March On

"Egypt may be mostly associated with its Pharaonic past and god-kings, but in this case the appropriate historical analogy is more recent: a pharaoh is taking the fall for the military class, the Mameluks. These Mameluks, the vast caste of officers and officials (uniformed or not) who continue to rule Egypt, have taken it upon themselves to redefine the revolution*. This is taking place amid a larger battle in Egyptian society to define post-Mubarak Egypt. The young revolutionaries who led the protests last year want, above all, a rupture with the past and to construct a more open society. The Islamists who were late backers of the uprising want to build a more just society by making both society and government more Islamic. And the generals, who now govern, for their part, are trying to redefine "revolution" as simply the removal of Mubarak and a handful of his cronies"*

Read More



Salama Moussa

The New Mamluks & the MB

"The hinge at the moment is the MB. They need to make a choice: would they support the army in exchange for quick power and the free hand to enforce

their social policies, or would they insist on a civilian government and possibly risk a repeat of 1954, when Nasser lashed out at them and removed most of their army sympathizers. This is why the MB has often put out conflicted statements about the way forward with respect to the army's role"

Read More

Hello Dr. Mursi Goodbye Mr. Shfiq



Mohammad Fadel

Why I voted for Mursi

"The positive reason is that the Muslim Brotherhood, by virtue of its deep and broad roots in Egyptian civil society, is relatively well-positioned, from an institutional perspective, to articulate policies that are beneficial to a broader segment of the Egyptian populace than any other organized group. This is without doubt the case when one compares the social base of the Muslim Brotherhood to that of the ancient regime, now contemptuously referred to by the revolutionaries as "al-fulūl" (the remnants). It is also true, however, when one compares the social base of the Muslim Brotherhood to other groups who participated in the Jan. 25th Revolution. ***Unlike the revolutionary candidates, Hamdin Sabbahi and Abu al-Futuh 'Abd al-Mun'im, whose votes were skewed to Egyptian urban centers, particularly Cairo and Alexandria, and unlike Ahmad Shafiq, whose support was disproportionately concentrated in the Delta, Muhammad Mursi's support was broadly dispersed throughout the country****"*

Read More



Hatem Rushdy

Dear Dr. Morsy My Conditions for Voting for You.

"I am not afraid of the Muslim Brotherhood".

"I don't believe you plan to turn Egypt into Afghanistan or Saudi Arabia and force my daughter to wear the veil. I don't believe that you will differentiate between Egyptian Copts and Egyptian Muslims. I don't buy that you will start a war with Israel or ignore Egypt's international commitments. It doesn't bother me at all that you were your party's second choice and I have no worry that the country will be run by the Murshed. None of these threats, for various reasons, rings true for me"

Read More



Noor

Why we really should fear Shafik ...

*"**Ahmed Shafik, Mubarak's good friend and last prime-minister, is viewed by many as the symbol for the counter-revolution**. Regardless of the fact that many are voting for him in fear of an Islamic takeover of Egypt, it is important to note that he is also fully backed by former members of Mubarak's National Democratic Party, as well as the police and the armed forces"*

Read More

The Six Days War Defeat



Zeinobia

#June5: Regarding the Military and The State - The 45th Anniversary of Six Days War Defeat



"Today is the 45th anniversary of six days war defeat, A defeat that we suffer from its consequences up till now and I am not speaking about the loss of Golan and East Jerusalem but I am speaking about how that defeat affected a whole generation that still suffers from its impact up till now and unfortunately this generation is leading the scene in Egypt"

Read More



Ahram

Public perceptions of Egypt's military: From 1967 to 2012

*"Analysts, historians draw comparisons between Egyptian military's tarnished reputation after 1967 defeat and the post-revolution falling out between army and people" [.....] "**The only way forward now is the exit of the old guard (read the SCAF) from power and the establishment of a proper civilian-military relationship. "Civilians must rule over military men**"*

Read More

The Economic Avalanche On Its Way

Sada

Egypt's Looming Fiscal Crisis

"Regardless of who is elected, one of the toughest challenges the new president of ***Egypt*** *will face is to* ***secure the hefty US$22.5 billion needed to finance the deficit of the recently released state budget for the fiscal year (FY) 2012-2013.*** *Given the sorry state of the post-Mubarak economy and the deep financial woes of the past 16 months—compounded by the political unrest and uncertainty likely to persist even after the inauguration—this will be a daunting task"*

Read More



Assem Memon

So here is how Egyptian Tax Money is Spent on a National Level:

Type of Expenditure	Billion EGP	% of Expenditure
Wages and Compensation of employees	56.68	**10.91%**
Purchases of Goods and Services (operating expenditure for the government: electricity, fuel, paper, pens, and cars. Etc… and services include: subscriptions, banquets, postage, maintenance of government assets etc…)	16.35	**3.15%**
Interests on old debt (oil and gas, wheat, farmers, health care, electricity, public transit, housing, export promotion, pensions, etc…)	105.95	**20.38%**
Subsidies, Grants, and Social Benefits	153.23	**29.48%**
Other Expenditures (taxes, customs, car licensing, damgha, etc…)	30.41	**5.85%**
Lump sum other expenditures (Ministry of Defense, and reserves??)	29.07	**5.59%**
Purchase of Non-Financial Assets Investments (land, houses, cars, equipment, etc…)	25.30	**4.87%**
Acquisition of Domestic and Foreign Financial Assets	4.25	**0.82%**
Domestic and Foreign Loans repayment	98.52	**18.96%**
TOTAL Expenditure	519.76	**100.00%**

Read More

Xenophobia: The Fear from Foreigners

Bikya Masr



Egypt's spy awareness: Xenophobia and paranoia brought to you by the state

"A suspicious looking foreigner enters the cafe, scanning the cafegoers, looking for prey while ominous and dangerous music plays in the background. He chooses his "victims" and joins them on the table, but the prey are so welcoming and warm-hearted towards him and in no time they are spilling their hearts out, giving him information about Egypt's social, political and economic problems, of which he could have easily read in a newspaper"[....] "The suspicious man then enters the "valuable" information into his phone, sending it somewhere. The caption appears "be careful with your words, words can save your country." [....] "The just under one-minute Egypt state-sponsored TV advertisement warning people from "giving away too much to strangers," shows a great deal of ignorance and xenophobia, elements that could very well endanger foreigners living in Egypt"

Read More

Zeinobia

Xenophobia: And this is how you will "REALLY" improve tourism in Egypt!!!

"The Egyptian authorities launched a campaign to warn citizens from speaking with foreigners for fear they will be spies"[.....] "I fear that this ad is an introduction for a campaign against human rights activists and journalists from abroad so they will not cover the upcoming crackdown against the Muslim brotherhood as well revolutionary powers and groups if Shafik is elected as a president"

Read More

Bassem Sabry



Beware of Spies: Anatomy Of A Fantastic TV Ad

"My eyes have been hurting (and still do) and I cannot look at a screen for extended periods of time, so I took a vacation away from the internet. I was, as a result, somewhat isolated from the news. But today I decide to check and see some of what I

missed over the past 72 hours, catch up a bit. First thing I found out was that, basically, aliens invaded the Middle East. Then, while checking the Hindustan Times (because that is what one normally does in one's spare time, of course) I discover the ad warning us that spies are invading Egypt. I found a subtitled version off the New York Times, and I share it at the end of the article. I won't talk about how insane and xenophobia-inspiring this ad is, because everyone else is... even the Hindustan Times. Instead, I would like to share a few comments"



[Read More]



Misogyny: The Fear from Women

Ayman S. Ashour

The Hymen Obsession: Inequality & Harassment in Egypt

"It is the same story over & over again everywhere in Egypt, sexual harassment! You can read warnings about it in guide books and we hear about it in the news and you could see it in sickening details in movies like Cairo Time with young men chasing a woman the age of their mothers'. Egypt is ground zero for sexual harassment! But why? This is a question that perhaps trained sociologists are better qualified to answer. I can only throw few guesses, from the move to separation of boys & girls in education, increased religiosity and delays in marriage age to the general oppression that Egyptians have & continue to suffer from"

[Read More]

Dr. El-Baradei on CBC - "The Angry Prophet"



Alaa Bayoumi

El Baradei: **Egypt's revolution today is in critical stage**

El Baradei: We have to find a way to co-exist or the country will explode

El Baradei: **Egypt's revolution was mismanaged by SCAF and political forces**.

El Baradei: People today are wishing id old regime could come back because of worsening conditions since the revolution

El Baradei: **We have not given Egyptians a modern political alternative yet.**

El Baradei: **Egypt is now divided into camps, everyone with his own agenda and considers the other as traitor**

El Baradei: **Presidential election if it takes place will be the beginning of the country's problems not solution**

El Baradei: **The Parliament is domesticated and weak**

El Baradei: We have wasted a year and a half and we now to start from the beginning

El Baradei: **SCAF is the main cause of the waste and the problem. It is not qualified to lead the country.**

El Baradei: The problems/ crisis of Egypt is getting more complicated (worse) every day

El Baradei: **Foreign investors are very worried and unwilling to invest**.

El Baradei: **Egypt is about to face a severe economic and political crisis**

El Baradei: **Recent agreement on how to form constituent assembly is neither representative nor useful**

El Baradei: The March 2011 constitutional referendum was the first step on the wrong way and we continued going on the wrong path since then

El Baradei: **Warns against reported agreement between Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi to change article 2 in Egyptian constitution**

El Baradei: Islamists are imposing religious issues which are not important to people's daily need and other interpretations of Islam

El Baradei: If I am offered membership of the constituent assembly, I will not accept it.

El Baradei: **I will not join constituent assembly if there is not enough guarantees about the kind of constitution it wants to write.**

El Baradei: **The mains problem is that the revolution did not manage the country after Mubarak and left management to SCAF**

El Baradei: The youth activists were divided and everyone thought he became a popular leader

El Baradei: The youth activists have to unite and build united political organizations

El Baradei: I may have done mistakes. But, **I believe in collective leadership. Our society believes in Pharaonic leadership.**

El Baradei: **The youth were polluted by some members of the elite who put their own interests before public interests**.

El Baradei: **We live today under some kind of fascist regime spreading and built on fear.**

El Baradei: I refused to meet Omar Somlian after the revolution.

El Baradei: If you stick to your political principles you will win morally and politically

El Baradei: **Political isolation of old regime members is "normal"**

El Baradei: **I have two solutions: a presidential council or selecting three people to lead the county, select constituent assembly & cabinet**

El Baradei: I don't like the way the concept "Islamist" is used as political slogan. We are all Muslims.

El Baradei: **Egypt is divided between "Islamists" and the so called "Stability Camp".**

El Baradei: **We have 3 scenarios; an explosion, presidential council, or a one year president**

El Baradei: Presidential elections have to be organized once a new constitution is written

El Baradei: **The Muslim Brotherhood played an important role during the revolution**.

El Baradei: I wish that the Muslim Brotherhood did not have a candidate in the presidential election

El Baradei: This is not the democratic process we hoped for.

El Baradei: I was surprised that Shafik decided to run in presidential campaign. **Old regime should have given opportunity to new one**.

El Baradei: **Shafik got second position in election because revolutionary forces were divided and because of the polluted political context**.

El Baradei: I always thought presidential election should not have taken place and urged other candidates not to run

El Baradei: **I had only one meeting with Muslim Brotherhood leaders after revolution when I visited them in their new party headquarters**

El Baradei: **SCAF told me the Muslim Brotherhood are against your appointment Prime Minister after revolution and MB denied such reports**

El Baradei: **There was no political coordination between me and the Muslim Brotherhood after revolution**

El Baradei: **Abol Fotouh is still part of the Muslim Brotherhood ideology and I understand why he would urge his supporters to vote for Morsi**

El Baradei: **The Shura council is a waste of money and it should not exist in current format.**

El Baradei: I will not vote in the second round of the second election. I won't give the process legitimacy.

El Baradei: To my supporters, I tell them everyone should make up his decision and act based on his heart tells him/ her

El Baradei: Both Morsi and Shafik have to tried to reach out to me indirectly (through mediators)

El Baradei: **If Morsi requests to meet me I will go and meet him. Yet, I refuse to meet with Ahmed Shafik**

El Baradei: **The possibility of political explosion in Egypt is bigger if Shafik becomes president**

El Baradei: **If you take part in elections, you have to accept its results**

El Baradei: **The constituent assembly should insist on a new election in one year once constitution is written**.

El Baradei: **SCAF has lost a lot of his ability to exercise political pressure because its mistakes in power**.

El Baradei: Revolution was not about a struggle between SCAF and the Muslim Brotherhood. It was about the youth who started it.

El Baradei: **The poor has lost faith in the political elite**.

El Baradei: People are losing faith because the old regime did not change

El Baradei: **I am against any "revolutionary courts or trials"**

El Baradei: **New legislators lack experience. If we have the best president without a useful parliament, Egypt will not move forward.**

El Baradei: **People care about a successful cabinet more than a good constitution.** People want the basic needs met.

El Baradei: **We should use the 1954 constitution as a good platform to build on our new constitution.**

El Baradei: Egypt needs a government formed by the majority party. **President should focus on foreign policy in new constitution.**

El Baradei: **Egypt needs an additional constitutional declaration before new president takes office; many crucial authorities are not decided.**

El Baradei: **Military has to accept to be part of civilians ruled government**.

El Baradei: **Military should focus on its job and give up its economic projects/ businesses gradually**.

El Baradei: **I told SCAF I am ready to be Prime Minister after revolution and SCAF did not accept it my offer.**

Politicization of the Revolution



Jess Hill

The Revolution Will Be Politicized

Ahmed Maher,
Founder of April 6



"Is the Egyptian revolution dead? Hardly. After months of quiet planning, Egypt's April 6 revolutionaries are ready to reveal their next big move: politics" *[.....] "Since the revolution, April 6 has been dogged*

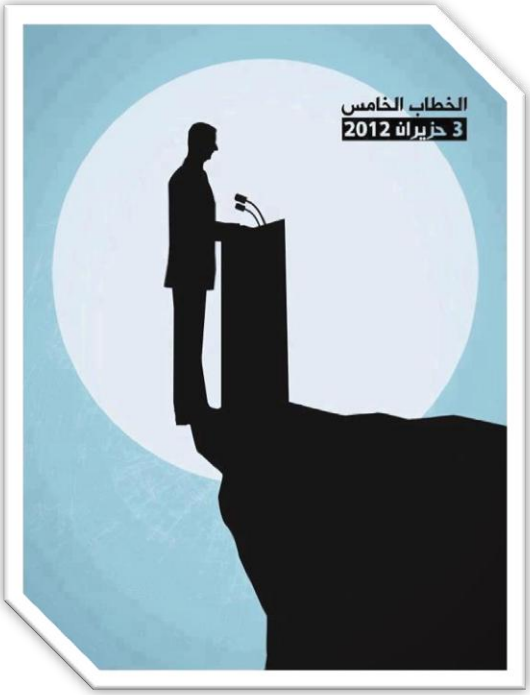
by rumors of foreign funding, a very serious allegation here in Egypt. In November last year, however, the Ministry of Justice reported that these allegations were false. April 6 is clearly not flush with cash — Maher, a civil engineer by trade, hasn't been able to give up his day job. So how are they funding these projects? "We have membership fees, and there are many supporters from the business community. Not too much, but it's good," he says. Technically, the group is still illegal — like many groups operating in Egypt. Maher says the movement needs a license, but if it can't get one, it will keep operating regardless"

Read More

Syria

The Yemeni Solution

Al-Bab



Syria and the 'Yemen solution'

How does this sound as a way to end the conflict in Syria?

Step one: *The Syrian parliament grants immunity from prosecution to President Assad and his closest associates.*

Step two: *Assad resigns as Syria's president but remains head of the Baath party, which in turn continues to control the parliament.*

Step three: *A presidential election is called and Assad's deputy, 73-year-old Farouk al-Sharaa, wins handsomely, since he is the only permitted candidate.*

Read More

Qantara

The Long Road to a "Yemeni Solution"

"We must not forget that perhaps 20 percent of the Syrian population is truly loyal to the regime, and that an even larger proportion is hugely afraid of the alternatives and the chaos that will follow any ousting of Assad. The only way to ensure that a post-regime civil war will not be longer and bloodier than the one that came before, clear assurances must be given that

minorities and other groups currently propping up the president will also have a future in post-Assad Syria"

Read More

After The #HoulaMassacar Here Comes The #QubairMassacre



S.N.N

"Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) & Damascus Centre for Human Rights Studies (DCHRS) report on the massacre of Mazra'at al-Qubeir in Hama 07-06-2012.The Syrian regime's security forces and Shabeehas, pro-regime militias affiliated to security forces, have perpetrated a horrific massacre in Mazra'at al-Qubeir 20 km to the west of Hama city, 2 km to the south of Ma'arzaf. Seventy eight victims including women and children were killed. Tanks leveled half of the houses almost to complete destruction which is visible from afar for any visitor"
Read More



Nasser H Al-Khalifa(Diplomat, Thinker, and Human rights advocate, Doha, Qatar)

#QubairMassacre after #HoulaMassacar is an indictment of UN system & Security Council and its 5 permanent members especially Russia & China

140 massacred innocent human beings last night in #QubairMassacre and the world still pathetic!



I am asleep, can you please die in silence!



Brown Moses

Syria - The Qubair Massacre

"A new massacre has just happened in the Hama suburb area of Qubair. At least 86 killed & number is expected to rise. Tweet: #QubairMassacre.At least 86 men, women, & children slaughtered by Assad forces in Qubair, Hama"
Read More



Tony Badran

Assad's Sectarian Strategy

"The killings are also a message to the outside world. When Assad hears daily consternation from Washington about the horrible specter of sectarian civil war in Syria, he recognizes that accentuating these anxieties is likely to deter, not trigger, international action. Indeed, judging from the underwhelming international reaction to the Houla killing, his reading was vindicated. This is why the pattern is now being repeated in other villages"

Read More



Rime Allaf

1) Shell area 2) Send shabbiha 3) Slaughter children & adults 4) Spread news 5) Blame terrorists 6) Start over #AssadSurgery



Shakeeb Al-Jabri

Syrian businessmen meeting in Doha have pledged 300 million US Dollars in support for the revolution. More than all nations combined.

The Turkish Spin: Abdulbaset Sieda is the New Kurdish Leader of the SNC





Middle East Insights

"Sweden-based Syrian dissident Sieda is likely to be the next leader of the SNC following the resignation of the group's former leader Burhan Ghalioun in May." *"Ghalioun, a secular sociologist backed by the Muslim Brotherhood, announced his resignation May 17 to avert divisions within the opposition bloc after activists on the ground accused him of monopolizing power." [....] "Choosing a Kurd would avoid suspicions that would be impossible to avoid if a Sunni or an Allawi was selected. Then again, it seems that the only ones seriously opposed to this candidacy are ... the Kurds themselves, as the article explains"*

Read More



Abu Hatem

SNC is controlled by Islamists. Seida is secular but against federalism and closer to Turkey than most Kurds.

It will be very hard for the KNC, and the PYD (PKK) to say SNC is not reaching out towards Kurds now. Also Kurdish LCCs on FB look happy.

Exactly Syrian Kurds aren't too fond of him because he is even more moderate than Barzani Kurds, like Okab Saqr of Shia of Lebanon.

At the same time he has good relations with Bashar and other KNC people, there are channels of communication, will be easy to talk.

He is the only Kurd close to MB, not really that anti-Turkey, and only major Kurd left in the SNC. He's like Okab Saqr to Shia.

Here is what is going to happen to Dr. Sida, first 3 weeks everyone will love him, in 2 months everyone will bash and hate him.

It will be harder for people to say SNC doesn't reach out to minorities when their head is a Kurd. If they make Sabra next it would be smart.

This guy Sida is the most moderate Kurd you can find in Syria. He's against federalism, friends with MB, Not anti-Turkey.

Lebanon

Is Saudi Arming the Sunnis Militias In North Lebanon?



Mustapha

A Phone Call That Shook a Nation

"On Saturday May 12, a young man from Tripoli Lebanon, named Shadi el Mawlawi received an important phone call. The events triggered by this call ended up rocking Tripoli and the rest of Lebanon for several weeks. From violent protests to urban warfare, chaos broke lose as dark smoke from burning tires billowed across the country, and angry people from Akkar to Saida blocked major Lebanese roads in anger. The call, Mawlawi believed, was from the Safadi Foundation, a well-known philanthropic organization that assists people in need. Mawlawi was eligible for medical aid for his newborn daughter, he was told, so he rushed to a Safadi center to claim the money. By doing so he walked into a trap set by Lebanon's General Security

which resulted in his arrest. ***Why did the arrest of one man cause so much instability? What does this tell us about Tripoli, about Lebanese politics and about the Arab spring's effect on Lebanon?"***

Read More

Who is Arming Lebanon's Sunnis?

"If you ask a supporter of Hezbollah or March 8 in Lebanon about who is arming Lebanon's Sunnis, the answer is usually quick and immediate, and it is always the same: Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries through Hariri's Future Movement (FM). But if you grab 5 random March 14 supporters (especially Sunnis) and ask them the same question, you might get as much as 5, hesitant, answers"

Read More



Hezbollah's Fear of the Future

Hanin Ghaddar

"The Shia taxi driver who brought me home from the airport a few nights ago answered my question about the fate of the 11 Lebanese Shia pilgrims kidnaped in Syria with a rather shocking statement: "We don't care. *We don't want them back if this causes any humiliation to the Sayyed. He will not apologize to anyone. "Of course, the Sayyed here is Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah. And the humiliation would be agreeing to the kidnapers' request for Nasrallah to apologize to the Syrian people for supporting the Syrian regime"*

Read More

Iran

The Nuclear Fatwa



Tehran Bureau

Did Iran's Supreme Leader really issue a nuclear fatwa?

"I find it most curious that some Western commentators believe that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's fatwa banning nuclear weapons is "well-documented." There has been plenty written about it, certainly, but I have never seen the fatwa itself written down per se or even appropriately

documented in either official or unofficial literature" [.....] "This post merely attempts to convey the point that an unhealthy complacency should not set in on how we view Ayatollah Khamenei's so-called "nuclear fatwa"

(1) There is doubt over whether such a fatwa even exists.

(2) Even if such a fatwa does exist, it does not mean that it couldn't be changed as and when deemed necessary by the Islamic Republic's political leadership

Read More

Platform for Future Iran



Maryam Rajavi (President-elect of National Council of Resistance of Iran)

Maryam Rajavi's Ten Point Platform for Future Iran

For The Full Text

Libya

The Future Is More Complex Than That of The Battlefield



Libyan Tweep Forum

Libya: The Revolution Was The Easy Part

"Libyans will tell you that the real 'Thuwar' have melted away, leaving only the greedy, uneducated thugs who are toting guns and demanding privileges in the name of the revolution. Whether this is true or not, these young Libyan men are certainly realizing that the world of politics is infinitely more complex than that of the battlefield, and their ability to deal with the post conflict political arena could well determine the success and stability of Libya in years to come"

Read More



Bilal H.B.

The New Libya and Its Foreign Policy

The next Libyan Foreign Minister will have the tough task starting new international relations beginning with the European Union. Libya-EU relations were formerly based on European exploitation, as if we needed them when in fact they are the ones who need us. We export Brent oil to them for cheap cost, we control illegal immigration, and we have major marine resources. We are also able to control the cause of their intimidation which is "Terrorism".

Read More

The Islamist Willing to Give Democracy a Chance



George Grant

Just How Serious is Derna's Islamist Problem

"The conclusion I am left with is that Al-Hassadi, like his colleague Ramadan Ben Khael, is at least willing to give democracy a chance. Like all Libyans, it seems that both men have experienced enough tyranny to place some value in freedom of expression. *Moreover, I am persuaded that these individuals represent only a small minority of opinion in Derna, which much more closely resembles other Libyan towns than rumour would suggest. Derna appears to be not so much a town with an "Islamist problem" as a town with high expectations of what the alternative, democracy, can bring. Perhaps the greatest danger now is that those in government and other positions of power fail to deliver on these expectations in the coming months and years, because it is at that point that the siren-song of extremist ideology can start to take on fresh appeal. That, however, is very far from being just a Derna problem"*



Read More



Tribes vs. States: The Airport Fiasco

Al Jazeera English

Clashes Erupt At Libya's Tripoli Airport

"Clashes have erupted at Tripoli's international airport after Libyan government-backed forces tried to take back the facility from an armed group. A government official said on Monday that the group, called al-Awfea Brigade, from the town of Tarhouna, 80km southeast of the Libyan capital, was demanding the release of their leader who they said disappeared two days ago

Read More

Arabist

If the NTC Can't Control Tripoli's Airport….

"The airport march by the Tarhouna militia is taking place in the context of national reconciliation efforts. Tarhouna and the region it is, the Bani Walid District, have been bastions of Qadhafi rule for years; some of the fiercest opposition to the anti-Qadhafi militias came from the area. This has made critics of the former regime even more leery of former Qadhafi loyalists, who in the past have clashed with local NTC-aligned fighters in Tarhoun itself. Additionally, members of the Tarhouna Military Council were apparently targeted in an assassination attempt by unknown parties this April".

Read More



David Kenner

New details emerge about Tripoli airport seizure as Libya

"The airport was captured by members of the Al-Awfia brigade early on Monday afternoon, before being retaken by government forces after sustained fighting later in the day. The brigade had occupied the airport in retaliation for the abduction of its commander, Abu-Alija Habshi, a day earlier"

Read More



Umar Khan

The Airport Fiasco

"More than 200 members of the Al-Awfeya Brigade armed with 14.5mm anti-aircraft guns and automatic weapons briefly took over Tripoli

International Airport on Monday afternoon. Their action was in protest at the disappearance the day before of the head of the brigade, Abu Ajila Habshi. After sporadic clashes that lasted less than an hour, the outnumbered members of the Awfeya Brigade surrendered to the forces of the Brigades' Union of the Revolutionaries of Tripoli, a government-controlled group. Brief though it was, the takeover had the world believing that Libya was indeed in chaos and made Libyans furious because the image of steady progress made in the past couple of months was being spectacularly blown apart"

Read More

Libya Upcoming Election



Joanne

Libya Ambassador to Tunis: Over Half Million Libyans in Tunisia are fugitives and Most are WANTED by Libya authorities

130 disqualified candidates got 3 days to appeal against disqualification then parties got 3 days to nominate replacements

Libya Elections More than 130 candidates out of 4,000 candidates will be notified in next 2 days that they have been disqualified

Dep. PM Abushagur says "We are expecting almost 100 % that elections will be done before Ramadan (July20)"

Tunisia



The Salafist Shadow



Rob Prince

Tunisia's Salafists: Brownshirts of Tunisia's Arab Spring

"The Salafists are casting a larger and larger shadow over Tunisia. Some were victims of Ben Ali's prisons whose righteous rage has been manipulated. Others have joined from the ranks of the large Tunisian lumped proletariat – the permanently unemployed, whose numbers are growing. Although Salafists remain essentially a fringe group, mostly foreign to the Tunisian political experience,

their numbers and influence are growing. Money to support their activities is streaming in from abroad" [....] "From the elections until today (early June 2012), the situation has only deteriorated and at an alarming rate. Salafist mobs – little more than the brown shirts of the Tunisian Revolution – have attacked media outlets, burned down bars and liquor stores, intimidated women, and physically attacked anyone with whom they disagree. The number of incidents has multiplied while the transitional government has done little to nothing to intervene, giving the Salafists a free hand nationwide"

Read More

Magharebia

Salafist Attacks Threaten Tunisian Tourism

"What the salafists are doing is the futility of futility," commented Adel Mezzi. "They are playing with the freedoms of the people without respect for the law, and this will of course hurt the country's image, whose primary capital is tourism and foreign investment."



Salafist leader Sheikh Abou Iyadh

Read More