

MEI MEDIA WATCH

(A Survey of Editorials)

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Presidential Elections in Egypt, May 2012

Note: The first presidential elections since the fall of Hosni Mubarak were held in Egypt on 23 and 24 May 2012. An interesting feature of this election was the contest between the Chairman of the Freedom and Justice Party and the last Prime Minister of the Mubarak government. This was the second presidential election since 2005 and for the first time witnessed more than one candidate. Editorial commentaries from the international and the Middle Eastern media on this event are reproduced here. **Editor, MEI@ND]**

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Dubai, Editorial, 2 April 2012, Monday

1. Brotherhood should give all parties a say

The interests of the people need to be accorded top priority for Egypt to progress. There is no question that the developments in Egypt are important as they indicate the direction in which the country is heading. Many things have happened in Egypt and the forces of change have been working towards a consistent and positive outcome. After all, the interests of the people should be given top priority, regardless of which party or group takes the mantle of power.

For the full text: <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/brotherhood-should-give-all-parties-a-say-1.1002685>

Khaleej Times
ONLINE

Middle East Institute @ New Delhi, www.mei.org.in

Dubai, Editorial, 3 April 2012, Tuesday

2. Egypt's presidency move

The political climate in Egypt is heating up. The reverse decision on the part of Muslim Brotherhood to field its candidate for presidency has raised many eyebrows. The reason is not that the religious entity might hold sway to the power nexus and become too powerful, rather it is the fear of Cairo becoming too radical to be governed. The nomination of Khairat Al Shatir, the deputy chairman, would go a long way in reshaping politics in a country that has hardly come out of authoritarian rule of the generals. **For the full text:** http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April5.xml§ion=editorial&col=

gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 8 April 2012, Sunday

3. Brotherhood is under observation

Its actions have enforced the perception that it is an opportunistic movement. The recent political manoeuvring by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt should be watched closely. The manner in which the group advances its agenda in Egyptian politics would determine to a great extent the future characteristics of the country. This is important as the current political process will define its outlook and course of action as much as the existence of alternative voices and groups. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/brotherhood-is-under-observation-1.1005426>

gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 9 April 2012, Monday

4. Egypt faces tough choice in election

Trimmed list of candidates will not include former spy chief and two leading Islamists. Egypt's first free presidential election is finally taking shape. This very important poll will elect the country's next leader who will have the very difficult task of implementing tough economic reforms in order to restore the country to some prosperity, which will certainly not be popular, and the whole country remembers Egypt's long history of riots whenever subsidies on basic foodstuffs have been reduced. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/egypt-faces-tough-choice-in-election-1.1010388>

gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 10 April 2012, Tuesday

5. Egypt needs a transparent presidential poll

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Without clear rules, this election will see manipulation at worst and confusion at best. It is very worrying that the rules for Egypt's vital presidential election are not clear, despite there being more than a year of preparation. It is depressing that the first round is due to be held in six weeks on May 23 and 24 (2012), and registration of candidates has just closed with some candidates still not sure if they will be permitted to stand. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/egypt-needs-a-transparent-presidential-poll-1.1006296>



Dubai, Editorial, 10 April 2012, Tuesday

6. Egypt's presidency blues

Egypt seems to be up for a new clash of the Titans. The filing of papers by ex-spy chief and Vice-president Omar Suleiman has, in fact, heated the presidential duel. The man who still draws his synergies from the military establishment now almost seems set to contest Brotherhood's nominee Khairat Al-Shater. But the manner in which the Islamist party has objected to Omar's candidacy has revealed the secrets in the skeleton. First, there shouldn't be any bar on anybody, other than the dilated provisions of law, in contesting for any public office. **For the full text:** http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April19.xml§ion=editorial&col=



Cairo, Editorial, 5-11 April 2012

7. The whole cake

The announcement that the Muslim Brotherhood will field a candidate for president has sent shockwaves across Egypt and beyond. When the vote is held next month (May 2012), should former deputy MB leader Khairat El-Shater become president, it would mean the country has become a near de facto Islamist state, something that millions of Egyptians want yet millions of Egyptians fear. **For the full text:** <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1092/ed.htm>



Amman, Editorial, 12 April 2012, Thursday

8. Decisive polls

The upcoming presidential elections in Egypt could be the most important political event in the Middle East, given the size and regional role of the country. Egypt was, and will always be, a very important Arab country, and the direction it takes is bound to have substantial ripple effects across the entire region. More than a dozen presidential candidates of different political and religious persuasions are running for election, including Muslim Brotherhood candidate Khayrat Al Shater and Salafist candidate Hazem Salah Abu Ismail. **For the full text:** <http://jordantimes.com/decisive-polls>

gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 14 April 2012, Saturday

9. Building Egypt civil society on sound footing

A process that excludes any group in the course of democratic practice is invalid. The recent developments with regards to the presidential elections in Egypt are reflective of the critical phase the country is going through. How this stage is handled and addressed will be crucial to the future of the country. And to ensure building a sound basis for civil society, all groups have to work towards the same goal — building the structure of a transparent and democratic society. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/building-egypt-civil-society-on-sound-footing-1.1008121>

TheNational

Abu Dhabi, Editorial, 17 April 2012, Tuesday

10. Egypt's morass of legacy laws muddies water

On Saturday (14 April), Egypt's presidential race was turned on its head when the Supreme Presidential Election Commission disqualified 10 of 23 registered candidates. Among the stated reasons was that one candidate had not acquired enough signatures in one province, another's party was not represented in parliament, and the nationality of a third's mother was questioned. **For the full text:** <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/egypts-morass-of-legacy-laws-muddies-water>

THE DAILY STAR
LEBANON

Beirut, Editorial, 19 April 2012, Thursday

11. Twisted transition

Around a century ago, Egypt was a place where women were fighting to achieve equal rights. Now, in the wake of a historic popular uprising that brought down a dictatorship, women are making their mark again – but in worrying fashion. As Egypt gears up for long-awaited competitive presidential polls, the winds of freedom have produced candidates such as Raqiya Ibrahim of the Umma Party. **For the full text:**

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/Apr-19/170672-twisted-transition.ashx#axzz1sSPH4TMJ>



Dubai, Editorial, 22 April 2012, Sunday

12. Buzzing on Tahrir

Tahrir Square is once again teeming with tens of thousands. The revolution in Egypt, which overthrew President Hosni Mubarak and at the same time kick-started a wave of upheavals in the region, now seems to be making its way towards an evolutionary process, and wants the reigning military junta to concede power. **For the full text:**

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April42.xml§ion=editorial



Cairo, Editorial, 25 April- 1 May 2012

13. Political opportunism and the presidential race

Had anyone predicted a few weeks ago the confounding scene of posturing and manoeuvring that surfaced in connection with the presidential race, no one would have believed it. First, the mother of one of the most vocal and best-funded candidates held US nationality, a matter that automatically disqualifies him from the race. Then the Muslim Brotherhood ate its words and fielded a candidate. To top it all, former vice president Omar Suleiman, who had said he had no intention of running, joined the race. **For the full text:**

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1095/ed.htm>



Dubai, Editorial, 2 May 2012, Wednesday

14. Second round shock in Cairo

Egypt has the sad choice of either an authoritarian or religious vision of its future. Egypt's first free presidential elections have flung up a shock as a military representative of the former regime will fight it out with the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. This direct clash between diametrically opposed authoritarian and religious visions of Egypt's future firmly

marginalises the liberal and secular option. This kind of choice is absolutely not what the protestors in Tahrir Square were looking for when they toppled Mubarak's dictatorship early last year (2011). **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/second-round-shock-in-cairo-1.1028460>



Jeddah, Editorial, 3 May 2012, Thursday

15. Egyptians prepare to choose

Sometime after June 17 (2012) Egypt should have its first ever freely-elected president. From the original 900 candidates who put forward their names, to the 13 approved by the military, one man will have been chosen to lead his country and, the majority of Egyptians clearly hope, to complete the revolution. **For the full text:** <http://www.saudi gazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=20120503123266>

gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 4 May 2012, Friday

16. Daunting task for the new president

He will have to immediately restart process of rewriting Egypt's constitution. The brutal violence used to suppress protesters in Cairo this week led to a massive march on Wednesday (2 May) attended by representatives of almost every Egyptian political group, all of which demanded an end to the bloodshed they believe was orchestrated by the government. At least 12 people were killed by suspected supporters of Egypt's military rulers. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/daunting-task-for-the-new-president-1.1017874>

gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 5 May 2012, Saturday

17. Task cut out for new Egypt president

He will have to deal with an assertive parliament and military authorities. Egypt's interim military government is wrong in seeking to redefine the role of the president a few days before the first round of presidential elections and a few weeks before the final run off decides who will be the nation's first freely elected president. There is a danger that this deliberate confusion may devalue the elections and it certainly devalues the Supreme Council of

the Armed Forces (Scaf), whose blatant attempts at manipulation and self-preservation are doing the Egyptian armed forces no good at all. **For the full text:**

<http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/task-cut-out-for-new-egypt-president-1.1025390>



Cairo, Editorial, 10-16 May 2012

18. Presidential party-hopping

Political uncertainty is the order of the day in Egypt. There is much confusion and a lack of coherence. Yet there is a strong feeling that the political future of the country is in the making and that the new president will determine the course of the country's history. Likewise, a number of Arab countries have embarked on presidential and parliamentary elections. Algeria today will undergo a general election in which the moderate Islamists are bound to score admirably. Syria's election, in sharp contrast, is a sham. **For the full text:** <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1097/ed.htm>

THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

Beirut, Editorial, 12 May 2012, Saturday

19. Substance lacking

People in Egypt, and the rest of the Arab world, experienced a novel sight this week when two presidential candidates squared off in a televised debate. In terms of form, the event could be considered a triumph, and a true achievement on the path to democratic politics. But in terms of content, the evening left a lot to be desired. **For the full text:** <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/May-12/173155-substance-lacking.ashx#axzz1ud9fhjPTa>

gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 12 May 2012, Saturday

20. Egypt needs clear election regulations

Banning presidential candidates two weeks before the polls skews process. The Egyptian election process is becoming increasingly chaotic as the polls come closer, and the lack of clear rules about who is allowed to stand for office is damaging their transparency and democratic legitimacy. It is important in any election that the rules are clear right from the start, so all possible contenders know where they stand. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/egypt-needs-clear-election-regulations-1.1021624>



Cairo, Editorial, 17-23 May 2012

21. Pre-electoral chaos

The recent events in Abbasiya were a painful reminder of a pattern of tragic events that keeps unfolding, from Maspero to Mohamed Mahmoud Street and beyond. Many hope that the election of a new president, who should be in office by 1 July (2012), will end the vicious cycle of violence and chaos in the country, much of which has been blamed on the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). **For the full text:** <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1098/ed.htm>

THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

Beirut, Editorial, 23 May 2012, Wednesday

22. Crucial juncture

For the first time in their history, Egyptians will, over the next two days, elect a leader not bestowed upon them by tradition or history. But whoever becomes president faces an uphill struggle, and must seek to unite the Arab world's largest country. Ahead of the vote, the outcome of which seems far from predictable, rumors of election rigging and corruption have abounded, but for any country's first ever democratic election, it must be remembered that this is a mammoth task to undertake. **For the full text:** <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/May-23/174314-crucial-juncture.ashx#axzz1v118G8ay>



Cairo, Editorial, 24-30 May 2012

23. The many challenges ahead

Every Egyptian man and woman who cast their ballot in the first ever openly contested presidential elections on 23 and 24 May (2012) would not have been able to reach this critical stage had it not been for the hefty sacrifices hundreds of this country's best young men and women paid with their own lives. The same applies to the 13 candidates who were involved in a heated race in order to gain the support of the Egyptian people. **For the full text:** <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1099/ed.htm>



Editorial, 28 May 2012, Monday

24. Whither Egypt?

Were preliminary results in Egypt's first round of presidential elections good for the Jewish state or bad for the Jewish state? On the positive side, there was a sharp fall in support for the Islamists. If in the parliamentary elections, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafist Nour party garnered between them 75 percent of the vote, in the presidential elections the two Islamist candidates – Mohammed Mursi and Abdel Moneim Abul-Fotouh – managed to receive just 44% of the votes. This seems to indicate a public backlash against calls on the part of the Islamists to implement Islamic law. **For the full text:** <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Editorials/Article.aspx?id=271755>



Editorial, 28 May 2012, Monday

25. Egypt's firm step toward democracy

The results of Egypt's presidential election will be bitter for most of those who organized and led last year's (2011) revolution against the autocracy of Hosni Mubarak. Placing first and second in the two-day vote, according to unofficial results, and headed for a runoff next month were Mohammed Morsi of the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood and Ahmed Shafiq, a former Air Force general and Mubarak loyalist who represents what Egyptians call the "remnants" of the old regime. The votes of secular liberals were scattered among several candidates, none of whom were both secular and liberal; the most successful, leftist Hamdeen Sabahi, appeared to place third. **For the full text:** http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/egypts-firm-step-toward-democracy/2012/05/27/gJQAMvY2uU_story.html



Editorial, 29 May 2012, Tuesday

26. Egypt's achievement

Uncertainties about the nation's future don't diminish the progress it has made in the year since President Hosni Mubarak was overthrown, as witnessed by the historic election this week. It's too early to say that Egypt's presidential election has redeemed the promise of last year's (2012) popular uprising against the country's authoritarian president, Hosni Mubarak. A definitive verdict will depend on how the eventual winner chooses to govern (and on whether the military will allow him to govern). But the election, which began last week and is likely to continue in a runoff next month (June 2012), was a powerful and poignant exercise in democracy. **For the full text:** <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/editorials/la-ed-egypt-20120529,0,7966788.story>

THE JORDAN TIMES

Amman, Editorial, 30 May 2012, Wednesday

27. Indicative

The first round of the presidential election in Egypt brought to the fore two diametrically opposed candidates that will be pitted against each another in the run off election due to take place in the middle of June (2012). Following the Egyptians' revolt against the regime of Hosni Mubarak, the Muslim Brotherhood, which had initially said it would not run for elections, fielded Mohammad Mursi against former Egyptian prime minister Ahmed Shafiq, an old guard associated with the former regime. **For the full text:** <http://jordantimes.com/indicative>



Dubai, Editorial, 31 May 2012, Thursday

28. Mursi's wise move

Egypt's presidential run-off is getting inquisitive. The assurances on behalf of the Muslim Brotherhood that it would work for a pluralistic political dispensation is a welcome development. The Islamist party's candidate Mohammed Mursi went out of the way, in an attempt to shore support for his candidacy on June 16 (2012), to pledge that as head of state he would make sure that Christians and other minorities are on board, and not push the Arab country into the nutshell of orthodox experiences. In the same vein, the guarantee that women would be granted their due place in society is definitely an extra mile to walk for the right-wing political party. **For the full text:** http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/May/editorial_May59.xml§ion=editorial



Dubai, Editorial, 2 June 2012, Saturday

29. Egypt is freer now

Egypt's military junta has kept its word. By letting the emergency powers law lapse, it has lived up to the expectations of the masses. The draconian piece of legislation had been hanging over the heads of Egyptians like the Sword of Damocles, which was widely used by the dictatorial regime of former president Hosni Mubarak to prosecute and perish its opponents. The law which granted sweeping powers to detain and try suspects on mere assumptions without recourse to trial in normal courts is now history. **For the full text:** http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/June/editorial_June3.xml§ion=editorial

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