

# Fifth of Egypt's MPs back bid to amend constitution

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Sat, 2019-02-02 22:49

CAIRO: More than a fifth of Egyptian MPs have backed a request seeking amendments to the country's constitution.

Abdul Hadi Al-Qasabi, head of the majority Support Egypt parliamentary bloc, on Friday obtained the signatures of at least a fifth of Egyptian MPs in support of the amendments.

Al-Qasabi did not disclose which articles were the subject of proposed amendments. However, there have been repeated calls in recent years to amend article 140, which limits the presidential term to four years.

Dr. Ali Abdel Aal, the speaker of Egypt's parliament, called for extraordinary sessions next week beginning on Sunday.

Al-Qasabi will request the amendments next week and has the "required constitutional ratio" to make the request.

MP Mahmoud Badr said on his Facebook page that he and a group of "colleagues" had signed a request to amend some articles of the constitution that will be submitted on Sunday.

Article 226 of the Egyptian constitution states that the president of the republic or a fifth of parliament can request an amendment to an article or articles of the constitution. The amendment is then discussed 30 days from the date of submission.



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Egypt army says kills 8 militants in desert air strikes  
Egypt to launch foreign currency bond offering in first quarter of 2019

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## [Egypt army says kills 8 militants in desert air strikes](#)

Author:

AFP

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Sat, 2019-02-02 17:18

CAIRO: Egypt's military said Saturday it had killed eight militants in air strikes in the Western Desert, as it leads a major campaign against Daesh. "The air force targeted the terrorist base... the completed operation has killed eight very dangerous terrorists", the military said in a statement. The military said "other people" had been arrested during the operation, but did not give details.

“The terrorist cell ... planned hostile actions that aimed to destabilise the country’s security and stability”, the army said, without elaborating. Egypt launched an operation dubbed “Sinai 2018” a year ago, in a bid to dislodge Daesh from the northeastern Sinai Peninsula and other parts of the country, including the Western Desert bordering Libya. The security forces regularly announce that alleged extremists have been killed, but rarely identify the deceased, the groups they support, or the operations they were purportedly planning. It is impossible to verify information on military operations through independent sources. Groups including Human Rights Watch have denounced extra judicial killings, particularly in the Sinai peninsula.

Operation Sinai was launched on February 9 last year and was supposed to last three months, but is still ongoing.



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Egypt unveils Pharaonic tomb, home to 50 mummies  
Organization of Islamic Cooperation to hold first festival in Egypt next week

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## [Algerian President Bouteflika, 82, to run for 5th term](#)

Author:

Associated Press

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1549123137942706100

Sat, 2019-02-02 (All day)

ALGIERS: Algeria's prime minister says 82-year-old President Abdelaziz Bouteflika will seek a fifth term in this year's election through a letter to the Algerian people in the coming days.

Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia told a press conference Saturday about his "strong belief" that Bouteflika will run in the North African nation's April 18 election. He says "all signs show it and with a little bit of analysis we can easily understand that he's in and that it's only a matter of time." Ouyahia added that he thinks Bouteflika remains "the best candidate" despite ailing health. The Algerian leader is partially paralyzed from a stroke and is rarely seen in public.

Two other candidates, former Prime Minister Ali Benflis and Ret. Gen. Ali Ghediri, have already declared they are running for president.



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[Algeria](#)

Algeria plans solar energy tenders to tackle rising electricity needs  
Algerian opposition names its candidate for presidential poll

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## [Sudanese man dies in detention after protests](#)

Author:

Reuters

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Sat, 2019-02-02 12:06

KHARTOUM: A Sudanese school teacher died in detention after being arrested in connection with protests in the east of the country, members of his family said on Saturday.

The 36-year-old man was arrested at his home on Thursday after protests in the town of Khashm Al-Qirba, the family members said, adding that security officials had told them he died of poisoning.

He had marks of being beaten on his body, the family said. The man's funeral took place on Saturday.

Security officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Students, activists and other protesters have held almost daily demonstrations across Sudan since Dec. 19, calling for an end to economic hardships and mounting a sustained challenge to President Omar al-Bashir's three decades in power.

Rights groups say at least 45 people have been killed in the protests, while the government puts the death toll at 30, including two security personnel. Bashir has shown no sign of being prepared to concede any power and has blamed the protests on foreign agents, challenging his rivals to seek power through the ballot box.

The information ministry said on Tuesday Sudan's intelligence and security chief had ordered the release of all those detained during the protests. However, the next day security forces detained the daughter of opposition leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi, her family said.

Bashir is wanted by the International Criminal Court over charges, which he denies, of masterminding genocide in the Darfur region. He has been lobbying to have Sudan removed from a list of countries, along with Syria, Iran and North Korea, that Washington considers state sponsors of terrorism.

That listing has deterred the influx of investment and financial aid that Sudan was hoping for when the United States lifted sanctions in 2017, economists say.

Sudan has been rapidly expanding its money supply in an attempt to finance

its budget deficit. But that has caused spiralling inflation and a steep decline in the value of the country's currency on foreign exchange markets.



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Sudan police fire tear gas on protest after prayers  
Sudanese opposition leader's daughter detained: family

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## [Catholics in UAE await arrival of Pope Francis](#)

Sat, 2019-02-02 15:48

DUBAI: Catholics in the UAE and around the Gulf are waiting expectantly for the touchdown of Pope Francis in Abu Dhabi on Sunday night – the first time a pontiff from the Church of Rome has set foot on the Arabian peninsula. The visit coincides with a trip to the UAE by Sheikh Ahmed El-Tayeb, grand

imam of Al-Azhar in Cairo. It will be the first time two such senior leaders of Islam and Catholicism have met.

The historic papal visit is the first in a series of events to mark 2019 as the “year of tolerance” in the UAE. Francis will take part in the Human Fraternity Meeting in Abu Dhabi, where he will meet other leaders of the world’s great religions, “reflecting the values of brotherhood, love and peaceful dialogue,” the organizers said.

The highlight of the visit will be an open-air service in Abu Dhabi, where the pope will celebrate mass before a crowd estimated at 140,000 watching in the Zayed Sports City Stadium and outside on giant TV screens.

Hundreds of coaches will leave Dubai on Monday evening with worshippers hoping to catch a glimpse of the Pope in Abu Dhabi, in what one observer described as a “Christian pilgrimage” in Arabia.

Leaders of other religions in Abu Dhabi include a representative of the Jewish community, and many Catholic expatriates living in Saudi Arabia are also expected to fly to the UAE for the historic event.

Raad Jabouri Al-Sheikh, an Iraqi Catholic who has lived in the UAE for 17 years, told Arab News: “It is an amazing thing. I never expected to see this. He has visited other parts of the world where there are many more Catholics, so it is an honor he is coming to see us.”



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Catholics in the UAE: 'Pope's visit a testament to peace and tolerance' We've got a ticket to the pope... and a day off