



Press Review City, Mobility, Environment – April 2023

Urban Development

Non-regulatory neighborhoods

The State Land Recovery Committee has announced the 21st round of demolitions across the country to address the problem of informal settlements. It also announced an intensification of the controls on unregistered constructions. Members of parliament point out that the action of the State on this matter has seen an unprecedented surge since President Abdel Fattah al-Sissi came to power, highlighting some success stories such as the Asmarat district.

The fight against non-regulatory neighborhoods continues in Alexandria. It is partly justified by the risk of collapse of many buildings in the Mediterranean city. Parliamentarians have called for an investigation into the recurring issue of building collapses that affect both Alexandria and Cairo (see June 2022 Press Review).

Conservation of Cairo's Heritage

The Cairo Administrative Court has ruled that the Champollion Palace in the heart of Downtown should be preserved and made available to the public as an archaeological and tourist site. This decision follows a complaint against several ministries and the Cairo Governorate for negligence. This palace dates from the nineteenth century and would have belonged to one of the grandsons of Muhammad Ali.

Photos of the tomb of Taha Hussein located in the City of the Dead in Cairo have circulated on social networks, denouncing the construction of an overpass bridge just above it. The Yasser Rizk axis should connect the Moqqatam to Salah Salem Road. The newspaper Al-Shorouk said that the tomb was not damaged, the pylon being located right behind it. Last autumn, fears had already been expressed about the potential demolition of the tomb (see October 2022 Press Review).

Tahrir Square

After the Mogamma (see Summer 2022 Press Review) and the Ministry of Interior (see March 2023 Press Review), it is now the turn of the former National Democratic Party's land, located in Tahrir Square, to be coveted. The Saudi Egyptian Development Company and the Emirati company Al-Shaafar Contracting Company have made a joint bid to develop the land after the Egyptian Sovereign Wealth Fund announced its opening to investors.

New Administrative Capital

The Ministry of Housing announced the launch of the second phase of construction of housing for employees of the New Administrative Capital in Badr City.

The Ministry of Environment has started to work from the New Administrative Capital.

Urban Rhythms

The return of daylight-saving time has been debated in the Egyptian parliament. While one parliamentarian opposes the switch to daylight saving time, pointing to health risks, another points to savings of nearly \$150 million per year reducing national electricity consumption by 1%. The new schedules apply from the last Friday of April on. The law (34/2023) was officially published in the Official Journal on April 17. Daylight-saving time was last in effect in 2015. An article in Al-Ahram Online looks back at the alternation of these measures since the 1950s.

A Month of Celebrations

As every year, a large iftar table was held in the Matareyya neighborhood in northeast Cairo: more than 3,000 people gathered in Ezbet Hamada Street. Many photos have circulated in the press and on social networks.

Ramadan is also a time of cultural production with the broadcasting of numerous TV series (see March 2023 Press Review), with a new dynamic: the proliferation of mini-series. This trend was accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which imposed new shooting rhythms. This year, 30 mini-series were aired for Ramadan.

On the occasion of the Eid el-Fitr holidays, public sector employees are on vacation from April 20-25. An article in Al-Ahram Online takes a look at the celebrations in the streets of Cairo. Eid is the occasion for various outings, notably to the cinema, or to the zoo, like the Alexandria's Zoo which welcomed 9,000 visitors in one day.

For Christians, the month of April was marked by Palm Sunday and then by the Holly Week, culminating with Easter celebrations.

Others

The issue of panhandling is discussed in the Senate.

A lawsuit has been filed in Port Said against the development project announced in place of the governorate museum (see March 2023 Press Review). A petition has also been launched.

After three years of closure, Nakheel Beach in Alexandria is being auctioned off for a period of three years.

Transport

The route of the second high-speed line has just been revealed. Trains running at 250 km/h will connect Six of October to Abu Simbel, serving all the governorate capitals of Upper Egypt. A third line will connect Qena to Hurghada.

President Abdel Fattah al-Sissi ratified an agreement with the French Development Agency to finance the Abu Qir metro in Alexandria for 250 million euros (see February 2023 Press Review).

Tourism

The Ministries of Tourism and Antiquities and Transport are seeking to increase the tourism capacity of the Egyptian coastline. The aim is to improve the reception of cruise ships in the ports and to promote yacht tourism (see September 2022 Press Review).

The Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Cairo will make audio guides available to the public.

Environment

The Ministry of Environment is launching eight projects to generate electricity from waste in eight different governorates. Discussions are underway with the private sector to implement them. For example, with Reenergy Group Partners in Giza governorate.

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