

DECEMBER 2011

www.al-sahafa.us



**AL-SAHAFHA**  
America's Monthly Middle Eastern Newspaper

# 2011 = THE YEAR OF THE ARAB SPRING

*See Cover Story Pages: 4-5*



**Lebanese  
Fashion  
Shines**

**See Pages  
12-13**



NEW YEAR'S

# RAFFLE



Your best ODDS to win

## ONE MILLION DOLLARS!

Drawing held on January 2, 2012.

Drawing date subject to change.

WINNERS	PRIZE	PAYOUT
4	\$1 MILLION	\$4 MILLION
10	\$10,000	\$100,000
120	\$1,500	\$180,000
1,000	\$500	\$500,000
2,200	\$100	\$220,000
TOTAL		\$5 MILLION

[WWW.OHILOTTERY.COM](http://WWW.OHILOTTERY.COM)



**TICKETS ARE LIMITED.**

**\$20/ ticket**

Lottery players are subject to Ohio laws and Commission regulations. Please play responsibly.

## 2011 = THE YEAR OF THE ARAB SPRING

From the Arab Spring to a global economic crisis to the killing of Osama bin Laden, 2011 has been defined by historic and dynamic events that will shape the world in the years ahead.

A revolt across the Middle East and North Africa began with the self-immolation of a struggling merchant in Tunisia and spread across the region. Egyptian protesters toppled the 30-year rule of Hosni Mubarak, and rebels in Libya battled against

supporters of long-time strongman Moammar Gadhafi, who was eventually killed after months on the run from rebel forces and NATO bombardments.

The significance of the Arab Spring is indisputable.

Across the globe, people, media, activists, captured images on their mobile devices and instantly shared them with friends and media outlets.

Some of those images might never have been shared if it hadn't have been for the creator of the iPhone: Apple founder Steve Jobs, the Syrian-American genius who led the home computer revolution and inspired some the world's most popular mobile devices.

Jobs died of pancreatic cancer in October. His final words, according to his sister, were "Oh wow. Oh wow. Oh wow!"

Fitting words for 2011.



Fatina Salaheddine pictured with Lebanese Media Personality; Zaven

**Fatina Salaheddine;  
Publisher & CEO**



Lebanese-American



We are pleased to announce, that the Al-Sahafa Newspaper is an official U.S. correspondent to: The Lebanese Broadcasting Channel, Future TV, MTV Lebanon, and The Al-Jazeera Network. Please stay tuned for broadcast features from America, to be seen all over the globe, through these very important Middle East Media Satellite channels.

### Al-Sahafa Corporate Office

Vol. 11 Issue #12  
©2011-2012

Phone: (216) 688-0991  
Fax: (216) 688-0993

Office Manager  
Tiffany Kehoe

Graphic Designer  
Tammy Calhoun  
TC Creative Services

Food for Thought  
Columnist  
Nijma Awadallah

.....  
[www.al-sahafa.us](http://www.al-sahafa.us)  
[office@al-sahafa.us](mailto:office@al-sahafa.us)

### Did you know?

- Al-Sahafa is published every first Wednesday of each month. (Exceptions to this is during the time this office is closed in the months of July and August).
- Distribution takes two days subsequent to printing in order to reach the familiar racks/businesses and postal mailings, due to Al-Sahafa's National distribution.
- Deadlines for Advertisements and Articles to be published in the following monthly issue, fall on the third Friday of each month. (For Ad Rates or for more information, contact the Al-Sahafa Newspaper office Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.).
- Interested in Joining our Public Relations Crew? Get more out of your free time, and join our PR family of great fun and rewarding activities- all in the name of Al-Sahafa! To join; Please e-mail or call the office!

Please acknowledge: All information in this publication is copyrighted to Al-Sahafa Incorporated. No Modification, Reproduction, Printing or Copying of the logo, text, or featured design trademarks is permissible. Al-Sahafa Inc. will commence legal action in the event, including attorney fees and costs to the prosecuted.

### Log on & Discover our Online World:

- E-mail and interact with us: [office@al-sahafa.us](mailto:office@al-sahafa.us)
- Get updates from your Middle Eastern Embassy!
- Discover Al-Sahafa's 10 year "Scrap Book" in **MAKING NEWS!**
- **FACEBOOK GROUP** for readers to join: Al-Sahafa Newspaper USA

### Mission Statement

The Al-Sahafa Newspaper is a monthly publication produced about the Middle East. Al-Sahafa (which means the MEDIA or the PRESS in Arabic) is the first of its kind, providing readers with a scope of Events, Cultural Highlights, Featured Editorials, Success Stories, as well as an Arab perspective on News, Religion and Politics. Published in the English language, Al-Sahafa contains a broad range of topics, (something for everyone to enjoy), and proudly reaches a large audience of readers throughout the United States, and Internationally.

There is no doubt, that the media in general, plays a huge role in image and perception. And depending upon the type of media outlet - the underlying message can undoubtedly give and eventually reinforce a negative perception about Arabs, Arab Americans and the Middle East to a vast audience. The MISSION and GOAL of the Al-Sahafa Newspaper is to initiate and open dialogue to help bridge the gap of tolerance and acceptance each month, by providing news - with the "Arab" viewpoint. Reminding readers, that "there is always the other side to every story told".

*"I love you when you bow in your mosque, kneel in your temple, pray in your church. For you and I are sons of one religion and it is in the spirit."*

-Khalil Gibran (Arab American poet)

# Cover Story

## 2011 = THE YEAR OF THE ARAB SPRING

By Solomon Weil

When Mohamed Bouazizi, a jobless graduate in the provincial city of Sidi Bouzid in Tunisia, about 200km southwest of the capital Tunis, set himself on fire on December 18, 2010 after police had confiscated a cart from which he was selling fruit and vegetables, few would have predicted that this event would spark the phenomenon we now refer to as the Arab Spring. Protests quickly escalated in Tunisia and within four weeks Tunisian President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali had to flee to Saudi Arabia having failed to stop the protests either by repression of promises of reform.

On 17 January, one day after Ben Ali's departure, another young man set himself afire near the Egyptian parliament. Within a week, coordinated mass protests began in Tahrir Square, and forced the resignation of long-serving Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who handed power to the military on 11 February.

Since then, the transitions in Tunisia and Egypt have made at best incremental progress in some areas. In Tunisia, the first elections anywhere as a result of the Arab Spring went ahead in October and the newly elected parliament had its inaugural session on November 22nd. The election winners, the moderate Islamist party Ennahda (Renaissance) will have a coalition arrangement with a liberal and a centre-left party. While Tunisia avoided the appalling violence that characterized the uprisings in Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen, the new government and parliament still face an up-hill battle in the transition to a more democratic political system, including drafting a new constitution.

In Egypt, the military was instrumental in pushing Mubarak out of office, but the slow progress towards democratic reforms, several deadly sectarian clashes between Islamists

and Christian copts, tensions and violence on the border with Israel, and a heavy-handed police crack-down on continuing protests in Tahrir Square do not bode well for the country's immediate future—even if parliamentary elections go ahead on 28 November. While the army seems keen not to want to actually govern the country, they seem equally determined not to give up their privileged position that gives them political influence and control over significant economic assets.

For President Barack Obama, the bin Laden raid marked a high point of his presidency. Sometimes considered soft on terror, Obama achieved something his predecessor failed to do: bring the terror mastermind to justice.

The killing came ahead of the 10-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, which was marked by the opening of several memorials, including an outdoor tribute at Ground Zero in New York.

The United States also marked a decade of war in Afghanistan, a conflict that began in the months after 9/11 aimed at rooting out al Qaeda terrorists. While the Afghanistan war rages on, the United States is preparing to pull out the last of its troops from Iraq.

Elsewhere in the Arab world, it seems as if the old regimes are determined to hold on to power at all cost, and despite diminishing chances of success. In Yemen, a crisis that had engulfed the regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh long before the Arab Spring began is nowhere closer to a resolution even after Saleh at long last agreed to a transition plan sponsored by the Gulf Cooperation Council. This plan saw Saleh hand over power to his Vice President (not the opposition), allows him to retain the title of President for another three months, guaranteed him immunity, and left his assets untouched and members of his family in charge of most of the government's hard power. Forcing Saleh out of office does also not address at least two of the country's



major crises—the Houthi rebellion in the North and the secessionist insurgency in the south, the latter of which has formed an alliance of convenience with al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula. Unsurprisingly, violence in Yemen has continued unabated since Saleh signed the GCC transition plan on 23 November.

In Syria, Bashar al-Assad has, so far successfully, clung onto power regardless of the mounting death toll among protesters. Like elsewhere in the Arab Spring, an initially peaceful protest movement has turned into an armed insurgency, but one that lacks a unified political opposition. The Arab League has increased pressure on the Assad regime, albeit not unanimously and so far only threatens sanctions, while France, in an eerie déjà vu of events in Libya, has called for humanitarian corridors and safe zones inside Syria to protect civilians from an ever more violent regime crack-down and has recognized the opposition. All the signs at the moment are pointing at further escalation in Syria and possibly another international military intervention.

Libya continues to stand apart from all other countries in the Arab world in which people took to the streets to demand freedom, jobs

and democracy. But the reasons for this are no longer all positive. The country remains divided and an Interim Government was only sworn in on 24 November, after weeks of protracted power struggles, tensions and occasionally serious violence between various armed groups that once made up the patchwork of rebel factions that ousted Gadhafi. Already Berber groups have suspended any cooperation with the National Transitional Council as they resent what they see as their under-representation in the new cabinet. At the same time, question marks remain over the apprehension and killing of Colonel Gadhafi and whether the Libyan justice system is able to give a fair trial for his son, Saif al-Islam, even after the International Criminal Court has accepted that he can be tried in Libya. On top of all that, serious and credible allegations persist about abuses of former regime supporters. Libya might yet turn a corner toward a stable and more democratic political system, but the obstacles in the way of such a transition are mounting.

Almost one year on from the beginning of the Arab Spring it may be too early to judge its outcome, but some crucial lessons should be borne in mind on the road ahead:

1. Transitions from authoritarian rule are, for the most part, violent affairs in which all



# Cover Story



sides are likely to commit abuses. Pushed into a corner regimes desperately cling onto power; once victorious, rebels find it hard to resist exacting revenge on members and supporters of the old regime.

2. Disparate rebel movements are united at best in their desire to get rid of the old regime, but what motivates their members is a whole range of different causes and more often than not there is no common vision for the future among them.

3. As a result, the departure of the old regime does not automatically lead to peace, stability and democracy.

It will take years, if not decades, for us to understand in full the consequences of the Arab Spring. But local leaders and activists in the Middle East and North Africa, regional and international organizations like the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council, the European Union and the United Nations all have a responsibility to make sure that the revolutions of the Arab Spring in the end improve the living conditions of the people in the region rather than install just a different brand of self-serving rulers that only pay lip-service to human rights, democracy, and individuals' well-being.

Many have dubbed the popular revolts in Egypt and Tunisia the Facebook revolution. Indeed, in Syria social media and mobile telephony play a key role in circumventing news blackouts and censorship to get news of the brutal crackdown by the government of President Bashar al Assad to the outside world.

Yet, despite the perception of many, it is not technology that is sparking the revolts. No doubt technology helps, facilitates and accel-

erates the speed and breadth of communication. New technology and social media impact politics, social movements, communications and flow of news. But the question one has to ask oneself is whether the Arab revolt would have erupted without Facebook and I would think that the answer to that question is a resounding yes. To dub the Arab revolt a Facebook revolution would require revisiting our explanations and understanding of past revolts starting just over the last century Russia and moving on to Iran, the Philippines and for example Indonesia.

To be sure, technology plays a role and indeed a very important role in protest and revolt. In Iran in 1979, it was the cassette that helped Ayatollah Khomeini to gain and wield power and inspire millions to overthrow the Shah, at the time one of the most powerful symbols of US influence in the region. In the very initial phase of Tunisia in December it was the mobile phone video of a young man whose humiliation by the regime of President Zine el Abedine Ben Ali persuaded him to set himself on fire that sparked the protests that led to the president's downfall.

Cassettes and mobile telephony are technologies that autocrats understand by and large. Social media, however, is in many ways a game changer, primarily because it involves a degree of engagement and connecting with one another that works in the favor of activists. Activists employ the medium at a time that autocrats have ignored it and failed to understand its power.

Social media constituted and constitutes a window of opportunity for activists. But even when autocrats attempt to engage, they are up against people who understand social media and its opportunities in ways autocrats have yet to grasp and structurally will find difficult if not impossible to grasp. Social media changes in ways earlier technologies did not the way one has to manage communications and public affairs, particularly in a crisis. That requires a degree of sophistication that many but particularly inflexible, ossified autocratic governments often find difficult, if not impossible, to marshal. In fact, marshaling that degree of sophistication would mean



a far more far-reaching revision of the way most autocrats do business, a skill Arab autocrats certainly have yet to put on display.

Perhaps most frustrating and most fundamental to autocrats is the fact that the combination of mobile telephony, the Internet and social media has rendered censorship futile. It fundamentally changes the ground rules of communications policies. It turns the shaping of the narrative into something much more complex, in which governments and institutions, autocratic or not have to engage in ways they did not have to in the past. For one communication has truly become a two-way street. Shaping the narrative no longer means control, instead it means engagement.

And that is an approach that in the best of circumstances is a difficult one. That is certainly true for autocrats, particularly embattled ones. It requires a mind shift few autocrats, certainly those that are on the defensive, can easily make. Just how difficult that process is evident in the problems the Western media have had in adjusting to technological change. It took the media years to understand that format shapes content, that when several years ago broadsheets moved to tabloid formats, the nature of the story changed.

Similarly, simply moving the print edition of newspapers lock, stock and barrel on to the Internet was not a workable formula.

It failed to recognize changes in terms of interactivity and the way news is consumed and the changing expectations the public empowered by new technology has of what news organizations offer. As a result, governments and institutions irrespective of the political environment they operate in have to rethink the way they approach communications. They have to pay greater attention to the way they project themselves, their policies and the way that they relate to the public in a new and increasingly complex communications landscape. It also means that, ultimately, governments and institutions will have to become more attentive to public opinion, because whether or not that opinion is blocked from being expressed, it is still there.

This will be a long and at times frustrating endeavor, and while we must remain realistic about the speed and comprehensiveness of its success, we should remain equally committed and determined in our support of the genuine democratic aspirations of the people who have started these revolutions.



## Bahrain: Following the Release of the BICI Report

Following the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) report that was presented to King Hamad on the 23rd of November 2011, it was the most extensive report that has been presented to date and the nation and its people had time to submit their claims.

It holds the Accounts and the Accountability, the conclusions and the recommendations. People who had just listened to the BICI Chair Cherif Bassiouni's speech were angered without taking the time to read the report which if read will draw many conclusions on all fronts and in my small unnoted opinion takes Bahrain a step forward when approaching many aspects of the way certain situations are handled.

Looking at many articles from social media that immediately drew a small nation to the world's limelight again, I found an article written by Morgan Roach that summed up the BICI report in a short but sharp manner and was perhaps the only reporter to cover the findings with a balanced report placing all the points which other agencies and journalists failed to.

This morning, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) released its findings of the government's response to protests that occurred in February and March. The findings were expected to

be critical and hold the government accountable for the abuse that took place. They did not disappoint. Placing significant emphasis on Bahrain's security services, the report documents the numerous human rights violations that took place. In his address following BICI Chair Cherif Bassiouni's remarks, King Hamad vowed that he will do everything possible to ensure that the atrocities that took place earlier this year will not be repeated. He must keep this promise.

The government's decision to submit itself to foreign experts for judgment is unprecedented in the Arab world. Knowing that the results would not be pretty, Bahrain's government determined that admitting its failures and working toward meaningful reform will not only strengthen the country, but also cleanse its international image. Whether or not the factionalized opposition movement accepts the commission's results is another story.

The BICI has been widely criticized as a "charm offensive"—a disingenuous attempt by the government to placate protesters.

In many ways, Bahrain's government is fighting an uphill battle.

The Shia community as we have yet

اللجنة المستقلة للتحقيق  
البحرينية

Bahrain  
Independent  
Commission  
of Inquiry

not confirmed the minority/majority in any report to date,

has long clamored for more representation in government as well as a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. The government's response to these demands has been slow.

Yes the response has been slow however where it has been slow is perhaps the way the community is more incited to protest physically whereas doors had and are still open for civilized dialogue. And dialogue does go a very long way if it's addressed in the correct manner with the correct assessment, the correct evaluation, the correct implementation.

Now that the government is on the brink of making real progress, it may prove too little too late.

It's never too late for progress.

Deep sectarian divisions spurred by Iranian propaganda have fractured the country, and violence continues. While the protest movement originally started with demands for political and social reform, it was quickly hijacked by extremist elements in the Shia community, mainly al-Wefaq, whose members have called for the removal of the royal family.

And these have been facts that are very easy for the naked eye to see. The power of the internet is a tool that can be used to prove the points above and show the fact that Iran has led a lot of propaganda via their many TV stations and social media.

Now that the BICI report has been released, the real work must begin. Bah-

rain's government will need to build on its pledges of transparency and reform. Although the recommendations of the commission are non-binding, they must be taken seriously. At a time when the country is so bitterly divided, the government must work toward addressing the grievances of its population and greater integration of Bahraini society. Furthermore, continued negotiations with the moderate elements in the opposition movement are needed. Some entities will never be satisfied with the government's efforts, but those who are willing to move forward and engage in the reconciliation process must be embraced. The BICI is off to a good start, but there is much work to do

For those who were disheartened at the BICI report, the acceptance of the report must be adhered to and the country and its people should not point accusations or reject the report.

Bassiouni's speech was tough and hard to swallow, but the report was fair and the most important point is that the "Human Rights" organizations in Bahrain and Internationally despite the fact that they were the first ones to object to the report and called it a "charm offensive" have also had hard pills to flush down.

If progress is what the people of Bahrain are looking for, it's time to accept all aspects of the BICI report and not just aspects that suit an aspiration or an opinion.

"It takes a great man to be a good listener and it takes courage to admit such truth"



# Bahrain

## HM King Hamad Receives BICI's Report and Delivers a Keynote Speech

Professor Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni, Chair of the Commission, Distinguished Commissioners, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests,

Having heard the important speech of the Chair of the Independent Commission of Inquiry, we extend our sincere thanks to the Chair and the Commissioners, as well as their staff, for their remarkable efforts. You merit our deep appreciation. Your Report is of profound value to us. By taking to heart your findings and recommendations, the people of Bahrain can make this day one that will be remembered in the history of this nation.

You have sought to establish the true facts of a period of painful unrest which has affected all of us. You have understood the unprecedented challenges faced by our authorities as they confronted relentless provocation, from hostile sources both inside and outside the country. You have recognized the need for our authorities to re-establish public order in the face of violence and intimidation against ordinary people as well as against the essential institutions of the nation. At the same time, you have also identified serious shortcomings on the part of some organs of our Government, particularly in failing to prevent instances of excessive force and of the mistreatment of persons placed under arrest.

The question is then, Members of the Commission: what will we do with your Report, so that we derive maximum benefit from it?

The answer is that we are determined, God willing, to ensure that the painful events our beloved nation has just experienced are not repeated, but that we learn from them, and use our new insights as a catalyst for positive change.

We do not want, ever again, to see our country paralyzed by intimidation and sabotage. We do not want, ever again, to learn that our expatriate work-force, which makes such valuable contributions to the development of our nation, has been repeatedly terrorized by racist gangs. We do not want, ever again, to see civilians tried anywhere else but in the ordinary courts. We do not want, ever again, to experience the murder of policemen and the persecution of their families for the work they do in protecting us all; nor do we want, ever again, to discover that any of our law enforcement personnel have mistreated anyone.

Therefore, we must reform our laws so that they are consistent with international stan-

dards to which Bahrain is committed by treaties. Even before receiving your Report, we have introduced proposals to amend our laws to give greater protection to the valuable right of free speech; and to expand the definition of "torture" to ensure that all forms of ill treatment are sanctioned by our criminal laws. Both of these proposals would place our laws in full conformity with international human rights standards. We have addressed issues of due process in criminal trials, in particular for the medical professionals who are now being re-tried in ordinary courts. We have reviewed, and are continuing to review, the circumstances of job dismissals and expulsions from educational institutions. In addition to retrials and reinstatement, affected persons have access to a range of remedies, including the newly established Victims Compensation Fund.

And of course, as I said on the day your Commission was established, we do not tolerate the mistreatment of detainees and prisoners. We are dismayed to find that it has occurred, as your Report has found, and we will not accept any excuse based on national exceptionalism.

Distinguished Members of the Commission,

Your Report is lengthy and detailed. We must study it with the care it deserves. As a first step, a working group of members of the Government will immediately be asked to conduct an in-depth reflection on your findings and recommendations. This working group will then urgently propose concrete responses to your recommendations. We intend to waste no time in benefitting from your work. Your Report provides an historic opportunity for Bahrain to deal with matters that are both serious and urgent. Officials who have not been up to their task must be held accountable, and be replaced. Above all, we must conceive and implement reforms that satisfy all segments of our population. That is the only way to achieve reconciliation, to heal the fractures in our society. In order to ensure that there is no return to unacceptable practices once the Commission has left Bahrain, we have decided to engage international organizations and eminent individuals to assist and advise our law enforcement agencies, and to improve their procedures.

The Kingdom of Bahrain assumes its international responsibilities seriously. Indeed, it has taken the initiative to contribute to col-



lective international action by providing facilities for multilateral organizations. In 2009, during the visit of Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, we dedicated a significant plot of land in our Capital, Manama, to serve the community of the United Nations; it now houses a regional office of the UN Development Programme. We would welcome other UN agencies, perhaps, for example, by the establishment of a regional office of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

Such international cooperation will of course not replace national initiatives. Just the day before yesterday, we announced that the National Institution for Human Rights is henceforth established as an independent body possessing its own organic law, to operate in accordance with the Paris Principles, which embody international human-rights standards relevant to the functioning of national institutions.

As for the Government's responses to the findings and recommendations of your Report, I say again that they involve fundamental issues, and must be dealt with urgently.

We have every sympathy for those who sincerely and peacefully seek reforms within a pluralistic society where the rights of all are respected, but not for those who seek to impose totalitarian rule. Our desire for liberal reform goes hand in hand with our deep disappointment, after having extended so many times a hand of friendship toward the Islamic Republic of Iran, by the around-the-clock broadcasts in the Arabic language by Iranian state-controlled radio and television stations,

inciting our population to engage in acts of violence, sabotage, and insurrection. Iran's propaganda fuelled the flames of sectarian strife – an intolerable interference in our internal affairs from which Bahrain has suffered greatly. As you have just correctly said, Chair of the Commission, the Government of Bahrain was not in a position to provide evidence of links between Iran and specific events in our country this year. But this propaganda, an objective fact to be observed by all who have eyes and ears and comprehend Arabic, not only directly challenges the stability and sovereignty of our country, but also poses a threat to the security and stability of the GCC countries. We hope that the Iranian leadership will reflect, and abandon this policy of enmity and discord.

We affirm our commitment to ensuring the safety and security of our nation and its people, and our commitment to reform, and to the rectification of errors in all transparency. We urge all our people to reflect upon their own attitude and intentions, to address their mistakes, and to do their civic duty to contribute to national unity within a community characterized by tolerance. Our highest objective, after pleasing God, is to promote brotherhood, harmony, and tolerance among all our people, within the environment of a pluralistic, cohesive, and prosperous society; a society that guarantees the rule of law and human rights; a society that ensures the tranquil pursuit of opportunities and fulfillment for everyone.

We thank you all for joining us here on this historic day for our beloved Nation.



# Food For Thought



## Chef's Story Presents

### “Sana's Kibbeh Bi'Laben”

By Nijma Awadallah

“This was my all-time favorite dish growing up. I absolutely loved the creamy yogurt sauce flavored with garlic and cilantro. I would break the kibbeh balls apart so I could taste it with every bite.” smiles Palestinian Sana Nashash.

The dish in the month's chef story is a favorite for holiday Middle Eastern gatherings. “Regardless of how informal these gatherings are, you can rest assured that food is involved; for Arabs it always is.”



Kibbeh Bi' Laben or Kibbeh in Yogurt sauce (literally translated as Kibbeh cooked in Yogurt in Arabic) is often called the Mac-n-cheese of Middle Eastern food because it is comfort snuggled in a bowl! It's popular across the Middle East in the winter months.

The Kibbeh balls are slowly cooked in creamy yogurt sauce finished with a sauté of garlic, dried mint and just a pinch of flavorful spices. “Kibbeh Bi' Laben symbolizes what the Arab food culture is all about: light, healthy and full of flavor!” says Sana.

Like many Arabic dishes, it's a labor of love; it involves lots of preparing, but in the end it's all worth it, “As they say, Rome wasn't built in a day! And this dish takes a lot of time to make. But you can do it slowly over time, and even cook/make some parts in advance and freeze.”

Sana, a teacher by trade, starts going over the recipe step by step, teaching me this Arab favorite.

The first step involves making the kibbeh balls. To save time Sana prepared them ahead of time, but she did explain how to make this meat mixture, “The meat itself has absolutely no fat, extra lean meat and is mixed with the soaked bulgur wheat to form the outside of the kibbeh balls. I suggest using fine bulgur wheat or else the kibbeh mixture is coarse and hard to shape.”

For moisture, the kibbeh is stuffed with grated onions and a small dab of cold butter. “As the kibbeh balls cook in the yogurt, the butter will melt and combine with the onions giving you a sweet surprise in each and every bite!”

The next step is to prepare the yogurt sauce. The yogurt is the base of the dish

and requires some skill to avoid it from curdling over the heat says Sana, “The first step is to cook the rice in about a cup of water, which is more than usual, until it turns completely mushy. And then add the yogurt and eggs. But you have to cook the sauce over low heat, stirring in ONLY one direction. ”

I finally ask my chef, “Are there any added tips for our readers?” and she adds, “Many Arab cooks don't flavor the yogurt, but I do with herbs, spices and garlic. This adds a boost of flavor!” She also suggests replacing the commonly used cilantro with a few teaspoons of dried mint. “My original recipe asks for cilantro, but my family is more of fan of dried mint, it's whatever pleasures your taste.”

Once the yogurt begins to simmer, cook the kibbeh balls in the yogurt at a low simmer for a couple of minutes (depending on the size of your kibbeh) and you've got a fantastic Middle Eastern soup. Add your final touches, serve and enjoy! Sahtain!

#### Ingredients:

##### KIBBEH:

- 1 lb of twice ground lamb or beef or veal, extra lean
- 1 3/4 cup of bulghur or cracked wheat, very fine or #1, preferably whole-grain),



soaked in cold water for a few minutes and drained very well to remove all moisture.

- 1 tsp salt (or to taste)
- 1/2 tsp black pepper(or to taste)
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon (or to taste)
- 1/2 tsp allspice (or to taste)

##### YOGURT Sauce:

- 1 32 oz container of plain yogurt
- 1 Large egg
- 1/4 cup of cornstarch (diluted in 1/2 cup of water)
- 1/4 cup of medium-grain nearly cooked rice
- 2 small cloves of garlic, sautéed
- Pinch of dried mint

##### Directions:

1. Prepare the kibbeh. Take the ground meat and place into a food processor and run the machine for a few minutes until the meat is pasty. Add the spices and the bulgar. Process for a few

*Chef's Story, cont'd on page 22*





# ONE-STOP SHOP.

**SAVE ON INSURANCE:**

- Car
- Home
- Renters
- Business
- Life
- Motorhome
- Motorcycle
- Boat

*And much more...*

**Call me to get more for your money.**

I make it easy to protect everything on your list and save money too. Call now and you'll also get a FREE lifetime membership in Good Hands<sup>SM</sup> Roadside Assistance. Get 24/7 access and low, flat rates on everything from tows to tire changes. Shop less. Get more. Call me today!



**PIERRE ELKHOURY**  
**(330) 334-7609**

191 GREAT OAKS TRAIL  
WADSWORTH  
a058732@allstate.com



**Allstate**

You're in good hands.

Auto Home Life Retirement

One agency for all your insurance needs.

Pay only when roadside services provided. Subject to terms, conditions and availability. Lincoln Benefit Life Co., Lincoln, NE and American Heritage Life Insurance Co., Jacksonville, FL. © 2011 Allstate Insurance Co.

Financing Available

It's hard to beat 60 years of experience!  
Quality Homes and Townhomes in Premium Locations  
built by America's Largest Home Builder.

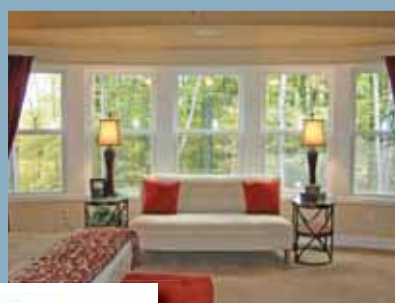
Townhomes

Excellent Warranties

Single Family Homes

*Mention this ad and receive a*

**STAINLESS STEEL REFRIGERATOR at NO COST.\***



For communities in the Indianapolis area  
[www.pulte.com/indy](http://www.pulte.com/indy)  
866-329-9322



For communities in Northeast Ohio  
[www.pulte.com/ohio](http://www.pulte.com/ohio)  
866-332-9322



\*Offer available on new contracts only accepted between 11/1/11 and 12/15/11 at all Northeast Ohio and Indiana area Pulte Homes. Home must close by 1/31/12. May not be combined with any other offer. Photographs depict a model containing features or designs that may not be available on all homes. © 2011 PulteGroup, Inc. All rights reserved. 11/1/11

## A CURRENT FASHION TREND

# The Scarf!

I have a friend who loves scarves. She uses it whenever she gets an opportunity. She carries herself very well and I have seen people giving her appreciative looks. But how many women do you see on our streets using scarves as a fashion accessory? As I thought on this, I realized that many might not be getting into it as they may not be knowing how to use it. We have listed in our Style & Fashion Section this month, some of the most common styles and have also provided a step by step guide on how to tie them. Go on and do try out these. We would love to see more well dressed women out there!

**The fabric:** Today, fashion scarves are commonly made from silk, rayon or acetate, which offer a light weight, fluid movement, strength, and a shimmering finish. Other common fabrics for scarves are cotton and wool, which make for a slightly heavier scarf, with structure and often textured finishes.

### Size and shape:

Scarves come in many sizes and shapes, and many are designed for specific uses. There are bandanas and kerchiefs which are smaller in size (usually 14-16 inches [35-40 cm] on a side), to large shawl-like scarves (which can be up to 48 inches [120 cm] on a side).

There are square scarves, rectangular (or oblong) scarves, and triangular scarves. Some scarves have hemmed edges, fringed edges, and fused edges. They can be batik dyed, tie-dyed, silk-screened, have woven patterns, or solid colors.

### THE TWO SHOULDER WRAP:

This is an excellent method of scarf-tying for use with sleeveless dresses

and low-cut scoop necked dresses and blouses. It can be used to provide a modicum of warmth when transitioning from afternoon to evening at various functions.

Scarf Style Needed: Square Scarf (120 cm square)

1. Fold your square scarf lengthwise (or as an option, diagonally).
2. Drape the folded scarf around your shoulders on the outside of the arms.
3. Tie the folded corners of the scarf into a small knot in the center front of the body.



### THE ASCOT WRAP:

This is a traditional scarf tying style, providing a conservative, yet sophisticated look. The style is excellent for summery skirt / pant suits where the addition of a blouse would be to warm for the climate.

Scarf Style Needed: Square Scarf (120 cm square)

1. Fold your square scarf diagonally.
2. Drape the folded scarf around the neck, passing the folded corners to the back of the neck. Cross the folded



Photo courtesy of Vakko

corners and bring to the front.

3. Draw the scarf to a snug fit around the neck and tie the folded corners into a small knot or bow (your choice).
4. Tuck the edges of the scarf into the collar of the jacket or blouse you are wearing as desired.

### THE CROWN:

This style of scarf-wrapping is named as it forms a fabric crown over the head. It is an elegant-looking wrap and is a good choice for bad hair days.

Scarf Style Needed: Rectangular (oblong) Scarf

1. Drape the rectangular scarf over the head, so that one end hangs much longer than the other.
2. Cross the ends behind the head. Twist the longer end to form a "rope".
3. Position the rope over the top of the



4. Tie the ends of the scarf together. They can be left loose, or guided behind the head and tucked under the scarf.

### THE LONG TIE:

You can create a soft-looking effect with your scarf reminiscent of a man's necktie. It makes for a beautiful accent to a simple suit, dress or blouse / slacks combination. The technique is simple, but highly effective.

Scarf Style Needed: Rectangular (Oblong) Scarf (at least 80 cm long)

1. Fold your rectangular scarf twice lengthwise to form an "S" fold.



# Fashion & Style

2. Drape that folded scarf around the neck, allowing the ends to hang down in front with one side longer than the other..
3. Tie the longer end in a knot around the shorter end.
4. Pull the shorter end to adjust the lengths as defined.

## THE NECK WRAP:

This is a smart, professional style of scarf-tying that makes for a simple accent to a business-suit, or elegant pant/skirt ensemble. This style looks best with a blouse bearing a high collar.

Scarf Style Needed: Rectangular (Oblong) Scarf (at least 80 cm long)

1. Fold your rectangular scarf twice lengthwise to form an "S" fold.



2. Drape the folded scarf around the neck, allowing the ends to hang down in back. Cross the ends and bring to the front.
3. Loop the ends around one another and pass around to the back once more.
4. Knot the ends at the back of the neck and tuck any remaining length under collar.

## THE SARONG/ SKIRT

You can wear your scarf as a sarong-type skirt. Worn this way, it makes an elegant cover-up at the pool-side or the beach. The light-weight fabric of most scarves makes it cool and comfortable, and the draping effect is very flattering to women who are uncomfortable showing their thighs and hips in a bathing suit.

Scarf Style Needed: Square Scarf (at least 120 cm square)

1. Fold a square scarf diagonally to form a triangle. Turn down the folded edge to form a "belt".
2. wrap the folded scarf around the waist and knot the folded corners.
3. Take the ends of the knotted corners and pass them over the knot and down along the leg to fill any gap.
4. Turn the scarf to position the knot anywhere you please. generally, at the hip is most flattering to the most figures.



## SCARF AS TRADITIONAL BELT:

There are times when you want to add a little "twist" to the traditional look of a belted slacks/blouse/jacket ensemble. By replacing the usual belt with a scarf in a complimentary color/pattern, you can create a flattering, and chic look.

Scarf Style Needed: Rectangular (oblong) Scarf (120 cm long)

1. Fold a rectangular scarf double lengthwise, twice.

2. Thread the folded scarf through the loops of the pants as a traditional belt. pull the scarf to even the



## THE SIDE-KNOTTED BELT:

Sometimes you need something to dress-up that simple little dress you're wearing, but you don't want (or don't have) a regular belt that would be appropriate. This is the perfect time to put a scarf to use.

Scarf Style Needed: Rectangular (oblong) Scarf (80 cm long)



1. Fold a rectangular scarf twice lengthwise to form an "S" fold.
2. Wrap the folded scarf around the waist and tie the ends in to a small knot or bow.
3. Adjust the unknotted end of the scarf to expand it creating a gentle angle.

## THE - KELLY:

Named after the famous American actress-turned-Princess of Monaco, Grace Kelly, this method of wearing a scarf was used to protect the hair-style and still look glamorous while traveling.

Scarf Style Needed: Square Scarf

1. Fold a square scarf along the diagonal.
2. place the folded scarf over the ahead with folded edge to the front.
3. Cross the folded corners under the chin around the neck.
4. Tie the ded corners behind the neck, making sure to catch the loose corners at the back under the knot.



## Lebanese Fashion Shines



By BROOKE ANDERSON

The nominations haven't been announced yet, but Lebanese designers are already busy making dresses that will likely appear on celebrities during this year's award season.

"This is the time of year we start our [haute] couture collection for Paris fashion week in January," says George Chakra, who designed Helen Mirren's dress when she won the 2007 Oscar for best actress. "It's usually from these fashion shows that celebrities pick their dresses."

At the beginning of the 2009 year, Lebanese designers Elie Saab and Rabih Kayrouz participated in the semi-annual weeklong haute-couture fashion show in Paris as part of the prestigious Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture. Zuhair Murad, Mr. Chakra and Georges Hobeika showed their collections on their own during the same week, making the total of Lebanese designers who



Elie Saab

debuted their work in Paris at least five. Mr. Chakra calls this phenomenon "the Lebanese invasion," similar to the 1980s when Japanese designers burst onto the scene.

Beirut's emergence as a fashion city is relatively recent. When Halle Berry won for best actress in 2002, Elie Saab became the first Lebanese to dress an Oscar winner, making him an overnight sensation. Today, the clothes of Mr. Saab and other Lebanese designers are regularly spotted at red-carpet events.

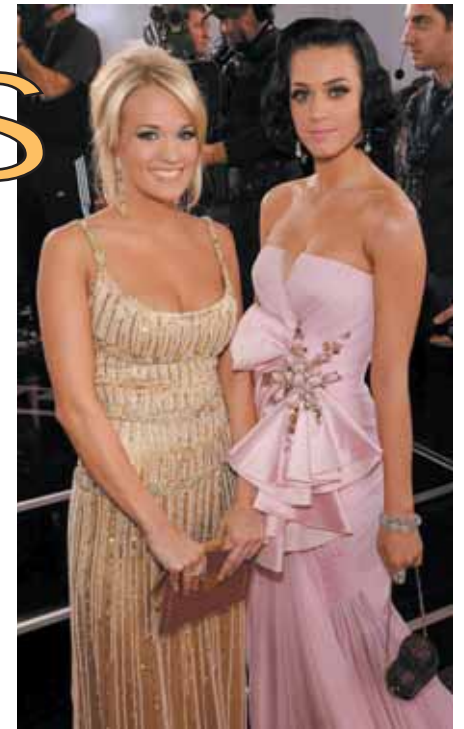
Lebanese evening gowns vary in style, from clean and simple to fully studded. But what they seem to have in common is their "wearability" and the fact that they find inspiration from their cultural heritage, often long and flowing, and with intricate stitching.

"When you see an Arab dress on the red carpet, you know it," says Amine Jreissati, fashion editor for Marie Claire Arabia. "The culture is in the dress, in the cut and the shape, with layers and movement. And there's also the embroidery. It's these small details that make a difference."

The Lebanese have a long tradition of clothes-making and embroidery. In the old neighborhoods of Beirut one can still find small ready-to-wear clothing stores by local designers, textile shops sell materials for the country's thriving custom-made suit business, and tailors on nearly every street repair clothes on-the-spot at their shops, often the size of a closet.

Lebanese designer Reem Acra has spent most of her life outside of her native Lebanon, but she remembers with nostalgia the Saturday afternoon shopping trips she took with her mother downtown at the souks of Beirut to buy fabric. Today, at her office in New York, she still has the first piece she designed at age seven, a white empire dress made of guipere lace. "I understood fashion at a young age," says Ms. Accra, crediting her upbringing in Beirut for her design savvy. "I would have designed the dress the same way today."

A walk through the streets of Beirut, which is a Mecca for people watching with its outdoor cafes and vibrant nightlife, shows how Lebanese styles are influenced by their country's French connection and their own tradition as the most liberal city



Carrie Underwood & Katy Perry in Zuhair Murad designs

in the Arab world. It was in this setting that Mr. Saab was raised, during the pre-war, Lebanese golden era of the 1960s and 70s, in a city that inspired him to become a fashion designer, despite the fact that there were no prominent haute-couture designers at the time.

"I grew up surrounded by beautiful women. Lebanese women are always elegant, and they're an example for the rest of the Arab world," says Mr. Saab, wide-eyed and smiling as he sketches a dress on a pad of paper at his boutique in downtown Beirut, the first neighborhood to be nearly fully restored following the end of the country's civil war nearly 20 years ago. (During the 2006 Israeli-Hizbolah summer war, downtown Beirut wasn't hit.)

Today, across the street from Elie Saab is the showroom of Zuhair



# Fashion & Style

Murad, a relative newcomer, whose gowns have appeared on Miley Cyrus, among other celebrities. In a country that is known more for war than anything else, and where its most talented professionals tend to settle abroad, the presence of these fashion house headquarters in the middle of Beirut is significant.



Rabih Kayrouz

Designer Rabih Kayrouz admits that he never expected to return to his home country after finishing his studies in Paris. "I came back to Beirut for an exhibition, and then decided to stay," recalls Mr. Kayrouz, who returned in 1990, the year Lebanon's civil war ended. "It was the post-war period, and something amazing was happening. A lot of people were coming back, and everyone wanted to contribute."

His homecoming also coincided with the success of then up-and-coming Lebanese designer Elie Saab. "Elie Saab opened the door," says Mr. Kayrouz, at his boutique near downtown Beirut. "He really launched Lebanese fashion everywhere. When I say I'm from Lebanon, everyone answers 'Elie Saab.' I'm really happy that he paved the way for me and put Lebanon on the map."



Zuhair Murad

Now, Mr. Kayrouz believes it is



his turn to encourage a new generation of Lebanese fashion designers. Through a nonprofit organization called Starch that he established last year, young designers have a venue downtown to showcase their collections for six months, and then get support in launching their own brands. "I have experience, and I can share that with people getting started," says Mr. Kayrouz. "I believe this industry should evolve and rejuvenate."

Ronald Abdala, a young designer who graduated from St. Martin's College in London in 2004, is grateful for the mentorship in his field, but would also like to see Lebanese designers take more risks. "Lebanese designers have done everything right. Now we're in demand," says Mr. Abdala. "But we need to push the envelope."

Linda Selwood Choueiri, who launched Lebanon's first BA in fashion design in 2006 at Notre Dame University in Louaize, agrees. She is hoping the course will encourage young designers to launch their careers in their home country and increase the atmosphere of creativity in Lebanon. She says, "Give us another five years, and there will be a real boom."



FashionTrendDigest  
www.fashiontrenddigest.com



Reem Acra



# THE WORK OF A NATION. THE CENTER OF INTELLIGENCE.

The Central Intelligence Agency is an independent federal agency responsible for providing national security intelligence to senior US policy-makers. Here, you can make a difference in your career by helping to save American lives and protect US interests worldwide.

The CIA employs all kinds of people from different backgrounds and with a variety of skill sets. In fact, the strength and effectiveness of the CIA depends directly on its ability to employ a work force as diverse as America itself.

Work with the best of the best. Share a commitment to excellence with talented men and women from a variety of ethnic, educational and professional backgrounds.

Opportunities to join America's premier intelligence agency can be found within each of CIA's four directorates:

## National Clandestine Service

In an ever-changing era of world-altering events, the people of NCS are hard at work keeping America safe. You can sit on the sidelines as the latest breaking news unfolds — or you can witness it live 24/7 as an NCS Officer. This is no easy job. The NCS is looking for extraordinary people to serve in the US and abroad. You'll be involved in worldwide intelligence collection efforts on issues of US foreign policy interest and national concern.

## Directorate of Intelligence

Much of the work at CIA involves the analysis of intelligence in order for policymakers to make decisions. At the DI, you can become an analyst and think ahead for your nation by connecting pieces of intelligence. This is where often incomplete and sometimes contradictory information



is transformed into unique insights and all-source intelligence analysis on a full range of national security and foreign policy issues.

## Directorate of Science & Technology

Highly advanced and secure technology systems are required to gather, analyze and communicate vital intelligence in real time. You could use your innovative thinking and problem-solving skills in the science and technology of intelligence through the development and implementation of bold solutions.

Whether you are a scientist, programmer or engineer, this is your opportunity to deploy leading-edge tools, capabilities and expertise to difficult national security challenges.

## Directorate of Support

Behind every intelligence effort are the extraordinary business and support professionals working in the Directorate of Support. From medical services and legal affairs to the business, IT, security and trade occupations, these officers provide the infrastructure and expertise necessary to keep key CIA functions up and running from headquarters to remote locations worldwide.

For highly motivated and reliable individuals interested in contributing to the work of a nation at the center of intelligence, the CIA offers detailed information about the Agency, its mission and its diverse employment opportunities at [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)

*All applicants must successfully complete a thorough medical and psychological exam, a polygraph interview and an extensive background investigation. US citizenship is required. An equal opportunity employer and a drug-free work force.*



### National Clandestine Service

Live the life of an Intelligence Officer 24/7.



### Directorate of Intelligence

Think ahead for your nation by connecting pieces of disparate intelligence.



### Directorate of Science & Technology

Put your skills to work in the science and technology of intelligence.



### Directorate of Support

Get involved in the business of intelligence.



Different beliefs. Different backgrounds.  
Same commitment to serve the  
**nation we love.**

You can make a difference for your nation and the world around you. This is no ordinary opportunity. It's the chance to work with smart, dedicated professionals committed to excellence in all they do. It's an opportunity to reach your potential in an environment that welcomes different views and perspectives. It's a way to bring true meaning to your career while standing up for freedom and democracy around the world. Applicants must have US citizenship and the ability to successfully complete medical examinations and security procedures including a polygraph interview.  
*An equal opportunity employer and a drug-free work force.*

For additional information and to apply, visit: [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)

THE WORK OF A NATION. THE CENTER OF INTELLIGENCE.



## Women of the Arab Spring: their issues are everyone's issues

By; Natana J. DeLong-Bas

Boston, Massachusetts - The capture and killing of Libya's Muammar Qaddafi, on-going demonstrations for an end to the oppressive reigns of Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh and Syria's Bashar al-Assad, and new elections in Tunisia show that one thing has not changed in the Arab Spring – change itself. Even in Saudi Arabia, where requests for reform have not called for regime change, change is proving inevitable with the death of Crown Prince Sultan and questions about what direction the soon-to-be-named new crown prince may take the country.

Much of the world's attention has focused not only on political changes in these countries – but also what these changes mean for the region's women.

My friend and colleague, Egyptian cultural anthropologist Yasmin Moll, and I were recently talking about our frustration with this method of framing the issues as it seems to suggest that the meaning of these changes for women is somehow different from the meaning for men, that women are a sideshow to the main male event, and that revolutions are inherently male-driven and male-dominated with women left to play, at best, supporting roles.

Focusing on “women's rights” and “women's issues” suggests that women are a separate social category, unrelated to national issues. When issues are defined as pertaining only to women, many men conclude that they have no reason to be concerned about them and that they have nothing to contribute or gain.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is that “women's issues” are everyone's issues. Women are not a minority. Women constitute half of the population. As such, women's rights and responsibilities are not minor issues, but national ones. How women are treated in the eyes of the state and the law is a matter of citizenship, not womanhood. Assuring that women are included as citizens

requires the support and activism of male public figures.

Analysis of the various revolutions shows that women have played important roles as leaders and organisers, as well as demonstrators and providers of technical and logistical support:

Egyptian non-governmental organisations estimate that 40 per cent of the protesters at Tahrir Square were women.

In Yemen, Tawakkul Karman's years of peaceful calls for an end to Saleh's regime won her the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize.

Libya's revolution was initiated by a group of women lawyers.

Syrian women began the demonstrations against al-Assad by organising sit-ins on highways.

Saudi women earned their right to vote, run for office and become full members of the Shura Council by proving their worth as professionals, employees, students and activists, as well as wives and mothers.

The powerful examples of the women of the Arab Spring should be viewed not as an abnormal or exceptional event, but rather as a normal and acceptable way for women from all walks of life to appear and participate in public space, addressing issues of national concern. Secularists and political Islamic activists, veiled and unveiled, conservatives and liberals, and professionals and housewives alike have taken to the streets, proving that the issues are not limited to a single group, ideology or outlook.

Limiting women's achievement and access to the corridors of power and decision-making not only deprives the nation of the voices of half of its citizenry, but limits everyone's vision of what the nation should look like and how it should function.

If there is one clear message from the Arab Spring, it is this – the people, both women and men, are no longer willing to be passive. They are active agents for



change who know their rights and are unafraid to demand, work and even die for them. They will hopefully continue to stand together as new governments are brought into power. Anything less robs the country of the voices and agents who created it.

Yasmin and I both hope that the media will give proper attention to the powerful role women have played – and continue to play – not only in revolutions, but also in the hard work of state construction that lies ahead. We need to continue to see women as agents of change and participants in run-

ning the country so that we can continue to believe that both are possible and desirable.

\* Dr. Natana J. DeLong-Bas is Editor-in-Chief of The [Oxford] Encyclopedia of Islam and Women and author of Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad. She teaches comparative theology at Boston College. This article was written for the Common Ground News Service (CGNews).

Source: Common Ground News Service (CGNews), [www.commongroundnews.org](http://www.commongroundnews.org)

**CIVIL AND CRIMINAL TRIAL LAWYERS**

**Subodh Chandra**  
Managing Partner  
Former Cleveland Law Director and federal prosecutor

THE  
**CHANDRA**  
LAW FIRM LLC

Recent Accomplishments

- Obtained injunction ordering major foreign media conglomerate to pay retirees promised healthcare benefits.
- Obtained dismissal of Medical Board investigation and agreement not to prosecute physician for healthcare fraud.
- Obtained \$2,000,000 jury verdict for employment-retaliation.
- Obtained directed verdict in civil-mortgage-fraud trial.
- Obtained dismissal of criminal-mortgage-fraud charges.
- Obtained federal court ruling on behalf of Federation of India Community Associations that Ohio law discriminating against naturalized citizens in voting was unconstitutional.
- Obtained multiple multimillion-dollar wrongful-death settlements.

**WWW.CHANDRALAW.COM**

1265 W. 6th Street, Suite 400 | Cleveland, Ohio 44113.1326 | 216.578.1700  
[Subodh.Chandra@StanfordAlumni.org](mailto:Subodh.Chandra@StanfordAlumni.org)

*The facts and law governing each individual case are different, so past results are no guarantee of a particular result in a case.*

## The Beirut Autumn Independence, between disappointment and despair

By; Anthony Elghossain  
(for NOW LEBANON - is an attorney based in Washington, DC.)

It's quiet in Beirut. The cafes are empty, the rooftop bars have closed and the tourists have gone home. Autumn in Beirut is generally calmer than the swinging summers and bustling winter holidays. But this year, the city's subdued mood may reflect something deeper—a collective sense of disappointment.



*All may look well in Beirut, but the country is being held hostage by a greedy, corrupt and fanatic ruling class.*

On Lebanon's Independence Day, there wasn't much to celebrate.

In 2005, the Lebanese had hope. In a series of popular demonstrations rivaling anything we've seen during the so-called Arab Spring, millions of Lebanese people came together to end decades of Syrian occupation. Now, as the Syrian people try to overthrow the same regime that brought so much hardship and pain to Lebanon, the Lebanese—regular citizens and politicians alike—remain paralyzed.

An ineffectual president sits in Baabda, where the pomp and circumstance far exceed any tangible achievements he may claim. To be fair, President Michel Sleiman is in a tough position. He lacks significant popular support, is wary of the omnipresent Syrians and must contend with a hopelessly divided political class.

The cabinet doesn't inspire much more hope. Prime Minister Najib Mikati may not be Hezbollah's man, and has already clashed with the party more than most expected, but the government he heads is stacked with stooges and utterly dependent on the political whims of regional rejectionists allied with the Party of God. Meanwhile, in parliament, the purported fountainhead of political order in Lebanon, factionalism and dreary leadership continue to slow progress on legislation, reforms, appointments, approvals and other affairs of state.

Nearly seven years after the Cedar Revolution, the Republic of Lebanon remains a hostage. And, perversely, its captors are the Lebanese themselves.

A class of political and economic elites run the entire country like a glorified mafia racket, which may be closer to the truth than most would care to admit. Various militias, not least of all Hezbollah, believe their assorted causes—legitimate as they may be—are reason enough to blatantly disregard the democratic process, work outside the established constitutional system and otherwise piss all over the rules of the game. One political coalition dangerously does what it says; the other helplessly speaks instead of acting. Foreign powers routinely intervene, almost as a matter of right, as locals invite and encourage that participation.

The Lebanese, in turn, accept this. They are relatively modern, apparently progressive and even libertine. But they are not independent, because they are incapable of living as such.

*Beirut, cont'd on page 22*

## Turkey's Ties to Neighbors, Not Their Dictators

By Soner Cagaptay

The Middle East is not Benelux, unfortunately -- not yet. In 2002, when Turkey's newly elected Justice and Development Party began a policy of rapprochement with the country's Middle Eastern neighbors, including Syria, the hope was



that this would jump-start integration between Turkey and its neighbors, creating something like the 1950s "Benelux" bloc of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. Ankara also hoped to benefit from this process by building soft power across the Muslim Middle East, in hope of rising up as a regional leader.

Until the Arab Spring, this policy seemed to be inconclusive, largely because of the hard reality on the ground: Turkey's counterparts in rapprochement were not its neighboring peoples, but rather their undemocratic regimes.

Syria is a case in point: whereas Ankara hoped to reach out to the Syrian people, the Assad regime took advantage of its close ties with Turkey, a member of NATO, to gain legitimacy while oppressing its people.

The Arab Spring has ended the mirage. Even though Ankara repeatedly asked President Bashar al-Assad to stop killing civilians, he chose to ignore these calls -- demonstrating that there was never true rapprochement between Turkey and Syria, and that Ankara had been unsuccessful in establishing effective soft power over Damascus.

Subsequently, Ankara has dropped Assad, emerging instead as the chief regional opponent of his policies. This is Ankara's new policy toward the Arab Middle East: leading the world in dropping dictators in favor of the pro-democracy movements, from Egypt to Libya to Syria.

Accordingly, Turkey now has a chance to promote democracy in the Middle East, build ties with its neighboring peoples, and rise to leadership in the region, all at the same time.

Turkey's time to become a Middle East power seems to have arrived. Challenges remain, of course, including the future of Turkish-Israeli ties and Iran's hostile attitude to Ankara's rising influence in the region. If Turkey and Israel can come to some accord, this would help Ankara's ambitions to become a regional leader, respected and liked by the peoples of the region. Iran is a more tricky case: Tehran envisions itself as the Middle East hegemon and will do all it can to undermine Turkey's ambitions to be the leader of a democratic Middle East.

Turkey is already rising to the challenge to lead the region by example. For instance, its prime minister recently called for secular democracy during his trip to Egypt, upsetting that country's Islamists. Not since the heyday of the Ottoman Empire have the Turks had this much clout in the Middle East. The sultans must be green with envy.

\*Soner Cagaptay is director of the Turkish Research Program at The Washington Institute.

## Celebrating Christmas in Bethlehem

By Nijma Awadallah

“Fee Bayta lahmin lil warah, Qud ush-rukkal salam (Oh holy child of Bethlehem, Descend to us we pray)”-“Oh Holy Child of Bethlehem”

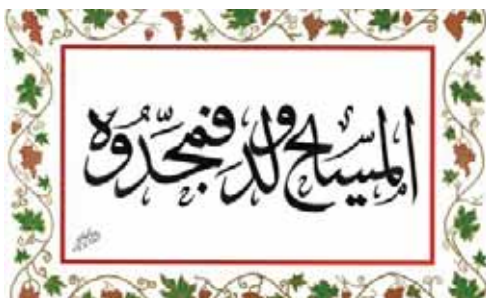
Christmas is a special time of year for many around the world. Many gather throughout the holiday season to rejoice and spread cheer. When we think of Christmas here in the states, we picture a winter wonderland, an old man in a red suit and Christmas presents under the tree, but how is this holiday celebrated half way across the world in Bethlehem? Which is said to be the birthplace of Jesus (PBUH).

In Bethlehem, the celebration of Christmas takes on a whole other meaning. Christmas trees and glittering paper are insignificant and jingling bells are forgotten, because religious symbolism and tradition take precedent and are the most important part of the holiday.

Don't expect to see snow or sleighs pulled by reindeer, since Bethlehem is located in a warm climate. Snow is replaced with sand and Pine Trees are replaced with Olive Trees.

Bethlehem is situated just south of Jerusalem, in the West Bank of Palestine. It is a little town surrounded by desert, but its beauty lies in the amazing blend of Eastern and Western cultures. Here they come hand in hand to create feeling of simplicity and piety.

Bethlehem (actually called Beit Lachem by some) roughly means “House of Bread”, a reference to the areas fertile soil. Bread, a staple food in Arabic culture, is served with almost every meal.



It is so crucial to the Arab diet that some Arabic dialects refer to it as esh, meaning “life.” The earliest mentions of the location date back to at least the 14th century, BC. The town itself only has a population of nearly 30,000 people and only 30% nowadays are Arab-Christian according to encyclopedia.com.

The small general Arab-Christian population can be misleading, because Christmas traditions and celebrations in Bethlehem are unlike anything, anywhere else in the world.

### LIGHTS OF CHRISTMAS

Homes in Bethlehem are decorated at Christmas, but not the way we are used to here in the States. Residents of Bethlehem don't over “light” their homes, hoping to outdo their neighbors. Instead of strings of lights, there are large, single, glistening stars on poles (usually lamp posts). The single star is set to depict the star the “Three Wise Men” followed to baby Jesus, and the practice of Christian homes in Bethlehem mounting a homemade star on poles in village centers. Some Palestinian-Christians even still practice the old tradition of painting a cross over their doors.

The most common form of decoration is the Nativity scene. Each family makes or buys one to display and place the baby Jesus in on Christmas. Families take pride in their manger scene, especially the children. Palestinian Mark Awad says, “Children love this tradition, the cradle under the manger remains empty till Christmas day, when they place a “baby Jesus” there.”

The Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem, is long believed to be the site of the birth of Jesus, is adorned with flags and decorations as well. Plastic snowmen and reindeer are somewhat scarce to find around the town, only angels and stars still seem plentiful, but if you look hard enough there are vendors with Santa Balloons and hats to be found.

Christmas in Bethlehem is a holy affair. While family and celebra-



tion are a part of Christmas all over the world, the message in Bethlehem is appreciation of the gift from God. Many people have made pilgrimages to Bethlehem to experience a holiday season in the cradle of where it began and have come away from it saying that it is like nothing they've ever experienced.

“We (Palestinian-Christians) are celebrating Christmas where the birthplace of Jesus was, we are actually experiencing the holiday where it actually happened! This is special!” says Rateb Rabie, President and CEO of the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation in Maryland, “We do prayers at midnight mass at the Church of Nativity, this is the main celebration, but we do as they do here, we put up a decorated Christmas tree, exchange gifts, and we visit each

other, we are just blessed to be at the place where it all happened.”

### THE PROCESSION

I remember waking early on Christmas morning to watch the holiday parade. I loved seeing the floats and entertainment, to me that was a holiday tradition! Palestinian Arab-Christians and many others in Bethlehem enjoy a “Parade” of their own too.

“On Christmas day, a procession, much like a parade, but much more solemn takes place,” says Palestinian, Sana Nashash. “Everyone comes out to see the whole thing, crowding walk ways and doorways, and even climbing on top of the buildings, just to get a better view!” The most important part of the procession is the lone horseman who rides



# Culture Corner

straddling a black horse carrying a cross.

The crowded procession is a fancy affair, with decorations, religious dignitaries, and political officials which, eventually ends at the “Church of the Nativity”. They enter the doors and slowly place a doll of the Holy Child in the church. The city’s different processions can take place at any time of day from December 25th to January 18th.

In Arab fashion, what’s a holiday celebration without any food? Palestinian families often celebrate Christmas with traditional meals and sweets such as roast lamb, nougat sweets, a hot, sweet drink of rosewater, nuts, among these desserts are Maa’ Moul and Ka’ak. These treats represent a special meaning and have been a tradition for years.

It’s amazing that centuries after the birth of Jesus, people of all faith are able to live and feast together, something that Melinda McClimans, Assistant Director of Middle Eastern Studies at The Ohio State University says is unique to the Middle Eastern area, “The festivities are shared by everyone, not just Christians. There is quite a respect for differences in the Middle East. People recognize the diversity more and accept it easier.”

But the upbeat mood is tempered by Israel’s separation wall that surrounds Bethlehem in an unsettled war. Many Palestinian-Christians are unable to travel through the divided areas easily, making it hard to visit their families on



the other side. Celebrations are often interrupted and halted as the war and violence progresses, “We are trying to bring knowledge to the world that Arabs are not just Muslims, but Christians too and we are doing this through the words of the Christian faith,” says Rateb.

The word ‘Arab’ is not of religious relevance – as many Americans seem to think.

The word “Arab” is a Nationalistic description that defines the language we speak and the region of our birthplace.

“Palestinians are also Christians, we are all under occupation; we don’t have freedom because of this large wall. We need our freedom. Palestinians of different faiths are standing united.”

However, according to recent reports; Pilgrims are undeterred by the political tensions. Nearly 90,000 tourists are expected in Bethlehem during the Christmas season this year, and that benefits Israelis and Palestinians alike.

The spirit of Christmas and other holi-



days continue to live on as Palestinian-Christians and others of many faiths come together for this joyous occasion. In Bethlehem, the celebration of Christmas holds a special meaning. Crowded malls and presents are irrelevant and fat men dressed in red are just a kids’ tale as

religious traditions are the most important part of Christmas. And as the message is clear;

“May there be peace on earth and good will to men”!

“iidu miilaadin sa’iidun”!



# Middle East News

## Washington Must Confront its Dysfunction, If it is to Lead

By: James Zogby (Arab American Institute; Washington DC)

The hysteria on display in Washington over UNESCO's vote to include Palestine as a member of the world body, though largely a manufactured effort, was, nevertheless, irritating and a sad commentary on the dysfunctional nature of U.S. politics.

From the Congressional letter urging the Administration to "Oppose [the] Dangerous Bid by the Palestinians to Gain UNESCO Recognition", and the White House's briefing of corporate executives warning them of the consequences to their interests should the Palestinians succeed "forcing the U.S. to defund the U.N.-related agency"; to the post-vote breast-beating that accompanied the "automatic cut-off of U.S." dues, and the shameful rhetoric that blamed the Palestinians for harming UNESCO's work—just about every aspect of this entire affair was almost surreal.

I was here in Washington in 1993 and 1994 after Oslo, when it was fully expected, in the euphoria that followed the Arafat-Rabin handshake and signing on the White House lawn, that Congress would rescind its long list of anti-Palestinian legislation. It would have been the right thing to do, but it was not to be the case, since AIPAC and its hard-line pro-LIKUD supporters would have none of it.

And so instead of changing or canceling the anti-Palestinian laws it had passed in the previous decade, Congress was pushed to place even more punitive restrictions on U.S. relations with and support for the Palestine Liberation Organization. Instead of removing the ban on the PLO operating in Washington or even visiting the U.S., it was given a "waiver" to operate that could be revoked under certain conditions and required a regular report from the Administration to Congress in order to remain in effect. Aid was given to the Palestinians, but with conditions more humiliating and burdensome than any other U.S. assistance package.

During this period, an alliance was born between the LIKUD who wanted Rabin to fail and Republicans in the U.S. Congress who wanted Clinton to fail. Both saw punishing the Palestinians as a safe target on which to focus their attention in order to accomplish their shared objective.

Despite Democratic control of the House of Representatives, hard-line pro-Israel politics trumped the Administration's appeals for Congress to take steps more supportive of Israeli-Palestinian peace. After Republicans gained control of Congress in 1994, it was as if the LIKUD had moved its offices to Capitol Hill. At one point, AIPAC's and Congress' efforts to pressure and punish the Palestinians became so troubling that then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin came to Washington to deliver an angry message to AIPAC, telling them to "back off" because their meddling in Congress was interfering with his efforts to make peace.

The legislation that has now been implemented suspending U.S. dues to UNESCO is a product of that era: of LIKUD and its bipartisan allies in Washington who wanted to set up as many traps and pitfalls as they could to make peace impossible; and of cowardly Democrats who wouldn't stand up to support their President and peace by opposing this obstructionism.

What is, of course, so irritating is how selective are the memories of those who run official Washington. Instead of remembering that these laws requiring an "automatic" withdrawal of U.S. dues were passed precisely with the intention of punishing the Palestinians and making the search for an Israeli-Palestinian peace more difficult, politi-



## UNESCO Grants Palestinians Full Membership

By John Irish (Reuters)

The United Nations' cultural agency granted the Palestinians full membership on Monday October 31st, a step forward in their long-running efforts to achieve recognition before the world as an independent state.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) became the first U.N. agency to welcome the Palestinians as a full member since President Mahmoud Abbas applied for full membership of the United Nations just one month before on September 23rd.

A huge cheer erupted in UNESCO's General Assembly after the vote, which marks a symbolic victory for Palestinians in the complex diplomacy that surrounds their collective status and relations with foreign powers.

"Today's victory at UNESCO is the beginning of a road that is difficult, but will lead to the freedom of our land and people from occupation," Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki said. "Palestine has the right to a place on the map."

Israel called the vote a "tragedy" and the decision damaged relations between UNESCO and the United States, an ally of Israel that provides about 22 percent of the body's funding, or some \$70 million.

Legislation stipulates that the U.S. can cut off funding to any United Nations agency that accepts Palestinians as a member.

The White House said the vote was "premature" and would not aid peace and the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations said UNESCO would suffer.

"Today's vote to grant Palestinian membership in UNESCO is no substitute for direct negotiations, but it is deeply damaging to UNESCO," said Ambassador Susan Rice.

UNESCO director-general Irina Bokova, who previously pleaded for Washington not to withdraw support, told delegates funding may be jeopardized.

"I believe it is the responsibility of all of us to make sure that UNESCO does not suffer unduly... We need each and every member of this organization to be fully engaged," she added.

### FRENCH ABOUT-FACE

The Palestinians got backing from two thirds of UNESCO's members to become its 195th member. Of 173 countries that voted from a possible 185, 107 voted in favor, 14 voted against, 52 abstained and 12 were absent. Abstentions did not count toward the final tally.

The Palestinians went to UNESCO after making a bid for recognition of the over-arching United Nations system in September before the U.N. Security Council, which has moved the issue to a committee where it is likely to run into a veto from the United States.

"This vote is not directed against anyone, but represents support for freedom and justice," Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said in a statement to the official news agency Wafa.

"This vote is for the sake of peace and represents international consensus on support for the legitimate Palestinian national rights of our people, the foremost of which is the establishment of its independent state."

But the breakdown of the vote reflected deep divergences in international views on Palestinian statehood.

The United States, Canada, Germany and Holland voted against Palestinian membership. Brazil, Russia, China, India, South Africa and France voted in favor. Britain and Italy abstained.



Washington, cont'd on page 22

UNESCO, cont'd on page 23

## Current State of Egypt

By Anthony Shadid  
(New York Times)

CAIRO — Through elections, protests, government formations and armed struggle, Arab countries in an arc from Libya to the gulf were engaged this past week more than ever in attempts not to simply overthrow leaders, but to decisively shape the orders that follow.

The center of that struggle was again in Cairo, in the landmark Tahrir Square, where a protest movement was revived and dozens were killed in violence. Some hailed it as a new revolution, or the opening of a front in the old one. But it might be better termed the end of the beginning, as within the span of just a week, events breaking out here and across the region seemed as seminal as any since that burst of optimism when the revolts erupted 11 months ago.

“In January, it was an uprising against the dictatorship, and now it is an uprising against what is left of that dictatorship,” said Sateh Noureddine, a columnist in the leftist Lebanese newspaper Al Safir. “The fall of regimes was not the revolution, but just a way to establish the foundations for the Arab Spring. Freedom and democracy need time.”

No one expected the Arab revolts to be a simple march ahead, but rarely have things seemed so much in flux, with more potential for fragmentation, bloodshed and disarray. While many analysts describe the disturbances as an inevitable reckoning with the legacy of dictatorship, others worry the region may face years of unrest before systems emerge to replace the stagnant, American-backed order that held sway for so long.

Fears of chaos are being voiced, as are hopes of making revolutions real. The battle has become so pitched in places like Egypt that the forces of reaction — namely the military — seem more determined than ever to hold on.



“What we’re seeing in the Arab world now is a state of panic,” Fadel Shallak, a Lebanese columnist, wrote Saturday. “Rulers are afraid of their people, the elite are afraid of the poor, the middle class is afraid of the lower class and the common people.”

“Will it lead to compromises here and there?” added Mr. Shallak, a former government minister. “Or will we keep seeing a state of panic and pressure? We don’t know.”

Tunisia’s election in October, hailed as a model, was remarkable for its civility. But it was the exception, as the rest of the region witnessed a tumultuous week.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh agreed to resign in Yemen, but the forces fighting the struggle there remain entrenched. At the same time, Libya’s former rebels formed a government but face the challenge of reconciling regions that act as city-states with their own militias. An eagerly awaited report on Bahrain’s crackdown on largely Shiite protests was delivered. And Syria found itself facing its greatest isolation yet over its repression of an uprising, with reports that it may be losing control of its hinterlands and with the Arab League meeting Saturday to discuss possible sanctions, an act that once would have been seen as unthinkable.

In Egypt, the first round of voting for a new Parliament was to begin on Monday. But the contest between protesters and a military they view as part of the old order of former President Hosni Mubarak has overshadowed the ballot.

“The ruling military council is corrupt and not that much different than Mubarak,” said Mohamed Sharawy, a 45-year-old driver, at a fiercely nationalist rally convened Friday to support the country’s military rulers. “But they are all we have right now.”

Mr. Mubarak’s authority ended in February. There is now military rule, led by a council of 20 generals, whose critics lambaste it for delaying presidential elections, monopolizing power, and condoning and even perpetuating the torture and abuse of the old government. Rhetorically, it has deployed the same tools of its predecessor, too, stoking xenophobic sentiments and appealing to the old mantra of security and stability.

Though some in Tunisia, particularly the Islamists, feared a shadow state there, it was



nowhere as pronounced as Egypt, where the military has placed its bets on what it believes is a silent majority weary of the country’s prolonged uncertainty and anxiety.

“The word ‘stability’ is but a righteous word used for wrongful ends,” a columnist wrote sharply Friday in the Egyptian newspaper Al Yawm al Saba. “This stability was not achieved throughout the past months. Why should it be achieved in the coming months?”

In Tahrir Square, the most memorable of the arenas of Arab revolts, Sharif Ibrahim, a high school teacher, looked over one shoulder at crowds surging again, imbued with the promise of revolution. Over his other shoulder was the detritus of days of battle between the police and protesters, a glimpse at the failure of those promises.

“There’s a question mark drawn over all of our heads,” Mr. Ibrahim said.

Fear is still an element in many of the transitions.

An International Crisis Group report warned last week that the crisis in Syria “undoubtedly has entered its most dangerous” phase. The government has relentlessly stoked fear of a bloody aftermath to justify its rule, even as its very policies have begun degrading the institutions of the state, presided over an economic crisis and dangerously exacerbated sectarian tensions.

In a startling disconnect, Al Dounya, a

semiofficial TV channel, began a midday news broadcast last week by saying, “May your morning be as bright as jasmine in Damascus.”

“Fear is evident in Damascus, and you see it in people’s eyes,” said Makarem, 30, a businessman who gave only his first name. “More people are turning against the regime every day, but even those are afraid of what will happen next.”

In Libya, the revolution’s promise has run up against shaky efforts — by clans, cities and various military forces that formed a loose coalition to overthrow Col. Muammar



el-Qaddafi — to come up with a working government. The new prime minister named leaders of militias in Zintan and Misurata, two cities that proved crucial in overthrowing Colonel Qaddafi, as the ministers of defense and the interior in a move that seemed aimed at both curbing their obstinacy and balancing the power each represents.

Fighters from Zintan have refused to withdraw from the capital, and disarming young

Egypt, cont’d on page 23

# Cont'd Reading

*Washington, cont'd from page 20*

cians today act as if these sanctions are divinely-ordained. When officials here lament the enforcement of these laws, saying “regrettably we have no choice,” even spelling out the dangers that these laws pose to the U.S. and the world, what they are really saying is that they lack the courage and political will to act to change the very laws they created.

Because lawmakers refuse to challenge hard-line LIKUDniks, they, therefore, blame the Palestinians for forcing them to confront the situation they themselves created and now refuse to change. In the surreal world created by this mindset, America becomes the victim, now being forced to do something it knows will hurt the world’s poor, impede efforts to preserve the world’s heritage, harm the interests of American companies, and do more damage to America’s image and standing in the world. And in answer to the question “Why are you doing this,?” politicians feign innocence and say “because the bad Palestinians forced us to, that’s why.”

That is why all this breast-beating is so irritating. And it is why, as long as Washington is captive of its own refusal to confront its own dysfunction, it cannot provide real leadership in the search for peace.

The Palestinians, to be sure, have problems at home. They must work to achieve national reconciliation and they must give hope to their people empowering them to become part of a true national liberation struggle. But for the past several decades, the Palestinians have not just had to face a brutal, humiliating, and acquisitive Israeli occupation, they have also had to face down an America that enabled this occupation—an America that feigned a leadership role as an honest broker, all the while acting as “coat holder” and cheerleader for one side in the conflict. And that is why, as painful as I find this state of affairs, I believe that it is important that the Palestinians have embarked on this strategy forcing Washington to face up to the reasons behind its failures in the Middle East and increased isolation in the world.

For there to be peace between Israelis and Palestinians, America must change. This will not come easily. There will be more of the proverbial “gnashing of teeth” and complaints that the “Palestinians are pursuing a dangerous course” or “forcing us to do this or that”. In reality, however, all that we are being forced to do is come to grips with our own failure and face up to what is increasingly becoming the reason behind our self-imposed isolation.

*Chef's Story, cont'd from page 8*

minutes more until the mixture is consistent. Set aside in the fridge until you are ready.

2. Prepare a small bowl of water to which you will add a tablespoon of cornstarch. Mix. Add a handful of ice cubes.

3. Forming the kibbeh balls: Measure balls no more than a few ounces.. Then form the ball into a sausage shape. With the index finger, dig a deep hole in it. If the kibbeh is too sticky, dip your finger in the bowl of icy water. Now start turning the hand that is holding the kibbeh balls counterclockwise until the walls of the kibbeh ball become as thin as pos-



sible. Then pinch the opened end of the ball by clenching your fist and close it up! This will get easier with practice, as it truly is an art form.

4. Now you can freeze a portion of the kibbeh for another day.

5. Prepare the rice as you normally would, but allow it to cook only half-way. Set aside.

6. Start preparing the laban (yogurt): whisk the egg in a small bowl. In another small bowl, whisk 1/4 cup of cornstarch and 1/2 cup of water. Add a container of yogurt to a pan over medium high heat. Mix the egg with a spoon and start stirring the yogurt in the same direction (clockwise) for a few minutes. Then add the cornstarch mixture and keep stirring for another few minutes. Add the rice and keep stirring to cook the rice completely and keep the grains separate in the sauce. The yogurt should start to steam. Keep stirring until it’s thick and creamy. Remove from the heat.

*Beirut, cont'd from page 17*

As troubling as all of this is, however, Lebanon has been perplexingly stable of late. Maybe that’s why nobody seems to care.

It’s tough to blame anyone. So much here is beautiful, in the “land of milk and honey,” that political participation and civics can seem like useless distractions. Today, for instance, the weather is perfect, gorgeous women stroll lazily in the sun, and the aroma of tobacco and coffee mixes with fresh air. It’s a quintessentially Levantine scene.

But wait. Things are changing, literally as I write this. Quite suddenly, around 40 soldiers scurry through Place de l’Etoile, the heart of reconstructed Beirut. The men around me grow visibly tense, and one even reaches for what I—perhaps a bit paranoid—imagine is gun. This might be the moment that everyone fears: the return of Beirut’s demons. With politicians brawling on television, with unrest in Syria imposing pressures on Lebanon’s state and society, and with communities across the country seething over their compatriots’ past wrongs, the alarmism is not entirely misplaced.

A few shopkeepers dart down the street to see what the fuss is about. “Nothing to worry about,” says Mustafa, returning to the café nearby. “They’re just protecting a politician... I think it might be the president or speaker of parliament.”

Some of us laugh, as the Lebanese tend to do after their brief scares, protracted stalemates or violent outbursts. “Well, I’m glad he’s safe,” says one man, with a wry smile. “Who the hell’s going to protect us?”

People return to their coffees, arguilehs and “three martini lunches.” The twin veneers of stability and Levantine cosmopolitanism have been restored.

For now, all’s well in Beirut. Perhaps there’s reason to celebrate after all.

7. Take a big pot and fill it with 6 cups of water and bring to a boil. Drop the kibbeh balls, a few at a time, in the boiling water and boil for nearly 10 minutes. Remove from the pot with a slotted spoon and drop them gently one by one in the steaming yogurt. Add gradually

up to 2 cups of the hot liquid to the yogurt while stirring again gently for 10 minutes over low heat.

8. Serve the kibbeh bi’ laban. Add dried mint, sautéed garlic cloves and preferred spices to the yogurt mixture if preferred.



# Cont'd Reading

*Egypt, cont'd from page 21*

men with guns remains a stark challenge. "I'm hopeful but a little panicked about all the challenges," said Idris Al Fasi, a senior adviser at the state electricity company.

In Yemen, a country long viewed as the most likely to implode, Mr. Saleh signed an agreement on Wednesday to step down after 33 years in office. But the demonstrations have not stopped, with protesters angry about a deal to grant him immunity. The opposition defended it, saying it was the only way to stave off civil war.

In Change Square in Sana, Yemen's capital and a base of the uprising, protesters said they had learned a lesson from Egypt: The departure of the ruler does not mean the revolution is complete.

"Hosni Mubarak left. They went back to their houses before their goals were achieved," said Ali Mohammed al-Hadda, a public employee sitting in one of hundreds of tents that looked permanent as protesters poured concrete and reinforced walls.

The universal celebration of revolts in Egypt and Tunisia has given way to a more complicated picture. Gulf states, and the Qatari-owned news channel Al Jazeera, support predominantly Sunni uprisings in places like Syria. Meanwhile, Iran and its ally in Lebanon, Hezbollah, both Shiite Muslim, offer support for the Shiite-led opposition movement in the gulf state of Bahrain, a major American ally.

American officials had hoped a newly delivered report that was sharply critical of Bahrain's repression might offer a way forward for reconciliation, but the country seems so polarized, and the Sunni monarchy so resistant to meaningful political reform, that unrest there is almost sure to continue.

In a new wrinkle, Saudi Arabia, which intervened in April in Bahrain's protests, saw dem-



onstrations last week among its own restive Shiite minority in the oil-rich eastern region of Qatif. Four Shiites were killed in violence for which the government — echoing the charges of Egypt's leaders — blamed assailants acting on "foreign orders."

Voters went to the polls in Morocco on Friday in the first parliamentary elections since passage of a new Constitution in June. A moderate Islamist group, the Justice and Development Party, won the most seats, but protest leaders there had urged a boycott, saying the new Constitution only reinforces the king's ultimate authority.

And fear, so familiar, was pronounced again.

"We don't need chaos like in Egypt or Yemen," said Ahmad Mzrouk, owner of a small restaurant in Casablanca. He railed against protest leaders there. "What are they doing to make the country better?" he asked. "Stop screaming, it's bad for the economy."

## Cairo Undone

THERE is a notion of Cairo, and of Egypt, in which its residents have long sought refuge. Unlike other Arab countries, their borders drawn with imperial whim, lines too straight on a map to make sense, Egypt is a true nation, and Cairo a true capital. Celebrated is the sense of its unity.

When the revolution began last winter, the prevailing wisdom in Cairo was that Egypt, imbued with so much history, could navigate change by virtue of its homogeneity, shared culture, ferocious pride and reverence for its past.

But the capital that Hosni Mubarak left behind after he was toppled in February is far more complicated than that. Many of the rich had fled for desert outposts called Dreamland, Beverly Hills and Mayfair, leaving behind neighborhoods that an irritated government had long cast as netherworlds of crime and danger. All those years of bribes and beatings by police officers who never deserved their authority had left young people alienated, their voices unheard. A wide current of disenchantment over Egypt's loss of prestige abroad runs through society. Lives feel abbreviated.

All these months later, the revolution's ardor fading, Tahrir Square feels less a model, more an inspiration.

Mr. Mubarak still casts a long shadow over his broken capital, in all its decrepit grandeur. It is most visible in the black-clad, helmeted police officers who still act with impunity. It is there in the suspicion, and distrust, and frustration at all those Sisyphean struggles. It remains a city yet to be claimed by its people.

That sentiment was heard this past week. Amid all the calls to overthrow the generals, to finish the revolution, and to remain steadfast, there was a poignant refrain about a city and its inhabitants. The chant was simple, it was blunt, and it perhaps mattered the most: "The people want the right to belong."

*UNESCO, cont'd from page 20*

For the European Union, which has stumbled in recent efforts to develop a common foreign policy, the UNESCO vote highlighted persistent rifts with some member states voting for and some against Palestinian membership.

Austrian UNESCO ambassador Ursula Plassnik, whose country voted in favor, said she regretted that the EU had failed to arrive at a common position on Palestinian membership.

France, which previously abstained from a vote on the subject of Palestinian membership in UNESCO, broke with precedent to vote in favor on Monday.

"Since it has been raised today, we must assume our responsibilities and respond to the substance of the issue ... On the substance, France says "yes"- Palestine has the right to become a member of UNESCO," said Hubert de Canson, France's representative at UNESCO.

Israel has said the Palestinian bid would amount to politicization of UNESCO that would undermine its ability to carry out its mandate. It said on Monday it would reconsider its cooperation with the agency.

"We regret that the organization of science has opted to adopt a resolution which is a resolution of science fiction," said Nimrod Barkan, Israel's ambassador to UNESCO, who called the move a tragedy for the agency. "There is no Palestinian state and therefore one should not have been admitted today."

The Israeli foreign ministry said the vote placed unnecessary obstacles on the road to renewing negotiations.

"This is a unilateral Palestinian maneuver which will bring no change on the ground but further removes the possibility for a peace agreement," it said in a statement.



5<sup>th</sup> Annual

Our Lady of the Cedars

# Christmas Hafli

2007

2010

Featuring:  
Tony Eid

2008

2009

Saturday, December 10, 2011

2011

DAYS INN HOTEL

4742 BRECKSVILLE ROAD ♦ RICHFIELD, OHIO 44286

6:00 P.M. COCKTAIL ♦ 7:00 P.M. DINNER

\$50 ADULT DONATION

\$20 CHILDREN DONATION (10 YEARS OLD AND YOUNGER)

CONTACT: FR. TOUFIC NASR 330-666-3598 ♦ TANIA NEMER-DAHER 216-789-5896