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Middle East News & Views

מרכז משה דיין ללימודי המזרח התיכון ואפריקה
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A weekly sample of news and opinions on current events from around the Middle East collected and brought to you by the Dayan Center.
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[Who is Benefiting from Barghouti's Imprisonment? / Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed](#)

Some leading figures in the Palestinian Authority are not too keen on the release of Marwan Barghouti, who has spent the past eight years in an Israeli jail. Hamas also fears his release due to his popularity that might overshadow its popularity. Barghouti's political program resembles that of Hamas and so does his language. Above all, he is a serious contender for the leadership position on the other side.

Source: **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (London), April 17, 2010**

[Can There Be Free Elections under Fatah? / Khalid Amayreh](#)

No true elections worthy of the name can be conducted under existing conditions in the West Bank where the Fatah-run government views an important part of its citizenry as enemies. More to the point, true elections require a healthy environment that is free from intimidation and interference by the security agencies, a requirement is conspicuously absent especially in the West Bank.

Source: **Ma'an News Agency (Bethlehem), April 8, 2010**

[Israel's Nuclear Lies / Hussein Shobokshi](#)

The ridiculous way in which Israel is trying to deceive the world and convince it that it does not have nuclear weapons because it has never admitted to possessing them is not convincing anymore. The reality says Israel is the sixth country in the world that has produced nuclear weapons and one of four nuclear countries not acknowledged as ones with nuclear weapons through the Nonproliferation Treaty (the other countries are India, Pakistan, and North Korea).

Source: **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (London), April 14, 2010**

[El-Baradei Goes to Market / Gamal Essam El-Din](#)

Mohamed El-Baradei, former director of the IAEA, has decided to take his campaign for political reform to the provinces and chose Mansoura as the venue for his first public appearance outside the capital. Still, El-Baradei remain no more than a hypothetical presidential candidate, not only because the final word on reform lies with President Mubarak and the ruling NDP. It is also proving difficult to shake the silent majority of Egyptians out of their slumber.

Source: **Al-Ahram Weekly (Cairo), Issue No 993, 8 - 14 April 2010**

[Hariri is Courting Hezbollah / Sami Moubayed](#)

During his upcoming visit to Damascus this month, Prime Minister Sa'ad Hariri will be reminded of the need to "protect and embrace" the arms of Hezbollah, in light of recent media allegations linking the party to the 2005 assassination of his father, Rafik Hariri. Hezbollah is visibly pleased with these developments. It wants to empower Hariri so that he can evolve into a reliable and sustainable ally and, eventually, rid himself of unwanted alliances.

Source: **Gulf News (Dubai), April 6, 2010**

[Iraq Continues to Frustrate US / Abdel Bari Atwan](#)

The fruit of last month's Iraqi election now tastes particularly bitter for the US as it contemplates the mortifying prospect of arch-enemy Iran brokering a power-sharing deal, a deal which will almost certainly consolidate Tehran's own close allies' control of the very country America has been seeking to 'liberate'.

Source: **Gulf News (Dubai), April 11, 2010**

[Turkish Gaullism? / Ömer Taspinar](#)

One of the major mistakes in analyzing Turkish foreign policy is done when analysts speak of a "secular" versus "Islamic" divide in Ankara's strategic choices. But while the growing importance of religion in Turkey should not be dismissed, the real threat to Turkey's Western orientation today is not so much Islamization but growing nationalism and frustration with the United States and Europe.

Source: **Today's Zaman (Istanbul), April 12, 2010**