Report on the Media Updates during May – June 2016
The following report monitors the status of the press and media in Egypt, and analyzes the developments in the Egyptian media sector during November and December 2015.

The report is issued by the ‘al Sawt al Hurr, the Arab Network for Media Support’ and is one of a series of reports issued by the network to provide media personnel, researchers and journalists interested in media with a comprehensive monitor and analysis highlighting these developments.
1. Developments in the Media Sector in General

- The Legislation Department of the State Council, on June 8 received the draft law on regulating press and media, after its approval by the cabinet. The Journalists Syndicate slammed the draft law proposed by media personality and Member of Parliament, Mostafa Bakry, which gives the president the mandate to ‘reshape’ the Supreme Press Council, adding that the draft law is in violation with the 2014 constitution. The draft law was approved by the Parliamentary Committee for Culture, Media and Antiquities.

- In May, many media outlets expressed repeated and vocal opposition to the maritime demarcation deal between Egypt and Saudi Arabia over the sovereignty of the islets of Tiran and Sanafir. A strong and widely supported media protest followed an action of the Ministry of Interior to enter the premises of the syndicate to seize two members of the syndicate.

- On June 14, ‘al Shorouk’ publishing house announced record sales of Naguib Mahfouz's “Afrah al Qubba” (wedding songs), after the novel was turned into a popular television series broadcasted during the Ramadan month.

2. Newspapers and websites:

The judiciary already issued more gagging orders during the first half of this year than in many of the previous years: five until the end of June, including one on the raid on the Journalists Syndicate, one on the sacking of state auditor Hisham Guineina and one on a case of foreign funding of civil society organizations.
General

Chairman of the board of the ‘al Ahram Foundation’, Ahmed Sayed al Naggar on May 12 dismissed media professional Mohamed Said Mahfouz, manager of ‘al Ahram Regional Institute of Journalism.’

Journalists of the privately-owned ‘al Fagr’ newspaper issued a statement on May 17, calling for the release of their colleague, photo journalist Kamel Abden, who was arrested on 25 April, while covering street protests against the transfer of sovereignty of the Egyptian Tiran and Sanafir Islands to Saudi Arabia and sentenced to two years in prison.

The Journalists Syndicate cancelled its celebration of World Press Freedom day on May 3, after the Ministry of Interior raided the syndicate’s premises.

Deputy Editor of ‘al Sharq al Awsat’ newspaper Ali Ibrahim passed away on June 7.

Editorial Developments

More than 30 newspapers and news websites complied with a resolution of Board and General Assembly of the Journalists Syndicate and blacked the front page of their Sunday May 8 issues in protest of the raid on the syndicate of May 1, including ‘Youm7’, ‘al Watan’, ‘Masrawy’, ‘Veto’, ‘al Masry al Youm’, ‘al Fagr’, ‘al Wafd’, ‘Rose al Yousef’ and ‘al Ahram’ news site. The raid took place to capture two journalists who wrote against the maritime demarcation deal between Egypt and Saudi Arabia over the sovereignty of the small islands of Tiran and Sanafir.

‘al Mussawar,’ one of Egypt’s oldest national magazines, devoted its June issue to the major achievements of President Abdel Fattah al Sisi on the occasion of completing his first two years term in office. The special edition cites opinions of media celebrities and politicians on his tenure.
On June 26, ‘Youm7’ newspaper printed 50 thousand copies of its paper during ten days and distributed the special edition free of charge on the Cairo subway.

On May 30, Head of Journalists Syndicate Yehia Qalash, and two board members, Khaled al Balshy and Gamal abdal Rehim resigned to pay a bail of EGP 10 thousand each to Qasr al Nile’s police, that kept them detained for harboring the two journalists Amr Badr and Mahmoud el Saqa at the syndicate’s headquarters. The trio was interrogated by the Cairo Prosecution Office the previous day. The case began on June 4, but was adjourned for three times, the last time till July 4.

Board chairman and editor-in-chief of ‘al Wafd’ partisan newspaper Sayed Abdel Atty, on June 29 suspended the journalist who accused Lebanese media celebrity Liliane Daoud of contracting AIDS, alleging that this was reason for her deportation from Egypt. Abdel Atty also apologized to the readers for publishing the story.

‘al-Ahram’ national newspaper, in an editorial comment on May 3, stated: "...The Interior Ministry apparatus carried out an illegitimate operation against freedom. Ministry officials and their supervisors did not grasp that the shameful raid on the Journalists' Union building is an unprecedented action that is unacceptable to journalists, other professional unions, and the public at large.”

A weird obituary published in the same newspaper on June 11 triggered a controversy on social media, as it was written in an unusual way, leading some readers to suspect it contained some secret code for a ‘terrorist’ operation in the country. The obit says: “Only God is eternal, Mrs... passed away – the mother of the deceased religion, homeland, right, and duty.”
**Legal entanglements:**

The state prosecutor, Nabil Sadek, on June 14 imposed a gagging order on the media on any news about detention of the head of the prosecution department of ‘al Haram’ Prosecution Authority, who is suspected of plotting with a defendant to set a deposit room at the al Haram prosecution office on fire.

The Supreme State Security court and the Cairo Criminal court on June 15 issued a gagging order on audio, video, print media and internet sites on any news about the murder case of Attorney General Hisham Barakat, involving 67 defendants. Case hearings are excluded from the news blackout.

The Misdemeanor Court on May 31 imposed a EGP 10 thousand fine on editor-in-chief of ‘al Fagr’ private newspaper and one of its journalists on accusations of defaming an ‘al Azhar University’ professor. In a news story published on February 12, 2015, the paper accused the plaintiff of being propped up by the banned Muslim Brotherhood during the parliamentary elections.

The Administrative Court on May 25 adjourned an appeal, lodged by the controversial media practitioner Tawfik Okasha, against the administrative prosecution's verdict, which referring him to disciplinary measures for defaming the national newspaper ‘al Akhbar’, to August 2.

Misdemeanor Court on June 14 sentenced Abdel Halim Kandil, editor-in-chief of ‘Sawt al Umma’ private newspaper to a EGP 10 thousand fine and Mohamed Saad Khatab, journalist at the paper, to one year in prison for defaming businesswoman Mona Aboud the owner of ‘Garden Hills’ residential project.

Lawyer Samir Sabry, filed a lawsuit on June 20 against board chairman of ‘al Ahram’ Foundation, Ahmed Sayed al Naggar, demanding him to revoke his appointment of Khaled Daoud as ‘al Ahram’s correspondent in Washington, citing that Daoud was working for the Qatari based channel ‘al Jazeera’ and slammed the current regime in
his article titled ‘Sisi's regime hates democracy’, refuted state action on the ‘Rabaa's massacre’, and supported Mohamed al Baradei.

The Misdemeanor Court on June 7 adjourned an appeal made by editor-in-chief of ‘al Shaab’ local newspaper, Magdy Hussein, against his 8 years prison sentence for circulating extremist ideas and for misrepresenting the Holly Quran, to July 26.

Journalist Mohamed al Sweedy filed a complaint with the Attorney General against female MP Naamat Qamar, for inciting to kill journalists, during a parliamentary session on the latest press syndicate crisis, for saying ‘Journalists shall be slaughtered.’

Security forces in Menoufiya governorate on June 14 arrested a reporter of ‘Makamelen,’ a Muslim Brotherhood affiliated TV channel, for impersonating a police officer.

Misdemeanor Court on June 13 adjourned six lawsuits filed by Mortada Mansour, chairman of the parliamentary Human Rights Committee and chairman of Zamalek SC, against owner Mohamed el Amin of ‘CBC’ TV channels and ‘al Watan’ newspaper, Abdel Fattah al Gebaly, chairman of the board and two journalists of the paper for defaming him, disturbing public peace, spreading false news, and igniting sedition. The case will commence on July 11, after documents are submitted and the case viewed.

3. Multimedia developments

The period of this Media-Monitor witnessed an increase in ‘hashtags’ that went viral on social media, including the one on the islands Tiran and Sanafir case (June 21) and the Lilian Daoud case (June 27), which were widely reported in the media.
4. News Websites

‘Youm7’ private newspaper and website now runs six additional websites: ‘CairoDar’, ‘CairoPost’, ‘Video7’, ‘Photo7’, ‘Parlamany’ and ‘Infrad’, the first website specialized in breaking news that was launched December 24, 2015.

Mostafa Hamdy, on May 20, resigned as editor-in-chief of online video news site “Etfarg” after less than 17 months on the job. Hamdy on his Facebook page blamed “randomness, and administrative interference in editorial matters.”

Executive editor of ‘Youm7’, Adel al Sanhoury, succeeded Mahmoud Mamlouk as editor-in-chief of ‘Infrad (scoop)’. ‘Youm7’ on June 11 published a report on its news site, expressing doubts on the validity of polls conducted by ‘Ipsos,’ the international market research company. The ‘Youm7’ report presented opinions of many experts and directors of private TV channels including Albert Shafik, managing director of ‘al Nahar’, Mohamed Hany, managing director of ‘CBC’, Amr Rizq, managing director of ‘ON-TV’and media export Yasser Abdel Aziz, who all express doubts on the credibility of the company’s report.

5. The Egyptian Radio and Television Union

A woman is now heading ‘ERTU’ for the first time. Safa Hegazy is a Faculty of Commerce graduate who previously worked at ‘ERTU’ as producer, editor and presenter. She was taken from air in 2007 because of overweight and returned in 2013 as head of the News Sector.
General

Hegazy on June 4 headed the first meeting of the Board of Trustees of ERTU with its new composition, which has not convened since 2011 hampering the workflow in some ERTU’s sectors.

On May 21 ‘ERTU’ head Hegazy appointed Abou al Alaa Mohamed Abdel Aziz as deputy head of the network of regional radio stations at the broadcasting sector, as a temporary head to the network. On June 16, she appointed radio presenter al Sayed Saleh, as head of Holy Quran radio station in Cairo.

Prime Minister Sherif Ismael on May 19 appointed Essam al Amir, former head of ‘ERTU’ as an assistant minister of culture for one year. Al Amir was removed from his post in April, and succeeded by Safa Hegazy.

Editorial Developments

‘ERTU’ inked a protocol with RTV production company ‘D-Media’ to cooperation on the production of audiovisual, theatrical, film, drama and TV shows production.

Hegazy announced on May 31, ERTU is gearing up to launch a new TV channel dubbed ‘Maspero Zaman’ on June 2, to broadcast football matches, concerts, and drama of the black and white era that belong exclusively to Maspero / ERTU, for eight hours a day.

Programming

Media professional Osama Kamal conducted a televised interview with President Abdel Fattah al Sisi, on the first two years of his presidency, which was aired on national TV on June 3. In his TV show “Cairo 360” on ‘al Qahira wal Nas’ TV, Kamel complained that the national channel had mistakenly broadcasted the second part of the interview before the first one. National TV also screened a documentary called ‘Egypt in two years’ to showcase Sisi’s achievements.
Amany al Khayat, in her show “Ana Masr (I am Egypt)”, on national TV on May 15, criticized movie director Mohamed Diab, for accepting foreign funds; presenting a distorted picture of Egyptian society and showing his antagonism towards Egypt and state institutions in his movie ‘Eshtebak (Clash)’, the only Egyptian movie invited to participate in the 69 session of the Cannes Festival. The movie shows the political turmoil in the country after the ouster of President Mohamed Morsi in 2013, presented through a police van overcrowded with demonstrators from different social groups. The movie was widely acclaimed and got much support of actors, writers and fellow movie directors.

6. Privately owned Channels/ Satellite TV

General

The ‘Egyptian Media Company’, owned by businessman Ahmed Abou Hashima, on May 15 announced acquiring 100% of ‘ON-TV’ shares. On 1st June, the company also acquired a 51% stake in the ‘Presentation Advertising Agency’. The company did not stop on that but it moved on to gain control of 50% of Egypt Cinema Company shares. ‘al Nahar’ and ‘CBC’ announced a definitive merger agreement on May 24 through setting up a holding company that will acquire all channels ads and their shares, to be the biggest ad entity. Amr al Kahky, board member of ‘al Nahar’ stated that the merger aims to expand the reach of the channels to include the Gulf market, which has an enormous volume of investments. Khaky added in his interview on May 25 with “Ala Hawa Masr” TV show presented by editor-in-chief of ‘Youm7’ Khaled Salah on ‘al Nahar One’ TV, that a new TV channel will be launched only for the Gulf region. ‘al Nahar’ TV network, launched a new TV channel called ‘al Nahar Noor’, on June 5.
‘al Hayat’ TV channel, in a statement released on May 19, denied rumors about selling the channel or inviting new shareholders to the ownership.

‘ON-TV’ announced on 1st June, launching ‘ON-TV Plus’ channel, to follow up all programs of ‘ON-TV Live’ channel, with higher picture quality.

‘al Qahira wal Nas’ TV issued on June 22 its first Code of Ethics for regulating its media work and to clarify the duties and obligations of its channels.

Workers at ‘al Hayat’ TV channel went on strike on May 31 and blocked the channel’s studios in protest of a three-month delay in payment of their salaries. Their strike led to the suspension of some live programs the next day, and broadcasting returned on June 2, after the channel promised to pay their delayed dues.

Mortada Mansour, chairman of the Zamalek FC criticized the “Egyptian Chamber of Media Industry” on its decision to suspend famous TV presenter Wael al Ebrashy and sports presenters Ahmed Shobeir and Ahmed el Tayeb after they clashed on air during Ebrashy’s show “el Aashera Masaan” on ‘Dream’ TV.

TV actor Yousuf al Sharif wrote an apology on Twitter on June 14 to the viewers of Ramadan TV series “Caesar” blasted off TV by for showing real footage of actual victims in the series.

The former to owner Naguib Sawiris expressed in a phone call to the “al Ashera Masaa” program on ‘Dream’ TV channel on the same day, that the channel caused him ‘a political headache’ and angered the government and political forces, adding the channel failed to cover its expenses.
Editorial Developments

The Egyptian Media Company, owned by Egyptian businessman Ahmed Abou Hashima, on June 24, provided state TV with a free live broadcast of the final phase of the African qualifiers for 2018 FIFA world cup in Russia.

*al Hayat* TV network, announced on May 31, stopping the broadcasts of ‘*Moga Comedy*’TV for technical reasons, and its programs will be screened on ‘*al Hayat 2*’.

*al Mehwar* channel signed a contract with media professional Eman Ezz al Din, on June 30, to host the “90 minutes” TV show.

*OSN* TV network, has named on June 13, Martin Stewart, as its new CEO.

*Deutsche Welle Arabic* on June 21 announced that media professional Yousri Fouda will present his new program "The Fifth Estate" on the channel, starting July 20.

Satirist Bassem Youssef announced on May 31 on his Facebook that he will host a new program called “Democracy Handbook”, broadcasted on the ‘*American Fusion TV*’, starting from July 7.

Lebanese TV host Liliane Daoud, announced on her Twitter on June 27 that she had officially ended her contract with ‘*ON-TV*’, which she joined in 2011, without giving any reason. A few hours later, news surfaced on social media indicating that Daoud was deported back to Lebanon by the police. The interior ministry stated that her residence permit has expired with the termination of her work and that she no longer held a valid legal status in the Egypt. On the same day, ‘*ON-TV*’ announced the departure of Gaber al Karmouty, the TV host of “Mansheet (headline)” show.

Managing director of ‘*Dream*’ TV Mohamed Khidr, 1st June took sports presenter and former football player Khaled al Ghandour off his TV show “Kora Maa Dream (football with dream)” for one episode, following Ghandour’s interview with Zamalek chairman
Mortada Mansour on ‘LTC’ private channel, where Ghandour is presenting another TV program.

‘OSN’ on May 12 announced the appointment of Emad Morqos, as a chief content officer. This position was newly created after the departure of ‘OSN’s senior vice president of creative programs and services, Kholoud Abou Hems, over a dispute with the channel administration.

‘al Hayat’ TV did not respond to demands to stop its TV show “Bani Adam Show”, presented by comedian Ahmed Adam after he mocked victims in Syria’s city of Aleppo. In a statement released on May 11, the channel apologized to the Syrian people, stating it has taken severe action upon what happened, and that the next episode of the show will contain a full apology. However, in his show of May 12, Adam failed to tender any apology.

Transfers

Editor-in-chief of ‘al Bawaba’ news and now member of parliament, Abdel Rehim Aly, signed a contract on May 10 with head of ‘Sada al Balad’ TV, Elham Abou al Fatah to broadcast his controversial TV show “The Black Box”, for a third season, exclusively screened on the channel in July.

TV presenter Yasmin Saeed returns to ‘MBC Masr’ TV after a period of absence of almost two years when she was completing her doctoral thesis.

Sports presenter Khaled al Ghandour announced on June 23, signing a contract with ‘al Acima 2’ private TV channel, to present a new program. One day earlier, Ghandour officially announced that he left ‘LTC’ TV channel.
Legal entanglements

The Misdemeanor Court, on May 29, accepted an appeal of controversial media practitioner Reham Saeed, against the February 29 court ruling for defaming a victim of sexual assault on her TV show in October 2015. The court cleared her from a six months prison sentence and an EGP 10 thousand fine for defaming the girl, and for another one year prison and an EGP 15 thousand fine for violating the victim's privacy. Saeed was back on air the next day with her TV show "Sabaya al Kheir" on privately-owned channel 'al-Nahar', and apologized to the audience not to the girl.

The Administrative Court on June 12 ordered the return of broadcasts of the controversial TV channel ‘al Faraeen’, whose owner Tawfik Okasha was banned from appearing on his channel or hosting programs. On 3rd March 2016, the Free Media Zone shut down the channel and banned activities of the owner’s company ‘Virginia’ for one year.

A judicial report issued on May 15, compelled the General Authority for Investment (GAFI), to stop the broadcast of “Masulity (my responsibility)”, the show hosted by Ahmed Mousa on ‘Sada al Balad’ TV, due to the enormity of the proven irregularities against him, and to stop airing any other TV shows that hosts Mousa during the period of the ban. It also recommended barring Zamalek chairman Mortada Mansour from being hosted on TV or invited to phone in his comments.

Dokki police station on June 2 arrested Mohamed Kamel, chairman of advertising agency 'Presentation', for issuing bad cheques for 'MBC'. Kamel challenged the court decision, which sentenced him to three years in prison and a fine of EGP 10 thousand, but his appeal was refused. so his arrest becomes a must to put into effect the judgment or to pay the check. On June 12, ‘MBC’ filed a new compensation suit against Kamel before Cairo Economic Court, to reimburse $6 million for the losses that the
channel incurred after Kamel’s company breached the contract on bringing on air last year’s league matches.

On May 15, a Family Court refused to take a grievance into consideration, filed by Tawfik Okasha, owner of ‘al Fareen’ TV channel, to lift the travel ban imposed on him for not paying alimony to his ex-wife. Okasha was recently suspended from parliament after hosting the Israeli ambassador to Cairo at his home.

The Administrative Court, on June 26 adjourned its lawsuit filed against the satirical TV show “Abla Fahita”, aired on ‘CBC’ TV, to July 13. The lawsuit called upon a ban on the show for violating values, ethics and for airing sexual innuendo, contrary to the traditions of society.

Journalist Nermeen Soliman, filed a report on June 14 against ‘DotMasr’ news site’s editor-in-chief of Rasha al Shamy, and HR manager Mira Kamal, for not paying her 7 months’ salary and for attempting to withhold her from the news site’s headquarters and for obligating her to sign that she owes no dues.

7. Freedom of Expression

Nidal Mansour, CEO of the ‘Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists’, denounced the arrest and deportation from Egypt of Lebanese media professional Liliane Daoud, former presenter of . Mansour called it a new blow to the freedom of expression of the media.

‘Democracy meter’ an independent human rights body, in a statement released on May 17 announced that it monitored 1126 violations of the Freedom of Expression in Egypt, during the period January to mid-May 2016.
8. The Supreme Press Council

The Supreme Press Council held an urgent meeting behind closed doors on May 3, attended by the head of the journalists syndicate Yehia Qalash, to discuss the crisis that followed the Ministry of Interior’s raid on the Journalists Syndicate.

Former head of the Journalists Syndicate, Diana Rashawn, in an on-air phone call to “Mas’ulity (my responsibility)” a TV show hosted on ‘Sada al Balad’ private TV channel on May 16, warned that the parliamentary ratification of the unified press and media law will be delayed and not meet the June 30 deadline. On this date, the tenure of 45 editors-in-chief of national newspapers will end and the Supreme Press Council can only extend their tenure or appoint new editors once the law is passed and necessary preparations have been completed. On May 16, ‘al Ahram’ news site, published the final version of this draft law, approved by the cabinet and was referred to parliament for ratification on the same day.

The Supreme Press Council issued a decision on June 16, mandating the heads of boards of state-owned press institutions to continue their work until a National Press Council will be formed and press legislation issued.

Speaker of House of Representatives Ali Abdel Aal on June 28 announced that the premises of all national (state owned) press institutions are owned by the House and that these institutions should pay rent, clarifying that the Supreme Press Council was notified. The next day, the council issued a statement pointing out that ownership supervision was the prerogative of the (now defunct) Shura Council and had been transferred to the Press Council under Presidential decree No. 76 of 2013. Secretary-General of the Supreme Press Council, Salah Eissa, stated on June 30, that the council received a notification from the House, stating that the House owns the old building of ‘Akhbar al Youm’ and of ‘al Shaab’s’ newspaper in Qasr al Ayni Street. Eissa added that
“This is not legally accurate, and needs further discussions and negotiations and legal procedures”.

9. State/Government Institutions and their dealing with the media

The new parliament had its first session on January 10. It formed a Committee for with 22 members of parliament, including three journalists. Mustafa Bakry, Osama Sharshar and Osama Heikal.

On May 16 the cabinet approved the unified draft law on regulating press and media, and decided to send it the State Council, then to be passed to the House of Representatives.

The Ministry of Interior refused to accept the condolence offered by some journalists on the assassination of eight police officers during a ‘terrorist’ attack that took place in Helwan on May 8.

The Minister for Social Solidarity Ghada Wali, chairwoman of an addiction treatment and abuse fund, stated on May 12, that the ministry, in coordination with the Personal Finance Fund of the Youth Ministry, will allocate EGP one million to drama productions without any scenes of smoking or drugs use, showing the negative effects of drug abuse and smoking instead, starting during the holy month of Ramadan on a variety of channels.

The parliamentary Committee on Suggestions and Complaints in its meeting held on May 10 accepted a draft law on cyber-crimes, submitted by former Major General and now MP Tamer al Shahawy. According to the law the cybercrimes include mail fraud and creating websites that aims to encourage ‘terrorism’. The penalties include prison
sentences and even execution in crimes that result in the death of a person, group of people or a threat to national security and social peace.

The Consumer Protection Agency on June 12 decided to ban four TV ads, for not respecting public taste, customs, community traditions and public morality the illegal use of children, despite the four ads clocked hundreds of thousands of views.

The Forty-fourth ordinary session of the Council of Arab Information Ministers was convened on May 25, with the theme “Role of Arab Media in Confronting Terrorism.”

10. **Journalists Syndicates**

The ‘Syndicate for Media Professionals’, an initiative of Hamdy Qunayati, was approved by the government but is still awaiting a legal base, which has to be provided by the parliament, which is due for September.

The Journalists Syndicate, in a statement issued on June 23, announced its objection to any attempts to halt or delay the issuance of the unified press and media law through proposals to amend the Act 96 of 1996.

The board of the Syndicate has decided to build a hospital for journalists in cooperation with ‘Dar Al Tahrir’ publishing house, according to statements made by council member Baha Abu el Saad Mohamed to ‘Youm7’ on June 28.

In an ‘unprecedented’ act, national security forces raided on the Journalists Syndicate on 1st May for the first time in its history, to arrest two journalists who had been staging a sit-in there. On April 30, the two journalists, Amr Badr, editor -in- chief of ‘Yanair gate’, a news site critical of the government, and Mahmoud al Saqa, journalist at the site, announced Their sit-in in protest of the security raids on their residences, because of their stance against the presidential decree to transfer sovereignty of the
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Egyptian Tiran and Sanafir Islands to Saudi Arabia. The two journalists were accused of publishing false news, and the general prosecution had issued arrest warrants for both of them.

The board of the Journalists Syndicate convened a meeting with the General Assembly on May 4 at 1p.m, which resulted in an extensive list of demands, including an apology of the presidency; the removal of Interior Minister Magdy abdal Ghaffar; the release of all journalists detained for publishing offenses and new legislation to protect journalists from detention for publishing-related crimes. The board urged all newspapers to black their front pages and put a black ribbon on the Sunday May 8 issue. It also asked them to post the slogan “No to gag orders … No to the restriction of press freedom” on their front pages and websites and to challenge the gagging order on news about the raid that was imposed on all media outlets.

The Journalists Syndicate on June 26 hosted a memorial service for veteran activist and member of the National Council for Human Rights, Shahenda Maklad who passed away on June 2.

The Journalists Syndicate on May 24 held a candle-lit vigil in front of its headquarters, in commemoration of the victims of the Egyptian plane crash of May 19 and urged its members not to preempt investigations results or to get into analyses that are not based on facts.

11. Attention from civil society organizations for the media

Mass Communication students at Beni Suef University, used their graduation ceremony on May 22, to show solidarity with “Atfal al Shawarea (street children)” - a satirical street performance band, whose members were detained over a video mocking the regime and a another one on photojournalist Mahmoud Shawkan, who has been incarcerated since 2013. Footage of their action went viral on social media.

Activist Gameela Ismail announced on her Facebook on May 28, that she would sue 17 news organizations, websites and TV shows, for republishing a report leaked by
‘Wikileaks’, alleging that she is receiving funds from the United States. Ismail added her lawsuit will charge media practitioners, TV channels, websites and certain pages on Facebook.

‘Promo Media’ advertising agency, owned by Egyptian business tycoon Naguib Sawiris, signed a contact with ‘al Bawaba’ multimedia, editor in chief by Abdel Rehim Aly, to provide all advertisements for both newspaper and news site, as of 1st June.

The 13th Arab Media Forum kicked off in Kuwait on May 1, with theme “Media Basic Components and Challenges” and lasted two days. The 15th Arab Media Forum kicked off in Dubai two weeks later, on May 15 with theme “Media… Human Dimensions” This forum highlighted the human dimension of Arab media, in light of the political and social developments that the Arab countries are going through.