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## **Egypt's Mubarak in landslide election win**

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**9 September, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Egypt's Mubarak in landslide election win**

**BNE:** Incumbent President Hosni Mubarak has romped to victory in Egypt's landmark presidential election. A landslide win has provided democratic legitimacy for Mr. Mubarak to rule the country he has governed autocratically for the past 24 years. According to an election official who wished to remain anonymous, a preliminary count suggests Mr. Mubarak got a massive 80 percent of the votes. The historic poll was Egypt's first ever contest to democratically decide the post of president. The main opposition candidate Ayman Nour took 12 per cent of the vote. He was a political lightweight until last week but now looks set to enjoy greater prominence in post-election politics.

There is doubt over the integrity of the election results. Mr. Nour has already cried foul and has demanded a rerun because of infringements of voting laws. The deputy head of his party told reporters: "After the grave violations that influenced the...election process...we demanded, out of concern [for the] national interest, that elections be repeated." Polling was marred by reports of bribery, pressure and intimidation for voters to support Mr. Mubarak. Voter turnout was also very poor at around 30 percent. A government spokesman dismissed these concerns as political rancor. He said they were irregularities that were to be expected in a fledgling nationwide election.

## **WARM-UPS**

**1. MY VOTING HISTORY:** In pairs / groups, talk about your voting or election history. What is the first election you can remember? How many times have you voted? Have you voted in school elections or in popularity polls in magazines? Is voting important?

**2. DEMOCRACY:** In pairs / groups, talk about whether the world is changing and whether more countries are becoming democratic. Talk about what you know about the history and current state of democracy in these countries:

- USA
- Egypt
- Ukraine
- Venezuela
- South Africa
- India
- Poland
- Iraq
- North Korea
- Iran
- China
- Your country

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Hosni Mubarak / Egypt / elections / democracy / voting / presidents / politics / election processes / voter turnout / election issues*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. EGYPT:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Egypt. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. OPINIONS:** How far do you agree with these opinions on Egypt's election?

- a. Egypt's election is one of the Middle East's most momentous historic events ever.
- b. The election was a sham, full of intimidation and electoral violations.
- c. First Egypt, next Iraq and then the whole of the Middle East.
- d. The Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's second largest party, was banned. Not good.
- e. Democracy does not work in the Middle East.
- f. Only 30 percent of people voted. Egyptians aren't so interested in democracy.
- g. Nothing in Egypt will change because of this election.
- h. Hosni Mubarak is very brave for calling such an election.

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think democracy will be widespread in the Middle East within ten years. Students B think it will take decades for Middle Eastern countries to accept democracy. Change partners often.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. Hosni Mubarak has romped to victory in his country's election.         | T / F |
| b. Mr. Mubarak has governed Egypt for almost a decade.                    | T / F |
| c. Mr. Mubarak reportedly got 80 percent of the vote.                     | T / F |
| d. The poll was only Egypt's third ever presidential election.            | T / F |
| e. There is doubt over the integrity of the election results.             | T / F |
| f. The opposition candidate has accepted the results.                     | T / F |
| g. Voters voted without being bribed, pressured or intimidated.           | T / F |
| h. A spokesman said irregularities were expected in a fledgling election. | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| a. incumbent      | serious       |
| b. romped         | nameless      |
| c. autocratically | bitterness    |
| d. anonymous      | protested     |
| e. prominence     | honesty       |
| f. integrity      | galloped      |
| g. cried foul     | current       |
| h. grave          | standing      |
| i. marred         | tainted       |
| j. rancor         | dictatorially |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. Hosni Mubarak has romped          | violations                           |
| b. Egypt's landmark                  | of the election results              |
| c. the country he has governed       | lightweight until last week          |
| d. main opposition                   | these concerns as political rancor   |
| e. He was a political                | candidate                            |
| f. There is doubt over the integrity | to victory                           |
| g. grave                             | autocratically for the past 24 years |
| h. Polling was marred                | that were to be expected             |
| i. A government spokesman dismissed  | by reports of bribery                |
| j. He said they were irregularities  | presidential election                |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**SYNONYM FILL:** Place the number of the synonym group in the correct gap (It is not important to guess a correct word - any of the synonyms from each group could be put into the relevant gap).

### Egypt's Mubarak in landslide election win

**BNE:** \_\_\_\_ President Hosni Mubarak has romped to victory in Egypt's \_\_\_\_ presidential election. A landslide win has provided democratic legitimacy for Mr. Mubarak to rule the country he has governed autocratically for the past 24 years. According to an election official who wished to remain anonymous, a preliminary count suggests Mr. Mubarak got a \_\_\_\_ 80 percent of the votes. The historic poll was Egypt's first ever contest to democratically decide the post of president. The main opposition candidate Ayman Nour took 12 per cent of the vote. He was a political lightweight until last week but now looks set to enjoy greater \_\_\_\_ in post-election politics.

There is doubt over the integrity of the election results. Mr. Nour has already cried foul and has demanded a rerun because of \_\_\_\_ of voting laws. The deputy head of his party told reporters: "After the grave violations that influenced the...election process...we demanded, out of concern [for the] national interest, that elections be repeated." Polling was \_\_\_\_ by reports of bribery, pressure and \_\_\_\_ for voters to support Mr. Mubarak. Voter turnout was also very poor at around 30 percent. A government spokesman dismissed these concerns as political \_\_\_\_\_. He said they were irregularities that were to be expected in a fledgling nationwide election.

1  
marred  
tainted  
tarnished  
bruised

2  
infringements  
violations  
abuses  
infractions

3  
incumbent  
current  
sitting  
present

4  
landmark  
historic  
watershed  
milestone

5  
rancor  
bitterness  
bad blood  
acrimony

6  
prominence  
standing  
eminence  
weight

7  
intimidation  
bullying  
coercion  
badgering

8  
massive  
enormous  
huge  
humongous

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**land**' and '**slide**'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. SYNONYM FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the synonym fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "EGYPT" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about Egypt, Hosni Mubarak and democracy.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |              |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| • romped     | • doubt   |
| • landslide  | • rerun   |
| • anonymous  | • grave   |
| • historic   | • marred  |
| • candidate  | • turnout |
| • prominence | • rancor  |

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What were your initial thoughts on this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you know about Hosni Mubarak?
- d. What do you think of the democratic elections in Egypt?
- e. What do you think of the fact that Egypt's second biggest political party, the Muslim Brotherhood, was banned from the election?
- f. Do you think Egypt's election will have a knock-on effect in the rest of the Middle East?
- g. What is your view of politics in Egypt?
- h. How do you think the Middle East would change if all countries held democratic elections?
- i. How do you think the world would change if all countries in the Middle East held democratic elections?
- j. Is it a problem that there have been allegations of vote rigging?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. What do you know about Egypt?
- d. What role does Egypt play in the Arab world?
- e. Do you think Mr. Mubarak has governed Egypt well?
- f. Do you think the election should be rerun?
- g. What do you think of voter apathy and the fact that turnout at the polls was only 30 percent?
- h. Do you think politics in Egypt will now be more transparent?
- i. Is the election process in your country perfect?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

**ELECTIONS:** In pairs / groups, talk about the electoral system in your country. Is it perfect? Write down some imperfections and suggestions about what needs to be changed to make the system better.

| Point  | Imperfections | Suggestions for improvements |
|--|---------------|------------------------------|
| The age from which people can vote                       |               |                              |
| The number of political parties to vote for              |               |                              |
| Equal access to television and the media for all parties |               |                              |
| The intervals between elections                          |               |                              |
| The number of years a leader can govern                  |               |                              |
| Electoral bribery and corruption                         |               |                              |

Change partners and show each other your suggestions for change.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Egypt's Mubarak in landslide election win**

**BNE:** Incumbent President Hosni Mubarak has \_\_\_\_\_ to victory in Egypt's landmark presidential election. A \_\_\_\_\_ win has provided democratic legitimacy for Mr. Mubarak to rule the country he has governed autocratically for the past 24 years. According to an election official who \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ anonymous, a preliminary count suggests Mr. Mubarak got a massive 80 percent of the votes. The \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ was Egypt's first ever contest to democratically decide the post of president. The main opposition candidate Ayman Nour took 12 per cent of the vote. He was a political \_\_\_\_\_ until last week but now looks set to enjoy greater \_\_\_\_\_ in post-election politics.

There is doubt over the \_\_\_\_\_ of the election results. Mr. Nour has already \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ and has demanded a rerun because of infringements of voting laws. The deputy head of his party told reporters: "After the \_\_\_\_\_ violations that influenced the...election process...we demanded, out of concern [for the] national interest, that elections be repeated." Polling was \_\_\_\_\_ by reports of bribery, pressure and intimidation for voters to support Mr. Mubarak. Voter \_\_\_\_\_ was also very poor at around 30 percent. A government spokesman dismissed these concerns as political \_\_\_\_\_. He said they were irregularities that were to be expected in a \_\_\_\_\_ nationwide election.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on the Egyptian election. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. POSTER:** Make a poster showing the levels of democracy and elections in one country in the Middle East. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**4. DIARY / SCHEDULE:** You live in Egypt. Write your diary/schedule entry for the day after the election. Is your country changing? Is the change good? What other changes do you hope will take place in Egypt over the coming years? Read what you wrote to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write out similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. F      c. T      d. F      e. T      f. F      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| a. incumbent      | current       |
| b. romped         | galloped      |
| c. autocratically | dictatorially |
| d. anonymous      | nameless      |
| e. prominence     | standing      |
| f. integrity      | honesty       |
| g. cried foul     | protested     |
| h. grave          | serious       |
| i. marred         | tainted       |
| j. rancor         | bitterness    |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. Hosni Mubarak has romped          | to victory                           |
| b. Egypt's landmark                  | presidential election                |
| c. the country he has governed       | autocratically for the past 24 years |
| d. main opposition                   | candidate                            |
| e. He was a political                | lightweight until last week          |
| f. There is doubt over the integrity | of the election results              |
| g. grave                             | violations                           |
| h. Polling was marred                | by reports of bribery                |
| i. A government spokesman dismissed  | these concerns as political rancor   |
| j. He said they were irregularities  | that were to be expected             |

### SYNONYM FILL:

#### Egypt's Mubarak in landslide election win

**BNE:** ---3--- President Hosni Mubarak has romped to victory in Egypt's ---4--- presidential election. A landslide win has provided democratic legitimacy for Mr. Mubarak to rule the country he has governed autocratically for the past 24 years. According to an election official who wished to remain anonymous, a preliminary count suggests Mr. Mubarak got a ---8--- 80 percent of the votes. The historic poll was Egypt's first ever contest to democratically decide the post of president. The main opposition candidate Ayman Nour took 12 per cent of the vote. He was a political lightweight until last week but now looks set to enjoy greater ---6--- in post-election politics.

There is doubt over the integrity of the election results. Mr. Nour has already cried foul and has demanded a rerun because of ---2--- of voting laws. The deputy head of his party told reporters: "After the grave violations that influenced the...election process...we demanded, out of concern [for the] national interest, that elections be repeated." Polling was ---1--- by reports of bribery, pressure and ---7--- for voters to support Mr. Mubarak. Voter turnout was also very poor at around 30 percent. A government spokesman dismissed these concerns as political ---5---. He said they were irregularities that were to be expected in a fledgling nationwide election.