

Cairo lawyer considers run for presidency

Cairo lawyer Khaled Ali, who last year succeeded in blocking the government's plan to hand over two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia, is considering a run for the presidency. The court ruling, upheld on appeal in January, was an unexpected setback for President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi, who had promised the oil-rich kingdom the islands of Tiran and Sanafir in an agreement last year. A report on the [News24](#) site notes that it gave Ali the shine of a defender of the country's integrity among the many who opposed the handover. Now Ali is considering running again in elections next year to challenge al-Sisi, the former general who came to office in 2014 in a landslide. The report says Ali's candidacy would be a long shot, but the 44-year-old sees it as a way to breathe some life into Egypt's leftist, revolutionary and pro-democratic forces after years of defeat and disarray under a crackdown. According to the report, he said consultations are under way among 'democratic and social forces' – his term for those behind the 2011 uprising and its supporters – to formulate a joint position on the election and consider whether to field a candidate or boycott. **He said that his chief concern is the 'legal and constitutional' environment of the vote**, which is due in the summer of 2018. The report notes that Ali has been a key figure among the small but vibrant core of mostly young pro-democracy and secular activists known loosely as the 'revolutionaries'.