Al - Alamein

From War and Destruction to Development and Construction
Contents

Introduction 5

Chapter One

Al-Alamein Battle Changes the History 7

Chapter Two

The Problem of Landmines in Egypt...Facing of Challenge 29

Chapter Three

Al-Alamein ...The First One-Million-People City 39

References 49
Introduction

A celebration will be held in October 2017 marking the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Al-Alamein, which took place in Egypt’s Western Desert during World War II in 1942. The battle almost decided the result of the war and changed history, demonstrating how closely Egyptian history is connected with the history of humanity. This means that there is a connection between the interests of the North and the South, confirming the necessity of reminding the world of Egypt’s vital and pivotal role both regionally and globally.

Egypt’s location and the nature of its terrain made it the inevitable stage of a battle that changed the balance of power and reshaped the position of superpowers post-World War II.

The celebration this year makes a call for love, a condemnation of violence and promotes peace on Earth. A celebration will also be held to launch New Alamein City, the first one million population city planned to be built as part of the northwestern coast development project to ease overpopulation in other governorates.

It is planned that this area, not only in Al-Alamein itself, but alongside 450km along the Mediterranean, will be home to some 34 million people by 2052. The establishment of New Alamein City is part of the state’s vision to create the necessary physical environment to achieve sustainable development.

The celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of Al-Alamein and the launch of New Alamein City confirms Egyptians’ ability to transform destruction into construction and change war and its remnants into peace and prosperity. It also proves Egypt’s ability, despite hardships, to challenge and face crises, and highlights the vital role played by the Egyptian Armed Forces in removing mines and clearing these areas of war remnants to create a new life, establish development projects and provide security and safety throughout the nation.

The Mohammed Naguib military base in Al-Hammam, west Alexandria, which is the largest in the Middle East and Africa, was inaugurated in 2017 on the anniversary of Egypt’s 23 July Revolution.
This base is a strong military presence capable of protecting the residents as well as the economic, strategic and industrial projects in west Alexandria, mainly the Dabaa nuclear plant, which is scheduled to be built in the coming years. It is also capable of protecting oil fields in the Western Desert, New Alamein and Marsa Allam Port on the Mediterranean.

The New Al-Alamein City is one of the most important projects that President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi talked about at the youth conference held in Alexandria in 2017, when he reiterated the necessity of establishing new urban communities and cities according to the most up-to-date tactics and planning. Investments for the first phase are estimated at $4.5 billion.

New Alamein is part of a plan to develop the northwestern coast that includes expanding the coastal space by 40km, the creation of new communities that will be linked with the proposed road network, the reclamation of land that will be irrigated with rainwater and underground water, and the establishment of this new city to serve as a gate linking North Africa with South Europe on the tourism and economic levels.

The new city will also facilitate communication between Borg Al-Arab and Marsa Matrouh to ease movement and travel of residents and workers and achieve the demographic expansion and raise the number of the economic activities in the North Coast to spread prosperity nationwide.
Chapter One

Al-Alamein Battle
Changes the History
The historical importance of Al-Alamein is due to the fact that it was the site of a decisive 20th century battle; the Battle of Al-Alamein. More than seven decades have passed since the Battle of Al-Alamein, during which the world – as well as several principles and strategic, political and economic theories – has changed dramatically. During this period, unshakable thrones, regimes and empires have collapsed, borders that were established hundreds of years ago changed, and dozens of countries and states in the developing world were liberated from the clutches of colonialism. Dreams and illusions of controlling the world by military force were shattered and replaced by another, more successful method in grabbing control, tightening one’s grip, and achieving hegemony and influence; namely the use of economic power. Today, states are facing different wars and challenges.

**World War II (1939-1945)**

World War II began on 1 September 1939 in Europe, and ended on 2 September 1945. The major countries involved in the war comprised superpowers in two competing military alliances: the Allied Forces and the Axis Powers. The war was the largest in recorded history, where over 100 million people from more than 30 countries participated, and an estimated 50-85 million people were killed.
The main countries involved in the war dedicated their military, economic, industrial and scientific resources to serving the war effort. The war also saw the first use of atomic weapons in human history, causing an estimated 1 million deaths in the bombing of Japan’s Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

After Italy declared war on Britain on 10 June 1940, the desert war began between troops of the two countries in Libya and Egypt. The first phase of fighting ended with an overwhelming defeat for the Italians in Operation Compass. Germany sent a force led by Field Marshall Erwin Rommel to aid the Italians.

Rommel won the Battle of Ain Gazala and seized the Libyan city of Tobruk in June 1942. Then, in July, he proceeded to the village of Al-Alamein, which is 110km from Alexandria, Egypt. Several battles took place: Al-Alamein I, the Flag of Halfa, and finally Al-Alamein II; the battle that led to the final defeat of the Axis forces in North Africa.

**Al-Alamein ... Crucial Battle**

Al-Alamein is located in Matruh Governorate and comprises Sidi Abdel-Rahman and Tal El-Ais villages. Prior to gaining fame as a battleground, Al-Alamein was a small village planted with palm and olive trees.

Its population is currently 10,922 people. The city comprises cemeteries, memorials and a museum to commemorate those of various nationalities who fell during World War II.

The city’s economy depends mainly on its natural wealth – i.e. oil, which is extracted by several Egyptian companies – as well as tourism, as it holds a number of luxurious resort villages such as Porto Marina and Marasi in Sidi Abdel Rahman.

**The Battle of Two Military Geniuses**

The first engagement in the battle at Al-Alamein broke out on 23 October 1942 between German forces and British forces led by Bernard Montgomery.
The battle is considered an important historical event that changed the course of history in World War II, and was one of the most important tank battles in military history.

**Logistics and Firepower**

British troops had overwhelming superiority over Axis forces in tanks and artillery at a ratio of 2 to 1, as well as air dominance over the battlefield.

In addition, the supply route was short for the British, who controlled Port Alexandria, about 110km from the battleground, and Port Suez, which is about 345km away. The nearest port controlled by the Axis was in Tobruk, which was over 590km away from the battlefield. The Axis also controlled Port Benghazi over 1,050km away and Port Tripoli more than 2,100km away. Moreover, the supply route for the Axis forces was subject to raids from Malta Island and from commandos in the desert.

**Montgomery’s Plans and Strategy**

Montgomery said on 23 October 1942: «When I took over the army command, I said that this mandate was to destroy Rommel and his army, and this is what must be done once we are ready, and we are ready now.»

Montgomery’s initial plan was based on two points: to destroy Rommel’s armored troops quickly, and to deal with his unarmored troops more slowly. However, Montgomery decided to reverse this method and modify it through two simultaneous actions: Contain enemy armored troops and deal with enemy infantry divisions by systematically destroying them in their defensive positions. The unarmored divisions were to be destroyed by successive fragmentation operations. To realize this plan, the enemy must be attacked from both sides as well as the rear. Supplies must also be cut off through carefully organized and accurately executed operations from a series of fixed bases that are accessible to his forces.

Montgomery explained this plan and met with his army commanders, emphasizing the enemy’s position and focusing on their weakness. He asserted that the fighting would take a long time. He then gave details on the strength of his army: its tanks, guns, planes, and its enormous supplies of ammunition. He
focused on not giving up the spirit of initiative and stressed that each individual must have a fierce desire to fight the Germans.

The battle witnessed the beginning of losses for the Germans, especially after the fuel shortage resulting from the sinking of an Italian oil carrier by the British, which paralyzed the progress of the tanks. As such, British forces were able to expel the German’s to Libya.

The battle began at 21:25 pm on 23 October 1942 with artillery bombardment by the British. On 24 October, the German commander Von Stoma died and German commander Ritter von Thoma, the leader of the African corps, took over command of the Axis forces until Rommel arrived on the evening of 26 October. The 9th Australian Division launched an attack that succeeded in isolating the 164th German Infantry Division on the night of 30 October. Rommel pushed his forces to liberate that division, and he did so on 31 October, but after suffering heavy losses.

Montgomery launched his attack on the night of 2 November through Al-Aqaqeer hill south of Sidi Abdel-Rahman. The Axis forces could not repel the attack, and Rommel realized that the battle was finally settled in favor of the British.

In the morning of 2 November, a radio message from German Chancellor Adolf Hitler ordered Rommel to stand firm until the end. However, it seems that Rommel was not sure that Hitler was the one who delivered the message, as he ordered his troops to withdraw.
Rommel ... Commander of German Forces in North Africa

On 3 November, the unencrypted text of Hitler’s original message calling for steadfastness arrived. Despite the superiority of British forces, Rommel decided to obey Hitler’s orders, if only for a short while.

On 4 November, however, Rommel found that he was no longer able to fulfill Hitler’s order. He began to withdraw to Fouka to the west, especially after the loss of about 200 tanks during the period from 3 to 4 November.

Albert Kesselring, commander of the German forces in the Mediterranean, confirmed that Rommel was right to withdraw on 4 November. Rommel lost connection with the commander of the African Legion, von Thoma. Though the Germans thought he had been killed, he was, in fact, captured.

Post-Battle Events

On 5 November, Rommel tried to establish a defensive line at Fouka in preparation for his withdrawal to Libya.

On 6 November, heavy rains hindered British progress, which was exploited by Axis forces in their withdrawal.

On 7 November, the Axis forces attempted to stop briefly at Marsa Matruh. On the same day, however, a letter arrived from Hitler warning Rommel that Allied forces may land between Tobruk and Benghazi.

On 8 November, a cable from Rommel to Hitler indicated that the fears of a landing were unfounded. However, he learned that the Allies had landed in Morocco and Algeria (Operation Torch). So, Rommel decided that the best thing to do was to withdraw to Al-Aqela.

The chase, led by the Eighth Army after the battle at Al-Alamein, ended in the city of Medenine in Tunisia after fighting forces advanced some 2,300km. The Tunisia campaign was the last decisive battle in Africa, ending Axis presence on the continent.

Battle Outcomes and Losses

Although the Allies had overwhelming superiority in troops, armored units, aircraft and supplies, in addition to destroying the African Legion, the battle at Al-Alamein exhausted them and deprived them of a sweeping victory.
Churchill said that Al-Alamein was a turning point in British military heritage during the war. “Before Al-Alamein, we were struggling to survive, but after, we become victorious.”

“Al-Alamein cannot be considered the end, it may be the beginning of the end, but it is certainly the end of the beginning.”

Main Reasons Behind the German Defeat at Al-Alamein

Supplies across the Mediterranean to Axis forces decreased to one-fifth of the normal needs due to the British Royal Air Force sinking three quarters of Axis supply ships, including fuel carriers.

The British Air Force was superior in both the quality and quantity of aircraft. The weakness of Axis air power (led by Kesselring) in North Africa was due to Hitler needing air forces on the Russian front.

The island of Malta was the base from which Allied forces launched attacks on Axis naval convoys.

Rommel’s needs were not met, especially for new equipment, tanks and soldiers to replace those who were exhausted in the battle.

What also had a negative impact was Hitler’s direct intervention in operations and his refusal to allow withdrawal in time, as well as not living up to his word to Rommel concerning the occupation of Malta and the provision of supplies.

Hitler’s adviser Marshal Wilhelm Keitel said that Al-Alamein was one of the most precious opportunities that slipped through Axis hands.

“At that stage of the war we were closer to general victory than any time before or after. On that day, we needed to exert just a little effort to open Alexandria and proceed to the Suez Canal or Palestine...”

Lessons Learned from the Battle

The forces of both sides were in direct contact for four months before the
battle. Both sides tried to prepare for the battle in every possible way. The main problem they encountered was that of logistics, and it was understood that the side to win the logistics race would have the advantage of starting the attack.

The British Eighth Army had unprecedented access to American-made equipment, which the German command could not counter as their resources were being depleted on the Russian front. The Germans were also suffering heavy losses in supply ships attempting to cross the Mediterranean to Rommel’s forces in North Africa.

It was clear that the British had the upper hand. As for Rommel, he could not support his four divisions with any reinforcements. He also could not fully rely on the Italian divisions supporting his forces, as they were not on the same level.

Given the superiority of British forces, Rommel decided to strengthen his defensive positions and intensify the surrounding minefields. He also kept all his reserve armored forces on the northern and southern flanks so that they could be moved forward to the expected location of the British attack.

Montgomery, on the other hand, considered how to fully take advantage of the overwhelming superiority of his position. He also considered the nature of the terrain at Al-Alamein, where the forces of his opponent stood between two strong natural defenses; the Mediterranean Sea to the north, and the Qattara Depression to the south. He knew that this was a rare chance that may not be repeated. He also knew that the Axis forces were superior in terms of mobility as well as the level of training of Axis commanders in these types of battles.

Moreover, Rommel, dubbed the Desert Fox, had no equal in experience in desert operations, which mainly rely on maneuverability and agility.

As such, Montgomery saw that it was necessary to exploit his superior position to strike at the Axis forces in one major attack that would eliminate the enemy while they are besieged at Al-Alamein. He aimed to cut off any opportunity to withdraw and to deprive Rommel of the chance to practice his ingenious maneuvers on the open terrain to the west.
Montgomery’s decision was consistent with the strategic plan of the Allies to eliminate Rommel’s forces completely and enable the US- British forces to land on the north coast of Africa on the due date; 8 November. The Allies could then control North Africa completely, encircling Hitler’s European fortress from the south.

Despite the overwhelming British supremacy in personnel and equipment, and despite the fact that the plan drawn up by Montgomery aimed at the total destruction of the Axis forces in Al-Alamein, the implementation of this plan was hindered by several serious obstacles, including Rommel’s ingenuity and the high-level training and combat efficiency of his forces.

The first obstacle was Montgomery’s failure to break through the Axis defensive positions in his first attack on the night of 23/24 October, resulting in his armored forces being caught between minefields and Axis defensive positions. The British armored forces suffered heavy losses as a result. The British command was forced to withdraw to the east of the minefields and continue the close fighting in the penetration area for several days without any considerable results. In the end, Montgomery had to adjust his plan.

Despite Montgomery’s success in his final attack, Rommel was brilliant in adapting to the developments of the situation, despite the decisions of the German and Italian leaderships. He succeeded in withdrawing a significant number of his armored and the mechanized forces, without giving British forces any chance, despite their superiority in land and sea, to inflict a major defeat. This was despite the Axis losing almost all their tanks and withdrawing in an open desert with no cover or a way to counter air attacks. This type of withdrawal has rarely been repeated in the history of warfare, and has impressed many military minds.

Rommel succeeded in withdrawing his forces from Al-Alamein, thus thwarting Montgomery’s goal to destroy all Axis forces in the region. As such, the British 8th Army found itself in a new conflict to seek and destroy the remaining Axis forces. The fight continued throughout the following months. The battlefield extended gradually from Egyptian territory until it eventually reached Tunisia, and the British Army lost the opportunity to eliminate Axis forces in North Africa and concentrate on other operations.

Al-Alamein was a decisive battle where both sides demonstrated the maximum combatant capabilities, resulting in the emergence of a set of principles without which victory could never be achieved: surprise, mobilization, flexibility, agility, initiative and deception.
World War II Outcomes

World War II has changed the political, social and military map of the world. After the war, the United Nations was established to promote cooperation and prevent future conflicts. The United States, China, the Soviet Union, France and the United Kingdom became permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

The Soviet Union and the United States emerged as superpowers on the international arena, while the influence of European powers declined. This paved the way for the Cold War and the emergence of independence movements in Asia and Africa, as well as the attempt to reform the economic situation in countries that were less industrially developed, through economic integration with other states.

Al-Alamein and the Victims of World War II

The Battle of Al-Alamein was the decisive battle on the North African arena and one of the turning points in WWII. It is regarded as an early example of a sweeping airstrike that is followed by another that divided the enemy forces.

Graves and Memorials Commemorating the Victims of the Battle

The Al-Alamein Cemetery, also known as the Commonwealth Cemetery, lies to the south of the macadamized road in front of Al-Alamein Rest House. It holds the remains of Allied and Axis soldiers and is divided into sections for soldiers for each country.

The cemetery includes 7,367 graves of soldiers from Britain, France, Australia, India, New Zealand, South Africa and Malaysia. The cemetery also has a memorial with the names of 11,945 soldiers whose remains were never found.

Egypt set up the cemetery for the foreigners who fell during the war, whose relatives still visit to this day.
Each October, a celebration commemorating the Battle of Al-Alamein is held and attended by a large number of officials, ambassadors and consuls from the countries who participated in the war, as well as representatives from the Egyptian government.

**The German Bone Collection Hole**

The German bone collection hole is 3kms west of Al-Alamein City overlooking the sea on a tall hill. It was constructed in 1959 as a gesture from Egypt to the German people and army. The hole holds the remains of 4,280 German soldiers who were killed at Al-Alamein. In front of the hole there is a headstone with the words “The land on which this bone collection hole has been built is a gift from the Egyptian people.”

**The Italian Cemetery**

This cemetery is 5kms west of Al-Alamein city, and is regarded as one of the most beautiful cemeteries in terms of architecture. The cemetery includes a
small church, a mosque, a memorial hall and a small museum, in addition to the remains of 4,800 soldiers. In front of the cemetery there is a plate stating that the desert had swallowed the bodies of 38,000 soldiers. World War II victims are also buried at the Al-Halafawi Valley Cemetery.

**The Important Role of the Egyptian Army Throughout History**

The great Egyptian army has performed a vital role since its establishment in preserving stability and the pillars of the state. The army has engaged in many battles and heroic events from the dawn of history till our present day. It is the protector of our national security, for which history is the best witness.

The Egyptian army is the first organized army in history, shouldering the responsibility of securing the borders of Egypt, its people and civilization since its creation over 4,000 years ago during the reign of King Djoser. The Egyptian army has never entered a battle except to defend the security of the country.

When a standing national army was formed under Mohamed Ali, he took experience and knowledge from the European states. The army fought in many battles and achieved several victories till it reached Asetana and participated in the Mora War in support of the Ottoman Empire. The Egyptian army also fought
in Mexico in support of the French Emperor upon his request. As a result of the weakness of Mohamed Ali’s successors, Britain occupied Egypt in September 1882 and the Egyptian-British forces entered several consecutive battles in Sudan against the Mahdi Revolution, which was suppressed in 1890.

**The Egyptian Warrior in WWI**

The bravery, discipline and stamina of the Egyptian warrior had surprised British leaders due to his vital role in WWI. World War I erupted due to several reasons, the most salient of which was the prevalent atmosphere of distrust on the European arena during late 19th century, which led to the division of Europe into two camps, each racing to enhance its military capability.

The first camp included England, France and Russia in what is known as the Triple Entente. Later, Belgium and Italy joined this camp. The second camp grouped Germany and Austria in what is known as the Central Powers. Germany had considered the Ottoman state the best ally against the rest of the European states.

In preparation for the war, Britain turned Egypt into a military base thanks to its strategic location and the importance of the Suez Canal. In this vein, Alexandria was turned into a Mediterranean operations command center, with fortifications established along the shores while camps and hospitals were set up in several Alexandrian districts and streets. In Cairo, the Maadi district was dedicated to British soldiers, while Heliopolis was dedicated to New Zealand soldiers, and Al-Haram to Australian and Indian soldiers.

Both Germany and Turkey agreed on the necessity of bringing Egypt to their side against England. They put plans to attack Egypt from several directions in order to distress British forces. In order to assume control over Egypt, Britain declared the country a protectorate in December 1914. Egypt was thus forced to enter the war alongside Britain so as to preserve its freedom, which Mohamed Ali had grabbed on the battlefield from the Ottoman state.

The British and Egyptian armies fought together in defense of Egyptian soil from all directions. On the eastern borders, the Ottoman army, supported by the German army, attacked the Aqaba and Gaza roads in order to close the Suez Canal and cut off British transportation lines. When Turkish forces started
crossing the bridge above the canal towards Serabium, they were attacked by Egyptian forces, which inflicted heavy losses.

The Ottoman forces were defeated in the Toson area and were prevented from crossing the canal. The commander of the British forces had praised Egypt’s military excellence, sacrifices and bravery, with the king of Britain granting the Victoria Cross Award to First Lieutenant Ali Zaki and First Lieutenant Khalil Gabbour for their role in the battle. Furthermore, a garrison from Egypt’s second battalion confronted the Ottoman forces in Tor, compelling them to retreat.

The Turkish forces attacked the Egyptian-British sites once again in the area between Qatia and Rumana, where Rumana Battle took place, ending with the defeat of Turkish forces. The Ottoman troops retreated from Arish and Rafah and the British-Egyptian forces entered these two cities in January 1917.

On the southern borders, the Ottoman state sought the help of Sultan Ali Bin Dinar of Darfur. Afterwards, British commander Wingate prepared an Egyptian campaign that achieved victory in several battles till it seized al-Fasher and brought Darfur within Sudan. Therefore, the Ottoman plans failed and Wingate acknowledged that victory in these battles was due to Egyptian forces, calling for the Order of the Nile to be granted to the Egyptian officers in recognition of their vital role.

On the western border, the Ottoman State succeeded in bringing as-Senussi to their side against Egypt after granting him huge amounts of weapons and ammunition, and taking advantage of the religious dimension in this respect.

As-Senussi then attacked the coastal road and the Western Oasis Road and British forces mobilized their army at Marsa Matrouh. The Senussians won the fight at first, but upon the arrival of supplies from Alexandria, British troops won the battle. The victories on the Egyptian front enabled Britain to offer 19 squads in support of the European front.

**Egyptian Contribution in WWII**

Those who signed the 1936 treaty did not imagine that Egypt would not take sides in the war, because Egypt fighting on Britain’s side was the price it paid to end British occupation of its lands, gain international recognition as
an independent state, and seek the help of the world in ending the restrictions on its legislative freedom.

On the popular level, Egyptians stood beside the Germans. However, the political and social changes internally compelled Egypt to adopt the policy of avoiding the scourges of war. Therefore, Egypt adhered to neutrality in the first stages of the war. The number of soldiers in the Egyptian army at the time was 25,000, in addition to 1,000 officers and 80 pilots. However, the Egyptian army had participated in several tasks and was capable of defending every inch of the homeland in light of the flaring atmosphere of war.

In this vein, Egypt was the battlefield of various events and conflicts; Egypt constituted the main communication line in WWII. In this respect, the British Forces Command in the Middle East was set up in Egypt and the Allied conference was convened at the Mina House Hotel in 1943, thus becoming the main mobilization and training hub for British forces.

The Border Corps, in collaboration with the Cavalry Corps, secured the Egyptian coasts and western borders, thus serving as a reconnaissance and information apparatus.

The Egyptian artillery units defended the main harbors and stationed coastal artillery in Alexandria, Port Said, Suez and Marsa Matrouh.

The Corps of Engineers established several defensive sites, not to mention extending and maintaining the water pipelines and railways in the Western Desert.

The Egyptian Royal Air Force had defended the Suez Canal, Cairo and Alexandria, in addition to intensifying surveillance along the Egyptian coasts and protecting the military and administrative lines. In this vein, the British leaders recognized the potential of Egyptian military forces in fulfilling such tasks. In his report to the British parliament in 1945, Winston Churchill said that “The Egyptian army made an important contribution during the war. It preserved security in the Delta, established and guarded the fortified sites, helped by all means in the war effort and prevented air strikes on the Delta and the coast.”

Winston Churchill
Mohamed Naguib Military Base... Protecting National Security

The Egyptians have always been capable of building and construction, and the Egyptian army is always ready to defend the country against any aggression. In 2017, the Mohamed Naguib Military Base was inaugurated in the presence of President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi and a number of Arab leaders. This base is the largest in the Middle East, established within the framework of the comprehensive development and modernization strategy of the Armed Forces as a replacement for the military city in Al-Alamein, which was established in 1993.

The base is provided with new technical and administrative units. It also includes the redeployment of several units that were assigned to the North Military Zone, thus enhancing its ability in securing the vital areas in west Alexandria and the Northern Coast, including Al-Dabaa Nuclear plant, the petroleum fields, Marsa Al-Hamraa Harbor, and New Alamein City.

With the aim of turning the old military base into an integrated base bearing the name of Major General
Mohamed Naguib within two years, the Engineering Authority constructed a total of 1,155 buildings and establishments in the base. In light of the direct threats on Egypt’s national security, especially from the western border, the Armed Forces were keen on enhancing the combat capabilities of the Western Military Zone in order to prevent armed terrorists from crossing the border as well as abort attempts of weapons smuggling, drug trafficking and illegal migration.

All this is done according to an integrated system of intensifying security procedures, upgrading armaments and redeploying combat units. In this vein, the Armed Forces established the Barani Military Base according to state-of-the-art systems with special attention given to the soldiers’ living conditions and training.

This base represents a powerful addition to the capabilities of the Armed Forces in the Western Military Zone in protecting the western border and deterring those who would violate the security of the state and stability of its great people.

**Alamein Military Museum... an Important Site for Visitors**

The Al-Alamein Military Museum is located in Alamein City on the northwestern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, 106km from Alexandria. It was established on 16 December 1965 and shows the course of the decisive Battle of Al-Alamein. The museum includes weapons, tanks and ammunition used by WWII forces, as well as maps showing the course of the battle. The museum was inaugurated after renovation on the 50th anniversary of the battle on 21 October 1992.
Main Sections of the Museum

The Museum consists of five main halls; the Mixed Hall, the Egyptian Hall, the Italian Hall, the German Hall and the British Hall, in addition to the open display hall and the command base. There is also a main lobby with wall paintings that depict the stories of the war and engraved images of the leaders of the warring armies; including Britain’s Bernard Montgomery and Germany’s Erwin Rommel, in addition to war maps of the North African states. Displays have labels in English, German, Italian and Arabic.

At the centre of the lobby is an artistic, white-colored, six-step memorial symbolizing the six years of World War II (1939-45). Above the memorial lies a replica of a number of white pigeons, symbolizing the peace that followed the years of war.

The Mixed Hall

The Mixed Hall is on the right side of the lobby and includes displays of equipment from all the states involved in World War II, including the utensils of one of the soldiers from the fourth Indian squad brigade and the Bible another soldier.

The British Hall

The British Hall includes maps of the various formations of British forces that
participated in the North African battles and the belongings of one of the British soldiers. There are also replicas depicting officers and soldiers from the British army, including that of a soldier from the Fourth Battalion holding a sub-machinegun, a pilot from the British Royal Air Force during his rest time, and a British desert fighter using a compass, in addition to the ammunition of the British artillery and the “Mills 36” grenades of the British forces.

**The Egyptian Hall**

The Egyptian Hall is at the center of the four other halls, and was established when the museum was renovated. The hall displays the logistics role Egypt played in WWII as per the treaty between Egypt and Britain at the time of British occupation, as well as Egypt’s losses during the war.

The exhibitions in the Egyptian Hall include a statue of King Farouk, pictures from World War II, and a painting of an Italian pilot who was captured by a patrol led by Sergeant Hassan Muhammed on 17 July 1940. There is also a painting depicting the capture of nine German soldiers by the Egyptian army as they planted mines on the railways.

There are also statues, pictures and paintings of soldiers throughout Egyptian history; from ancient Egypt up till World War II. The displays also include weapons used by the army during the war.
The German Hall

Acquisitions, plans and weapons of German troops in North Africa are exhibited in the hall. There are also replicas of German soldiers and officers during their military missions, including a replica of two German women soldiers from the signal corps and a replica of a soldier riding a BMW motorcycle beside a replica of a soldier carrying a machine gun. Also on show are weapons, war equipment, and articles of the Afro-German legion and its commander-in-chief Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, dubbed the “Desert Fox”.

The Italian Hall

A replica of the Italian army logo during the World War is placed at the entrance to the hall. On exhibition are statues of Italian soldiers and officers in their different uniforms, standing among them a Libyan recruit. Other statues include those of a military engineer in his summer uniform, an armored soldier in his winter uniform, a paratrooper, a lieutenant, a doctor in the Italian Navy in his summer uniform, and a captain in the Italian Air Force. The Italian Hall also exhibits different kinds of weapons and ammunition that were used by the Italian army in Al-Alamein War, instruments and tools of a military doctor and a field telephone.

The Open Hall

The hall includes weapons and heavy equipment of the Allies and Axis troops who participated in Al-Alamein War. Among the weapons on show are a German 150 mm anti-tank gun, a German 88 mm anti-aircraft gun, an English Universal soldiers’ carrier, an American Chairman tank, an American Grant General tank, and an English plane manufactured in 1939. The hall houses an English armored
vehicle, a Ford car produced in Canada in 1912 with a capacity of 3 tons, a Ford supplies vehicle with a capacity of 3 tons, an English anti-tank gun weighing 17 pounds, an anti-aircraft gun of 3.7 inch caliber, and a 30 mm anti-aircraft gun.

**Rommel’s Cave Museum ... Personal Possessions of the Desert Fox**

The museum is located on Rommel Island, 2.5 km east of Marsa Matrouh’s harbor. A cave hewed in the mountain, the museum harbors some of Rommel’s possessions donated by his son, the Mayor of Stuttgart in Germany. The museum tells the story of Al-Alamein War, making it an attraction for thousands of tourists every year. Rommel’s Cave exhibits a collection of weapons, tanks of the troops that participated in World War II, as well as maps of the battle and Rommel’s jacket and glasses. In 1997 the idea of turning the cave into a museum was conceived.

The museum, which dates back to the Greco-Roman era, was closed for restoration from 2010 to 2017, when the state decided to open as many museums and archeological sites as possible. The cave is carved in the shape of an arch with an entrance and an exit on the shore. General Rommel chose this cave to be his residence during World War II.
Chapter Two

The Problem of Landmines in Egypt ... Facing of Challenge
Egypt has been suffering from damages caused by landmines planted during World War II. The landmines resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians and have obstructed development in the areas where they were planted. Resources available in these areas became off-limits. More than 22.7 million landmines and other explosives were planted in Egyptian land during World War II. This figure makes up more than 20% of the total mines planted all over the world, of which 17.2 million mines are in Al-Alamein.

The role of the Armed Forces in demining Al-Alamein cannot be ignored. The army has been committed to make this area safe in order to proceed with the development of the northwest coast which will result in providing 1.5 million job opportunities and housing 5 million Egyptians there. The Egyptian army demined 94,446 feddans in Al-Alamein in 2015. It is noteworthy that this area is rich in its natural water resources, oil and natural gas.

For more than 70 years mines and explosives in Al-Alamein have hindered the social and economic development of the area. Reclamation of a million feddans was stopped, and national projects like Al-Qattara Depression, which is as important as the High Dam, came to a halt. The area has a stock of minerals that can provide self-sufficiency for Egypt, and even make available for more to export. Currently Egypt imports many of these minerals.

The areas where the landmines are planted can be a golden opportunity to release the pressure on the Nile Valley and develop communities and population centers between Alexandria and Marsa Matrouh. Another problem is that the mines have hindered the exploitation of the tremendous touristic potentials available in the area, which are available in natural reserves, moderate climate, safari trips and oases.

Mine Risk Awareness

Mine Risk Awareness contributes to diminishing the number of victims of landmines and war remnants explosions whether during or after wars. According to the standard criteria agreed upon by several international organizations, mine risk awareness represents the main axis for protecting lives and properties. It
comes within the framework of mine sweeping operations which include technical and non-technical surveys, risk evaluation, placing signs, drawing maps and mine sweeping operations, in addition to the documentation and submission of the cleared areas to the authorities concerned. This will be followed by the Injured and Victims’ Families Assistance Program which will be applied by determining the needs of victims through a continuous follow-up including field visits, emergent and continuous medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological support, and the socio-economic rehabilitation of the victims.

In 2016, no mine-explosion accidents were reported in Matrouh. This is attributed to various reasons, including the care and support which Matrouh governorate offers to mine risk awareness activities, and the support of the Egyptian government to the efforts of the Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the Northwest Coast programs.

**Sacrifices of the Armed Forces**

Throughout years of mine sweeping activities, the Armed Forces has incurred thousands of causalities: 697 dead and 7,616 injured. The Armed Forces works on three phases: locating the places of mines and war remnants using the available maps and advanced machines; the removal of explosives; and ensuring that all explosives and mines are being completely removed.

The Mine Sweeping Program which is affiliated to the Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the Northwest Coast has provided 250 mine detectors, 250 life vests, 5 equipped ambulances, 250 anti-explosion boots, an explosive detector, and an armored vehicle equipped with a mine detector.

The Regional Manager of the UNDP, Ignazio Artaza, said in 2014 the partnership
with Egypt has contributed to the successful completion of the first phase with the assistance of the Ministry of Defense. An area of 83,027 feddans is now ready for development. It has also contributed to offering a better life for 241 mine victims through providing artificial limbs. Ambassador James Moran, the head of the EU delegation in Egypt had asserted in 2014 that the EU will contribute with an amount of 4.7 million euros in partnership agreement with the UN Program to assist in demining operations in this area.

The Problem of Mines and the Lack of Information

As the Ministry of Defense started drawing up a comprehensive plan for mine sweeping in Egypt, it faced off with a serious problem: the lack of data as regards the minefields, the different types of mines, and areas where war remnants could possibly be found. Thus, the Armed Forces held an international seminar on demining the Western Desert in March 1983 at the Engineering Authority headquarters. The seminar was attended by deputies from France, Germany, Britain, Italy and the United States. A number of representatives handed Egypt maps of some land mining areas.

The Ministry of Defense prepared a map using the documents that had been received from some states. When the minefield survey was initiated, it was clear that these maps show a much smaller area than the actual land. Despite the availability of the maps of minefields, the Armed Forces faced grave challenges during the demining operations. These challenges included the lack of accurate information on the locations of the minefields, the sensitivity of mines because they were planted over 50 years earlier, not to mention the mines’ relocation due to climate changes or the movement of sands in some areas. In these cases the maps were useless and suspicions mounted about the existence of mines in other areas that were branded clean. As a result, demining costs increased to the point they exceeded the state’s economic ability.
The National Council of Human Rights, in collaboration with the UNDP, held an international conference on 27-29 December 2005 on demining and the development of the Northwest Coast in Cairo. The Foreign Ministry, among other ministries, assisted the National Council of Human Rights in the preparation for the conference. The conference reached several recommendations, on top of which are: calling upon the advanced states and international organizations to provide Egypt with the adequate experience and state-of-the-art methods to ensure the success of demining operations; establishing a fund for mine clearance of the Northwest Coast to be financed by states that were involved in WWII and from other states and international institutions and authorities; and calling upon NGOs to launch an international campaign for consolidating Egypt’s efforts of demining the Northwest Coast and highlighting the problem from Egypt’s humanitarian and developmental perspective.

**Mines Problem on the International Arena**

Since the early 1990s Egypt has focused on raising the mines problem on the international arena, the problem being one of the priorities of Egypt’s foreign policy. Egyptian diplomatic missions abroad have exerted concerted efforts to talk to the international community about the country’s mines problem. These efforts resulted in little help from the UK, Germany and France. A Japanese delegation from Kyushu University visited Egypt to test the modern technological equipment of mine detection in Egyptian lands in cooperation with the Armed Forces.

Instead of concentrating solely on the responsibility of the countries that planted the mines, Egypt started focusing on the developmental and human perspectives to motivate the other countries to take part in adopting a more developmental approach. Only then can the other countries invest in demining projects, easing Egypt’s burden of the high costs of demining that stand in the way of conducting applicable feasibility studies.
The image became bleak. With the death of every mine victim, the tragedy of mines grows. The availability of information nowadays has helped us put a figure to the people who lost their lives because of mines. This is when the international community has become more adamant to end the mining problem in Egypt.

In 1991, an international movement campaigned to impose a ban on mine planting. The UN intervened in 1994 to come up with drastic and effective solutions. An international agreement was signed by 135 countries to prohibit the use of land mines. As a result of these collective efforts, it became clear that there was a determination on the local, regional and international fronts to ban the use of land mines.

A UN mission visited Egypt in the year 2000 to evaluate the mines problem. It included representatives from Mine Action Unit affiliated to UN peace keeping process administration UN, UNICEF, UN Development Programme and WHO. The mission visited Alamein and Ein Sokhna regions to identify the mines problem and national efforts of the Egyptian Armed Forces to cleanse the area from mines. The mission met a number of mines victims in addition to a big number of ministers and officials to get acquainted with the development policies and cleaning of North and West Zones from mines, as well as making use of them in agricultural, tourism, mining and oil fields. The UN mission wrote a comprehensive report about the mines problem in Egypt.

The Most Important Recommendations Were:

- Praising the Egyptian Armed Forces’ efforts in cleansing the areas.
- Recommendations about efforts needed in various sectors (health, rehabilitating the injured, etc...) were recorded.
- The important role international organizations and grantee countries can play in providing technical and financial assistance to remove the mines.
- Recommending the establishment of a joint credit fund in participation with the UN to end this problem.

The report was issued as a UN official document. The Foreign Ministry distributed the report among Egyptian missions abroad along with the recommendations of the National Committee for Supervising the Mines Removal that was formed by a Prime Minister resolution no.750 of 2000. Then, the committee’s name was changed to the National Committee for Supervising Mines Removal and Northwest Coast Development. It comprises ministries, government agencies, the governorates concerned and NGOs. The committee succeeded in establishing a credit fund in participation with the UN development program aiming at assisting the Egyptian government in its development and mines removal programme through obtaining finance from grantee countries and agencies as well as the private sector.
The cabinet approved a plan put forth by the National Committee to deal with the problem of mines. The plan is a comprehensive strategy with a development vision for the northwest area. With investments reaching LE 60 billion, the strategy sees the year 2022 in its plan. It also includes a comprehensive list of industrial, agricultural, environmental, tourist, infrastructure, housing and social service projects that have the top priority in order to provide a more suitable climate for investment.

**Egypt’s Position on Ottawa Treaty**

Egypt has spared no effort to foster international efforts aiming at drafting a legal binding framework for the international community to limit the use of anti-personnel landmines. Thus, Egypt participated in the preliminary stages of the draft treaty in 1996 and 1997 after failing to reach an agreement on amending the second protocol of the Convention on certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). But Egypt preferred not to join the Ottawa Treaty due to its deficiencies in tackling the problem of landmines after the failure of reaching an agreement during the negotiations stage. Although Egypt did not join the treaty, it still agrees with its humanitarian objectives.

**World Day for Mine Awareness**

On 8 December 2005 the General Assembly declared 4 April the World Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

The UN General Assembly called for continued efforts by states, with the assistance of the United Nations and relevant organizations working in the field
of demining, to foster the establishment and development of national mine-action capacities in countries, where mines and explosive remnants of war pose a serious threat to the safety, health and lives of the people or constitute an impediment to social and economic development.

All mine-action procedures are deemed a humanitarian work because the main target of such procedures is to save lives. These procedures include locating and removing mines and explosive remnants of wars in war-torn areas to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to mine-affected people.

United Nations Mine Action Service serves as the UN coordinator of all efforts exerted with the aim of clearing roads of mines and explosives as well as training mine-infused areas’ inhabitants on demining procedures. The UN mandate is a critical step for future humanitarian efforts.

**Landmine Struggle Center**

The Landmine Struggle Center (LSC) was established on 3 December 1997 as the first center in Egypt and the Middle East that deals with the problem of mines. The center is a non-governmental organization established with the aim of cooperating with international and regional organizations as well as official entities in the field of mine action. The center houses a galaxy of university professors, journalists, lawyers, doctors, engineers and chemists. The main reference for the center’s work is the international and humanitarian law as well as international conventions that stand against implanting landmines.

**The Center’s Objectives**

The center primarily pays due attention to attaining an accurate geographical monitoring of landmine locations so as to survey and mark mines-planted areas as well as to reaching a census of mines victims, dead or injured, categorizing them, providing legal and medical services to them, reintegrate the handicapped into society, raising awareness of the gravity and threats of landmines and clearing mine-infested areas through making optimal use of international, official and public efforts.

With the aim of consolidating its efforts and enhancing its performance, the center was keen to exchange data, information and expertise in the field of combating landmines with all states and organizations concerned. It is noteworthy that the center’s efforts bore fruits. The center gained membership of the International Campaign for Banning Mines as well as the membership of the Coalition of
Non-Governmental Organizations with the aim of establishing an international criminal court. In addition, the center announced the establishment of the Arab Campaign for Combating Mines, formed of 13 non-governmental organizations.

**The Egyptian Standpoint on Landmines in the Security Council**

In June 2017, Egypt participated in a UN Security Council briefing on the threats and hazards of landmines and explosives. Egypt pointed out that “abandoned mines and explosive remnants of wars have become a source of access for armed movements and terrorists to find materials for manufacturing improvised explosive devices”. Egypt asserted its support to the vital role undertaken by the United Nations in this problem and called for drafting a comprehensive approach to mine action and explosive hazard through mobilizing the international community in cooperation with the United Nations to support national efforts undertaken by mine-affected countries and to provide assistance to these countries to enable them to enhance their capabilities in facing up to the threats of landmines and explosives.

In the same context, Egypt stressed that providing assistance should never be linked to conditions irrelative to the objectives of combatting the threats caused by landmines and explosives. Discussions extended to shed light on the grave and random threats posed by landmines and explosive remnants of wars not only on the safety and security of civilians but also on law-enforcement, peace-keeping and humanitarian relief missions. That is not to mention the long-term effects on humanitarian, economic and development conditions in mine-affected countries where threats posed by landmines impede efforts to develop the afflicted lands and constitute a burden in the process of peace-keeping that may last for years after the end of conflicts.

Undoubtedly, threats and hazards posed by wars are clearly manifested in the grave impact of landmines and explosives, putting into consideration that planting a mine costs nothing while demining costs a fortune. However, in spite of all difficulties and challenges impeding development plans, Egypt is capable and determined to deal with the problem of landmines, overcome obstacles, push forward development plans, draw up a new map for the country relying on a host of mega-projects in all walks of life and implement ambitious plans that expediently forge a better future.
Chapter Three

Al-Alamein ...

The First One-Million-People City
The New Al-Alamein City is Egypt’s future, presenting a new example for coastal cities based on integrated development. It will be the beginning of a different generation of new cities in Egypt because it depends on making use of human resources and natural wealth from water and energy. Due to its proximity to the coast, drinking water will be provided through desalination of sea water by solar energy. There are more than 20 companies racing against time to complete the establishment of the city with a budget of $ 5 billion — half the investments allocated to the development of west Egypt.

**The New Cities...Egypt’s Hope**

Populating new cities is the best solution for urban expansion and overpopulation. However, while new cities will solve the problem, other cities are still waiting for their turn to develop. The new cities in Egypt are divided into three generations according to the dates of establishment.

The first generation cities are 10th of Ramadan, 15 May, 6th of October, Al-Sadat, New Borg Al-Arab, New Salhea, and New Damietta.

The second generation cities are New Beni Sweif, New Minya, New Nobariya, and Sheikh Zayed.


New Al-Alamein is one of the most important projects of the Northwest Coast. The total area of the city is 48,000 feddans. The first phase consists of two main sectors with a total area of 8,000 feddans which are a coastal sector comprising the international tourist center, and an archeological and civilized sector. It is considered the first eco-friendly city established on the fourth style to be one of the development projects aiming at absorbing 34 million citizens to ease the pressure on overpopulated governorates.
The New Al-Alamein City is one of the most important projects that President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi talked about at the youth conference held in Alexandria in 2017. The President reiterated the necessity of establishing new urban communities and cities in line with the latest scientific methods and advanced urban planning in addition to a million housing units, including more than 7,000 in Al-Alamein city. The President also ordered the establishment of touristic, industrial, educational and agricultural projects to attract foreign and domestic tourists to Al-Alamein.

**Al-Alamein, a Tourist Capital and Summer Headquarters for Administering State**

The proposed plan for New Al-Alamein City is a new model for Egyptian coastal cities that achieves integrated development. It also provides various economic benefits on the touristic, agricultural, industrial, commercial and scientific research levels.

The President assigns and follows up the new Al-Alamein projects and assures the necessity to launch touristic development and other projects as soon as possible, according to the state’s plans for developing the North Coast and its desert backyard.

**New Al-Alamein City**

The city will not only be the most advanced tourist capital in Egypt but also it will be the summer headquarters for the state’s agencies where presidential headquarters and others for the cabinet will be established. Modern hotel chains and high housing towers, reaching more than 38 floors, will be built. Some 14 km-long “passages”, or promenades, will be established to compete with the most famous tourist resorts in Mediterranean countries.
Location: The New Al-Alamein City lies on the northern coast, 34km west of Alexandria, where the Mediterranean Sea lies to the north and the contour line is 200 to the south.

City Establishment Resolution: The Prime Minister’s resolution no 123 of 2015 was issued to allocate an area of 41,147 feddans to establish the new Al-Alamein city.

A presidential decree, no 109 of 2016, allocates 6893082 feddans of the new urban communities region as a shore region for the New Al-Alamein city.

It is a comprehensive city and is considered an extension to “Sidi Abdel Rahman” resort to the west, “Al Hammam Canal” to the south, and the Mediterranean to the north.

The city is divided into two sectors. The first is the “Shore Sector”, on an area of 7,000 feddans. It lies between the international road (Matrouh-Alexandria) and the Mediterranean Coast where Marina resort lies to the east and “Al-Hamra” port in “Sidi Abdel Rahman” to the west. The second is the southern sector. It lies to the south of the international road on an area of about 41,000 feddans.

New Al-Alamein City: The Beginning of a Different Generation of Cities

New Al-Alamein City represents the first model of the new generation of the one-million population cities, where it is planned to accommodate more than 3 million people by the end of the first phase. New Al-Alamein will be the start of a different generation of new cities in Egypt that depends on sustainability. This means that it will depend on
the best use of human and natural resources like water and energy. Moreover, it will benefit from the advantage of being in close proximity to the coast to obtain water from seawater desalination instead of pumps and water pipelines in addition to the exploitation of solar energy to provide new and renewable energy.

The establishment of the city comes in light of the presidential decree to build it. This city is the first of the fourth generation of promising new cities for sustainable development. It will be a model for a comprehensive strategy of urban planning that aims to accommodate a great portion of the expected population growth during the coming years by virtue of the concept of sustainable comprehensive development. This kind of cities will positively reflect on the urban, environmental, social and economic conditions of the country.

The Coastal Sector of the Dream City

The coastal sector consists of the following areas:

Al-Alamein Lake (Hotels District), city center, the distinctive residential district, Hadayk Al-Alamein District, Fanara Marina, a conference center, private resort, entertainment area, cultural center, Al Bohera Housing District and fair grounds. However, the archaeological area is expected to contain an open museum, International park and entertainment area, hotels and port services.

The urban sector will include a university and a regional services center. The coastal sector will include a public park north of the archaeological area that extends for 8 Km along the shore and includes restaurants and parks.

New and Promising Investment Opportunities

There are many investment opportunities available in the first phase that is scheduled to include a fair entertainment area, a world-class hospital, hotels, a university and a regional services center. With an area of 296 feddans allocated for hotels, the number of hotel stays per night may reach some 15,500 rooms. Towards the end of the first phase plots of lands for 12 hotels will be offered. The area allocated for the world medical center and physical therapy is 44 feddans. The center has a growing importance in light of the increasing demand on medical services on the national and regional levels. Some 400
feddans have been allocated for the regional services center which includes trade centers, outlets, galleries, entertainment parks, cinemas, theaters, clubs and administrative services.

**Diversity of Services in the New City**

Different services will be available in the city. These include: educational services such as schools, universities, colleges, vocational training institutes; and health services such as clinics, health centers, hospitals, and others. There are also retail services like supermarkets, shopping centers, small shops in districts, shops and stores in commercial areas and city centers. Professional and commercial services will be also provided, such as banks and communication centers. Professional services like law and consulting offices, architectural engineering, engineering services, IT and accounting companies will be available. Moreover, there will be trade services like travel and communication agencies, in addition to entertainment and hospitality services like hotels, restaurants, cinemas, parks, stadiums, leisure and entertainment facilities. This is in addition to the logistics and transport services like transport and storage activities, integrated logistics operations like storage, shipping, packaging and others. Other services include governmental services (police, fire brigade, road maintenance, garbage collection, gardens maintenance, public works and utilities maintenance), security, building and utilities management, and personal services. The city will be funded by the New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA) and major investors. Projects are being tendered.

**Housing Units for all Brackets**

Housing units will be built for all economic brackets. In addition, some distinctive social housing units were built. There are about 5,000 units in the first phase and 1,920 distinctive housing units are currently being finished at a cost of LE 300 million, providing 8,000 job opportunities in addition to the medium and luxurious housing.
**New Al-Alamein Towers**

The Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities announced it will start establishing New Al-Alamein towers. The project comprises 8 separate platforms with a sea view, each with two or three towers, 35 meters high. The towers include 3 commercial and administrative floors in addition to an underground car park and the rest of the building will be residential. Work is currently underway in the commercial mall behind these towers. Work is carried out by 5 contracting companies: Samco, Orascom, the Arab Contractors, SIAC and Hassan Allam Sons. Some of the towers will be built as hotels with international standards.

**International Road Conversion Project (Alexandria- Matrouh)**

The international road conversion project (Alexandria- Matrouh) will be implemented by the Arab Contractors Company from the intersection of Wadi Al-Natrun and Al-Alamein to Sidi Abdel Rahman at a length of some 48km. The conversion road which will be an alternative to the coastal road. Paving works and road signals are currently set. The road is 5 lanes wide in each direction rather than the regular two service lanes. Furthermore, the company started to construct the remaining junction of Wadi Al-Natrun-Al-Alamein intersection to Marina Gate 1. Three bridges will be constructed in this junction.

The Armed Forces’ Engineering Authority has started building a water station with a capacity of 150m³/day to serve the city. In this respect, the Ministry of Housing has
made use of the city’s natural resources, where it dredged the site’s lakes reaching a depth of 4m. The new city will host a 14-km-long Corniche, an open area, a sandy coast, a 30-35m long tourist walkway, a bicycle area, water fountains and vast green areas.

The city’s infrastructure is currently under construction at a cost of LE 2.3 billion. It includes the construction of 110km roads in addition to the installation of 100km water supply networks, 83km sewage networks, 153km irrigation networks, 123km rain water drainage networks and 580km electricity networks. These infrastructure projects and others have provided, until now, 10,200 job opportunities.

**The Twinning Project between Alexandria Library and New Al-Alamein City**

New Al-Alamein New City pays special interest to culture. At the fourth National Youth Conference President El-Sisi announced that a universal library similar to that of Alexandria will be built in Al-Alamein city in two years. He said that the Alexandria Library “will have a twin within two years.”

The Urban Development Authority, which is in charge of Al-Alamein, has prepared a detailed sketch of Al-Alamein Library. The draft includes the establishment of a theater, heritage centers, museums and innovation workshops. The Urban Development Authority as coordinated with the entities concerned an executive plan that includes the area, total expenses, architectural style and the time schedule.

The establishment of this library makes Al-Alamein a city of cultural and civilizational character in addition to its historical element, having been the scene of World War II and houses Al-Alamein cemeteries.

**The Re-planning of the Old City of Al-Alamein**

New Al-Alamein City is adjacent to the old one and stretches west to Sidi Abd El-Rahman village. It extends from the Mediterranean Sea in the north to El Hammam Canal in the south.

The province, in coordination with the General Organization of Physical Planning (GOPP), assigned the same consultation office that had planned and organized the old
city making it in charge of the strategic plan of the new city so that there would be no differences between the two cities regarding architecture and services provided. In fact, all construction works are being carried out as fast as possible to provide the inhabitants of the old city with all the facilities available in the new one. New Al-Alamein is targeted to attract 1.5 million citizens in the first phase. The remaining phases are set for completion in the next seven years, with a promise to make the city one of the most important on the Mediterranean.

In a nutshell, the new cities are the Egyptians’ dream to get out of the bottleneck because they will put an end to the slum phenomenon and provide appropriate housing units for all social classes. Therefore, Egypt has given top priority to urban expansion to face the problem of overpopulation. In this respect, it established a number of urban projects in different places, salient of which are the New Administrative Capital, and a number of coastal cities such as the New Al-Alamein City, the New East Port Said City and the New City of Al-Mansoura. Such development projects extend to the Delta in the north and Upper Egypt in the south, especially in the area that need help the most. This is in addition to the establishment of new urban communities west of the Nile in order to serve the people of Upper Egypt such as west Qena and west Assiut.

President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi assured that the New Administrative Capital and the new cities shall provide their inhabitants with a fine standard of living as well as all services whether social, economic or entertainment. He also affirmed that Al-Alamein will restore weight and balance to the whole area, making it an attractive destination for all classes since it is an integral community, which will develop the area from Km90 until Km130. This makes New Egypt deserving of all our support and appreciation.
References:
- Sarah Al-Baz, Facts about “Al-Alamein Battle” that Turned the Tide of World War II, 21 October 2016, link: http://maktaba-amma.com/?p=2971
- The official Facebook page of the spokesperson of the Armed Forces, the establishment of Mohamed Naguib military base at Al-Hammam city and Barany military base in the Western Zone, 21st July, link: https://ar-ar.facebook.com/EgyArmySpox/posts/1107903866007261
- Mohamed Badr, “Al-Alamein” the cemetery of foreigners “The Commonwealth”, which includes the graves of 7 thousand victims of World War II. And Matrouh Bedouins give January 20, 2015, Veto, link: http://www.vetogate.com/1436488
- Mariam Al Rumaithi, the second battle of Al-Alamein 1942 is one of the most famous battles in the twentieth century 01/ 02/ 2015, nation shield website, link: http://www.nationshield.ae/home/details/history/
- The Middle East News Agency (MENA), 70 years since the Battle of Al-Alamein … the World remembers the victims of War II. And losses call for peace, 20/10/ 2012, Al-Ahram gate, link: http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/263681.aspx
- Hazem Abu Doma, a vital role of the Egyptian army in World War I, 21 November 2016, Al-Ahram, link: http://www.ahram.org.eg/News/202090563350/139/
- Egypt since 1936 Treaty until World War II, the fourth & sixth chapters , al-moqatel website, link: http://www.moqatel.com/openshare/Behoth/Atrikia51/MohdAli/sec11.do
- Hassan Mashaly, videos and photos...Al-Alamein Military Museum stands as eyewitness of World War II, 15 August 2017, youm 7 website, link: http://www.youm7.com/story/201715/8/%
- Rommel Museum, the electronic gate of Matrouh governorate, link: http://www.matrouh.gov.eg/rommel_museum.as
- Ashraf Ashour, A Million mines hinder the development in Egypt, 4th April 2017, link: http://www.vetogate.com/2654403
- The problem of land mines in Egypt and the international position, the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, link: http://www.mfa.gov.eg/Arabic/EgyptianForeignPolicy/InternationalOrgRelation/DisArm/Pages/DisArm277land_mines.aspx
- Mines in the Arab World…Hell under Earth (1/7), 31st Mat 2017, Health and Environment website, link: https://www.beawseha.com/201621/11/%
- Rabab Fathi, with photos… executive commission in charge of removing mines at the North Coast: the Armed Forces removed 23 million mines from 83 thousand feddans at Al-Alamein, youm 7 website, link: http://www.youm7.com/story/20142710/%
- Al-Alamein New City, Urban Communities Authority, link: http://www.newcities.gov.eg/know_cities/alameen_new.aspx
- Ahmed Hassan, the Minister of Housing heads for Al-Alamein City to inspect the project under construction, 16 September 2017, link: http://www.youm7.com/story/201716/9/%D9 –
- In photos… the beauty of the Corniche of Al-Alamein New City, which adds a new landmark to this touristic city, youm7 website
Mohamed Hossam, In details... Al-Alamein New City Tower Project, link: http://iskanmisr.com/201703/08//
Ahmed Nafadi, Al-Alamein New City is an eco-friendly city and a new presidential summer residence, Al-Ahram gate, link: http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/1565465.aspx