

Response to The Arab Weekly FAKENEWS

The motive behind the article '*As it moves closer to Eritrea, Egypt eyes military base on Nora island*' that appeared on the London based Arab Weekly on 15th March 2020 might be unclear: but there can be no doubt about the sub-standard 'analysis' and glaring inaccuracies exhibited in the article.

The article written by a certain **Sabahat Khan**, who is presented as some sort of analyst—a senior one at that—makes no effort to present the sources for the ludicrous claims made in the piece. Instead, the article chooses to cite 'unconfirmed reports', in a vain attempt to dress its patently false claims with a veneer of acceptability.

The author, supposedly a 'senior analyst' at the Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis, demonstrated an inordinate level of ignorance of the region, by their unawareness of the historic peace deal between Eritrea and Ethiopia which was signed on 9th July 2018. Had the author been as knowledgeable as they claim to be about the region, they would have been aware of the peace deal and if they had taken the time to read the five points outlined in the agreement, they would have been made aware of the first point which states, '*1. The state of war between Ethiopia and Eritrea has come to an end. A new era of peace and friendship has been opened.*' Thus, would have been spared from the indignity of exposing their utter ignorance about Eritrea, as shown by the claim '*Ethiopia and Eritrea technically remain at war...*' made in the article.

The author is not just ignorant of the historic peace deals signed in Asmara, and Jeddah, but is blatantly oblivious of the geographical layout of Eritrea. Had the author had a modicum of knowledge about Eritrea and its geography, they would have known that there is no such thing as the '*Dakhla Peninsula*'.

The Dahlak (*note, not Dakhla*) is a group of islands that form an archipelago off the north-eastern coast of Eritrea. By definition, a **peninsula** (Latin: paeninsula from paene "almost" and insula "island") is a piece of land that is bordered by water on three sides but connected to a mainland. This being the case, in a reflection of the incompetence of the author, the article claims that Nora is an island on a peninsula. How one can have an island on a strip of land remains unclear.

In a further example of the lack of the geographical knowledge of Eritrea and the repackaging of past lies, the article claims that Sawa is an Arab base secured by Saudi Arabia and the UAE for 30 years. When in actual fact Sawa is a training centre for Eritreans located in the eastern part of Eritrea.

This is not the first time that the Arab weekly has churned out articles packed with lies about Eritrea. In the past it has claimed that Iran had established a base in the Dahlak Islands, that Egypt had deployed thousands of troops in Eritrea and many more.

If a mere perfunctory review of the article can reveal such glaring inaccuracies, one wonders what a more forensic examination of the article would unravel.

It is a sad reflection of the era of 'fake news', where people who have absolutely no knowledge of the subject matter at hand, have the audacity not only to churn out unsubstantiated drivel, but unabashedly present themselves as 'experts' on topics they have little or no knowledge of.

It goes without saying that, whoever is behind this childish ploy to stir up conflict in the region through such amateurish articles— is bound to fail.

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Information & Communication Affairs

Embassy of the State of Eritrea to UK & Ireland