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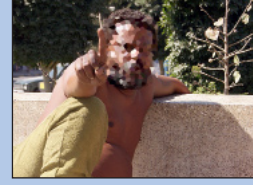
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Inside: ▶



5
Sheikh Hameed Al-Ahmar speaks with the Yemen Times



8
Psychological health in Yemen



10
Exclusive interview with Rabbi of Yemen's Sana'a Jews

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'Day of Anger' protests quake Yemen

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi
SANA'A, Mar. 1 — Tens of thousands of anti-government protesters gathered in 'Change Square' outside of Sana'a University as protests entered their nineteenth day.
Last Tuesday, 'Change Square' witnessed 'a day of anger' that was staged in solidarity for people killed by security forces this week because of their participation in protests against the regime.

The anti-government protesters were chanting, clapping and dancing while large speakers broadcast enthusiastic music. Hundreds of tents have been erected. The walls and tents are hung with cartoons and slogans that denounce President Ali Abdullah Saleh as corrupt and a thug.
Protesters waved Yemeni flags and some of them climbed up light poles and billboards to chant enthusiastically against the president. Female protesters were also taking part in the demonstra-

tion.
Protesters there say that they will not leave until the president leaves. They say that the president has two choices: "Either leave or be forced to leave."
"This is the only place I can express my opinion without being monitored by political or national security. When I see those eager protesters, I realize that the regime will be overthrown by those heroes who come here spontaneously," said Ali Abu Lohoom, a youth activist.
"I don't want a job or money. I want the president to step down," he said.
Abu Lohoom denounced the recent speeches by the president as 'stupid'. "Our president is dying," he said.
Redwan Masood, head of Yemen Student's Union, told the Yemen Times that there are cases of enforced disappearances of students and protesters by security forces.



Tens of thousands of anti-government protesters rallied across Yemen on Tuesday to decry the deaths of demonstrators in Aden.

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Saleh blames US, Israeli conspiracy for unrest

By: Shatha Al-Harazi
SANA'A, Mar. 1 — At least 6,000 people gathered at Sana'a University on Tuesday to demand the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The demonstrations — which were organized by the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) — were dedicated to the individuals who had been killed in Aden while protesting peacefully.
The anti-government protesters rejected all forms of negotiation and dialogue with the president, and were unwilling to accept anything short of his immediate departure. Saleh, in turn, accused the protesters of being agents of Israel and the US. "There is an operation room based in Tel Aviv and run by the White House that aims to destabilize the Arab world. These protesters are nothing but [that operation room's] implementers and imitators," said Saleh during a speech made at Sana'a University to a group of medical professors.
Saleh also confirmed that he would be willing to leave his position if he were voted out in an early election called by

the opposition. "All around the world, it is the opposition that calls for early presidential and parliamentary elections," said Saleh. "But the opposition in Yemen wants neither early nor late elections. They only want chaos." He then went on to remind Yemenis that their country is not Tunisia or Egypt, and that the opposition is leading Yemen towards a civil war.
According to the official White House website, American Press Secretary Jay Carney expressed the US' disapproval of Saleh's accusations: "I just want to get the quote right. He had this to say about

the uprisings, about the protests that are taking place in Yemen. This is the President of Yemen... He said this: 'I am going to reveal a secret. There is an operations room in Tel Aviv whose aim is the destabilization of the Arab world and that operations room in Tel Aviv is run by the White House.' Is this how our ally should speak about the United States?"
Carney has advised Saleh and other Middle Eastern leaders to commit their countries to political reform. "We've made it clear to the leadership in Yemen," said Carney, "just as we have with

the leadership in other countries that they need to focus on the political reforms that they need to implement in order to respond to the legitimate aspirations of their people. Moreover, we don't think scapegoating will be the kind of response that the people of Yemen or the people of other countries will find adequate."
"Soagain," explained Carney, "I think the focus needs to be, in Yemen as in other countries, on opening up society and working with one's own people to bring about a process that's democratic and inclusive."

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Latest developments from Freedom Square, Taiz

By Imad Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Mar. 2 — Al-Hurria (freedom) Square in Taiz was crowded yesterday with hundreds of thousands of people, including many youth and leading JMP personalities for 'a day of rage'. They are still rejecting authority despite the latest initiative from President Saleh on Monday night of forming a national unity government.

The opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) in Taiz said that the day of rage is a consolidation of the public revolution, and a show of loyalty to the Yemeni people, "who have come from every plain, mountain, village and town seeking liberation and to force tyranny to leave."

A statement released by the JMP

denounced the killing of peaceful protesters in Aden and other governorates "in a barbarian manner and with retarded mentality." They also requested the culprits who used a hand grenade against people sitting in the square in Taiz last week be arrested. The attack resulted in the death of a young man, Mazen Al-Bethaiji, and injured dozens of demonstrators.

The statement also stated that revolutions were not an exercise of revenge, rather they are meant to remove corruption and tyranny. It affirmed that the Yemeni people with its youth, students, its national and political forces, in addition to NGOs, have all decided to follow the path of change that will restore Yemen, and its people's dignity and honor.

The release called upon all Yemenis, including those in the military, intellectuals, scholars and the youth to join the revolt. It commended those involved in the sit-in at Al-Hurria Square and other locations in a peaceful struggle in all governorates.

Sheikh Abdul Majeed Al-Zandani, a leading figure of the Islah party that is part of the JMP, caused controversy among members and supporters of the JMP at the sit-in at the square. Al-Zandani had expressed support for the president's invitation during his meeting with scholars last Monday, of extending to opposition parties a chance to form a government of national unity. The controversy developed into a fist fight between some members of Islah and others

belonging to the Socialist Party. The latter accused Islah of adopting a "foggy" stance and of being two-faced.

Sources at the square said that some demonstrators had attempted to organize hundreds of youth to march to the governorate's city hall and stage a sit-in there. However, other protesters prevented the march for fear that their friends would be harassed by security or attacked by bullies.

Security forces have blocked access to Taiz City to prevent potential protesters from other districts from joining their comrades at Freedom Square. According to a JMP source, security checkpoints intercepted crowds that had come to join the day of rage from Al-Turba, Maqabana, Jabal

Habashi and several other districts in Taiz.

Peace caravan to Aden blocked by security

A security force comprising of three patrol vehicles, intercepted a peace caravan from Al-Hurria Square headed to Aden on Monday morning. The caravan included writers, poets, human rights activists and academics. They were to travel to Aden in solidarity with the youth there, and as a condemnation of the acts of killing and suppression in Aden at the hands of the military and security units working for the regime.

Ms. Bushra Al-Maqtari, a member of the caravan told the Yemen Times that the convoy was nominal, and its

members were men of letters, activists, academics and politicians from all political parties and orientations.

"The caravan," said Al-Maqtari, "was meant to confirm the unanimity of the demand, that is, the ousting the regime. It was also intended to convey a message of accord with the youth of Aden, and protest against the killing and suppression of its people, and to relieve the military siege imposed on Aden's towns."

She added that the caravan had comprised of over 1000 participants who had volunteered to join, and that some national figures had contributed to it. She said that blocking the caravan promotes succession by creating a rift between Yemenis in northern and southern governorates.

Local radio stations to tackle social issues

By: Tom Finn

SANA'A, Mar. 1 — A workshop on the role of local radio stations in tackling important social issues in Yemen was chaired on Monday by the Women's Media Forum, in collaboration with the Responsive Governance Project (RGP) funded by USAID.

Mangers from the local radio stations of Lahj, Aden, Shabwa and Abyan met with the General Director of Radio and Television, Dr. Abdullah Al-Zalb, to share their ideas on the importance and potential of local radio in Yemeni society.

"Radio stations are a vital medium between local authorities and the Yemeni people," said Dr. Al-Zalb, adding that Yemeni citizens, especially those living in rural areas, depend heavily on radio both as a way of receiving information and also as a means of interacting and participating in their societies.

There are twelve local radio stations in Yemen, most of them are based in Sana'a and all are government owned institutions, according to Raghda Jamal,

a program officer at the Women's Media Forum (WMF).

The local radio stations cover national news as well as local news from each governorate.

"Because so many are illiterate they listen to the radio. It's far more important than television as a means of communication," said Jamal.

The WMF recently began producing their own radio program 'Modern Yemen', a series of 20 minute episodes featuring reports and interviews, which focus specifically on issues faced by Yemeni women in their day-to-day lives.

"We have produced two series. The first tackled social issues such as child marriage, addiction to qat and divorce. The second talked about the financial difficulties facing Yemeni women," Jamal told the Yemen Times.

WMF have obtained a permit from the Ministry of Information allowing them to freely distribute their content to government-owned local radio stations across the country.

"We are the only NGO in Yemen that



Managers of local radio stations discuss their role in tackling Yemen's social issues on Monday in a workshop organised by the Women's Media Forum in collaboration with the Responsive Governance Project, funded by USAID

owns a private radio unit such as this. It's pioneering work," said Jamal.

Al-Zalb praised the role of the WMF, which also works to coach media personnel to contribute to local

radio services through training courses funded by the RGP project.

Mr. Bery Reed, RGP director, said that local media could play an important role in building relationships between the Yemeni government and NGOs.

The workshop produced a number of recommendations that will be used to improve the awareness and skills of journalists and broadcasters, in particular regarding issues of health, education, water, economy, youth and women.

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Continued from Page 1

'Day of Anger' protests quake Yemen

"Some injured protesters are afraid to go to hospital because they know that security forces will detain them," he said.

Adel Al-Osaimi, an activist in the ruling party and secretary-general of the Yemen Student's Union, said that all the students of Sana'a University refuse the opposition's protests and call for stability. He said during a public meeting with the president in Sana'a last Tuesday, that anti-government protesters want the university to be a theater for their demagogic actions.

However, Masood challenged the ruling-party officials to bring ten students to support the president. "They have no student base. All students are eager to make change," he said.

Sa'ad Al-Abasi, 17, came to the anti-government protests from Sahrab district in Taiz governorate to participate in the day of anger.

"I've come to overthrow our corrupt president and his regime. The deadline for the president leaving is next Friday," he said.

Abdulmajeed Al-Zandani, a prominent religious leader, declared last Monday his support of the protesters at Sana'a University.

"There is no legitimacy for the ruler who is not acceptable to the people," Al-Zandani told protesters last Monday.

Counter-protests have taken place in Al-Tahrir Square where thousands were chanting for President Saleh. Witnesses said that the pro-government protesters came

by buses provided by officials of the ruling party.

An employee in the public service, who wishes to remain anonymous, told the Yemen Times that his employer forced employees to attend pro-Saleh protests in Al-Tahrir Square. He said that employers provide buses, flags and pictures of the president for employees to carry.

"They threaten employees with being laid off. I'll not go to any pro-government protests, and I'm not afraid about the results of my decision," he said.

Saleh blames US, Israeli conspiracy for unrest

Saleh, however, has already made it clear that he doesn't need an of the US' advice. In his speech on Tuesday, he questioned why the US felt the need to be so involved in the Arab world. "No one can lie to anyone now," said Saleh. "Every day we all hear Obama's comments: Egypt don't do this, Tunisia don't do that. What's your business in Oman? What's your business in Egypt? Are you the President of the United States or of the Arab world?"

Abd Al-Majid Al-Zindani, the head of the Senior Islamic Scholars Council and key member of Yemen's Islah party, joined the anti-government protesters on Tuesday and made a speech intended to encourage them, telling them it's their constitutional right to protest and reject the regime.

"[Saleh] came to power by force, guaranteed his stay by force and the only way he will leave power is by force as well," said Al-Zindani.

Al-Zindani predicted that an Islamic caliphate will soon be created within the Islamic world. "The new century of the caliphate is coming," opined Al-Zindani. "According to the latest report issued by one US national security organization, the Islamic caliphate is expected to be re-born by 2025."

He also explained how the Egyptian revolution started small, but that very gradually, more and more people began to join the effort. This is how the Egyptian people were able to force President Mubarak to step down.

On Monday, President Saleh met with Zindani's Senior Islamic Scholars Council. Over the course of the mediation between Saleh and the opposition, the JMP announced their rejection of Saleh's proposals and their new affiliation with the protesters.

Tawakul Karman, one of the most visible Yemeni protesters and Director of Women Journalists Without Chains, commented on Saleh's predicament by saying that today, no initiative but his immediate departure will suffice. "The revolution has announced its complete rejection of all of Saleh's initiatives and has reiterated its main demands: the overthrowing of the regime, the erasure of its myriad symbols and the departure of Saleh's relatives from the army and security apparatuses," explained Karman, while reading a statement written by key protest figures. She then called upon all Yemeni people to participate in the "revolution".

On Tuesday, President Saleh also dismissed the governors of Aden, Hadramout, Hodeida and Lahj.

Different segments of society join anti-government protests

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANA'A, Mar. 2nd — More women and children are joining the anti-government demonstrations at Sana'a University every day. Some are personally motivated to remove what they believe to be a "corrupt" regime, while others are encouraged by their husbands or fathers to attend. Still others proceed to the university campus in secret, without the knowledge of their protective families.

Saher Jamal, a 24-year old school teacher, is one such individual. She goes to the protests every day but hides the fact from her parents, who would worry about her security if they knew she was shouting for the removal of the president.

One Facebook group called "I Am a Yemeni Female Who Wants To Protest, But..." was founded by a girl whose family has prevented her from joining the demonstrations, in spite of her keen desire to attend. At present, the group has approximately 500 members.

Three sisters from a well-known tribe recently had a fight with their brother while attending the Sana'a University sit-in. He was scandalized to discover that they were in attendance, in spite of the fact that he'd been allowed to camp there for days.

"It's the tribal mentality that makes him prevent us from expressing our opinion. He was afraid of what other tribesmen in the protest would think of us, as well what supporters of the ruling party might do shut us up," said Amani Mohammed, one of the three sisters.

Ibtisam Al-Humadi is protester who decided to join the demonstrations to raise awareness of her brother's death,

allegedly by the hands of "the corrupt government". "My brother has been dead for nine months, but he has been kept in a hospital refrigerator for eight of those months. No one cared about the fact that his life had been taken from him. I delivered a complaint to the president's office, but nothing happened," explained Ibtisam.

Faisal Al-Humadi, who is Ibtisam's brother, became embroiled in a fight with his neighbor, who later stabbed him in the back. He bled for three days before receiving an operation, but police arrested him before he was able to recuperate fully. This resulted in his paralysis.

"At the police station," said Ibtisam, "they told him that he would receive special treatment and that he would be put in an individual cell with three windows. Instead, they brought him bottles 'to urinate in', but inside the bottles was some sort of flammable liquid. As such, he was burned completely and then he died."

Ibtisam said that she knew the police were lying when they said her brother had committed suicide. "How could he have, when they checked him and took all of his belongings before sending him to his cell? They ordered my brother's burial so as to keep the identity of the murderer anonymous. They wanted to bury him along with his legal case. I will keep shouting for the removal of this regime — of those who killed my brother."

Aisha Ahmed is a mother who has brought her child to the demonstrations for the sixth day in a row. "We came to make the president step down," said Ahmed. "He has achieved nothing during his rule. Many university graduates don't have jobs. We want a truly inde-

pendent president."

Khadija, a nine-year old girl whose face had been painted with the word 'leave', said that her mother had brought her to the protest. "We came to make the president leave. He is a thief who stole half of my father's salary," she said.

The sit in at Sana'a University campus has been well-organized. The tents that have been erected are neatly aligned in rows and bear labels that identify their owners. Immediately to the right of the university gate is the women's tent. When a new group arrives on campus, they are greeted by loud cheers of "Welcome, welcome!" They are then offered a chance to give a speech on the main stage, announcing their arrival and proclaiming their commitment to the cause of overthrowing President Saleh.

On Tuesday, the demonstration's media committee said that 200 pro-government protesters had joined the anti-government demonstration. Students who had been taken to the pro-government rally at Tahrir Square managed to find their way to the opposition protest at Sana'a University, where they then joined the opposition crowds.

According to the National Organization for Defending Freedoms and Rights, a body that reports all violations that occur at the anti-government demonstrations, 45 students at the Kuwait High School in Sana'a had been threatened with academic suspension because they had articulated anti-government views.

Salim Alaw, a Sanaani lawyer, has said that the school has no legal right to suspend students on the basis of political expression. "We even got a complaint that one of the 45 students in question had been beaten by the school's principal for shouting 'the people want to

remove the regime'."

Another private school has suspended two students for shouting anti-government slogans in class. One of them is only seven years old, while the other is 12. "The head of the school called me and actually started cursing me and my nephew," said Ali Al-Dailami, activist and uncle of one of the children in question.

Alaw said that it is illegal to suspend a student before issuing a formal warning to both the students and his or her parents.

The protesters have also mobilized for the efficient provision of meals. These are eaten in large groups and are usually donated by either sympathetic neighborhood cooks or by the protesters themselves. Since many tribes have joined the demonstrations, they also take responsibility for the feeding of their fellow tribesmen. The protesters are very aware of who is feeding them and they reject any food that is donated by political figures that they don't trust, including Islah party leader Hameed Al-Ahmar. Rumors have spread amongst the protesters that Al-Ahmar intends to become Yemen's next president, and this makes them extremely wary of his support.

In the tents at Sana'a University, many different activities take place. Some are full of smoke and qat, while others are full of young activists working on awareness campaigns. Indeed, the qat sellers still manage to find their way into the protests and their tents have been reaping very good business.

Nevertheless, some of the normal residents living in the university area have informed police that they have been unable to practice their normal lives while the protesters are busy taking up space.



At the anti-government protest, the banner read I don't understand anything but I dream of freedom

Bilquis Foundation campaigns for dyslexia awareness

By: Ayham Al-Otoom

SANA'A, Mar. 2 — Two parent-teacher dyslexia awareness courses have been initiated by the Belquis Development Foundation (BDF) at two different schools in Sana'a. The courses, undertaken to raise awareness about the condition, "...educated participants on the concept, causes, symptoms and treatment methods of dyslexia," said Hana'a al-Aqil, education officer at BDF. Dyslexia is a learning disability that "impairs a person's fluency or accuracy in being able to read, speak, and spell".

Al-Aqil said that their plan was designed to cover 50 schools — at a rate of two per week — followed by a field survey of schools in Sana'a in coordination with the Ministry of Education. She added that the second course was specifically geared towards teachers. During this course, 25 teachers learned various methods best suited to the instruction of dyslexic children.

Ms. Sabah, headmistress of Al-Izz school, said she had never heard about dyslexia before the courses, but now, thanks to Hana'a and her dedicated awareness raising, more teachers are equipped with methods to better educate their students. "We invited Hana'a to the school," explained Sabah, "to benefit

from her experience and understand the concept even further. We also invited some of the pupils' mothers and all the teaching staff was present during the course. BDF distributed brochures and lectured on this disorder and how to deal with dyslexic children."

Sabah indicated that educators are now responding positively to the course by changing their teaching methods when dealing with children who suffer from this learning disorder. In the past, special consideration was rarely given to the education of dyslexic children.

Ms. Angela, an English teacher at Al-Izz school, said that the course had taught things about dyslexia they had not previously been aware of, as well as ways to look after children with this reading and writing disorder.

During the course, teachers learned how to interact with children with learning difficulties and were instructed on how to give them adequate time when writing. The problem for many dyslexic children is connecting mental processes with the visual and auditory senses. As such, parents and teachers were advised to associate the letter "D" with the picture of a door, as a means to embed it in the dyslexic student's subconscious.

During the course, BDF made some recommendations to the teachers, such

as focusing on the strength of dyslexic learners (e.g. if the pupil likes painting, the teachers should take that into consideration when teaching him or her), giving the pupils enough time to copy the lessons from the blackboard and concentrating on visual communication — associating everything that is taught with a corresponding picture.

"Before the course," said Angela, "I used to reprimand my pupils harshly. I would attribute their educational weakness to the negligence of their parents or former teachers. But now I've changed my attitude completely."

Mrs. Hana'a, mother of Al-Izz sixth-grader Haia, said she had suffered with her daughter for three years. She used to punish the girl for not understanding her lessons, as well as for her slow writing. Her teachers often acted in a similar way and kept telling Haia's mother that her daughter had always been an absent-minded and slow learner, implying that she was stupid. They had even refused to give her daughter extra time to finish copying lessons from the board, saying they would not have wasted class time for the sake of Haia.

Hana'a praised the role played by BDF. "When I attended the course and listened to Ms. al-Aqil, I learned what dyslexia was. It was as if she was talking

specifically about my daughter Haia," she said.

She recalled how her daughter used to memorize her lessons at home and whenever she had an exam, the results were invariably disappointing. "One of the reasons for Haia's poor performance was

that the teachers were letting my daughter down," said Hana'a. "Her reaction was to break her pencils and to crumple erasers. This was a way to show her hatred for studying, because her teachers did not understand her problem."

She said that her daughter's situation

has improved since the BDF's recommendations to the teachers, such as increasing the marks of dyslexic pupils to encourage them, and refraining from shouting at them. "My daughter received 60 points out of 60 on her latest English test," said Hana'a.

UK doubles aid to Yemen

By: Malak Shaher

SANA'A, March 2 — The United Kingdom promised the Yemeni government on Wednesday to increase its aid to Yemen from GBP 46.7 million to 90 million (YR 31 billion) by 2015, said Joanna Reid, head of the British Department of International Development DFID in Yemen.

DFID Secretary Andrew Mitchell announced that 1.8 million people will have better access to basic services such as healthcare, water and education as a result in the increase in aid.

The bilateral aid committed by the UK government is intended to assist development in Yemen and will increase gradually in the coming four years.

The UK also asked that the Yemeni government endeavor to meet a series of goals, which include moving towards the holding of free and fair elections and promoting economic reform.

"We also continue to encourage political reform in Yemen and believe that

holding free, fair and multi-party parliamentary elections are an important part of that reform," said Reid. "We will continue to work with Yemenis to make such elections possible."

Yemen is one of 13 countries that will be helped by the British Government to hold freer and fairer elections.

According to Reid, the UK government is "concerned about Yemen's high level of unemployment" and that part of the additional development aid will target employment problems across the country. The investment in education and training will equip Yemenis with the skills necessary to find jobs domestically or in the wider Middle East.

"As a result of DFID's increased support to Yemen, we estimate that an additional 38,000 Yemenis will be able to find work," said Reid.

In terms of education, the aid will enable more than 55,000 children in all Yemeni governorates to go to primary school. DFID will support the Social Fund for Development, which spends around 40% of its investments on edu-

cation, according to Reid.

According to the British Embassy, the UK government is committed to supporting Yemen in the long-term, as demonstrated by Britain's decision to sign a 10-year Development Partnership Arrangement with Yemen in 2007. The Agreement includes commitments from both the UK and from Yemen. For example, the government of Yemen has pledged to produce a development plan for poverty reduction that also details a series of reforms. For their part, the UK has offered to help support the Yemeni government in achieving these reforms, as well as to urge further progress.

Yemen is one of 27 countries to be helped by the British government in the 2011-2016 period. The new strategy presented by Secretary Mitchell will aim at decreasing the infant mortality rate by 250,000 children, saving the lives of 50,000 women during pregnancy and childbirth, securing proper education for 11 million Yemenis and providing access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation.



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Sheikh Hameed Al-Ahmar to Yemen Times:

“The real threat to Yemen’s unity and stability is this current regime”



He is one of the sons of late Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar who was the most powerful tribal leader in Yemen. Although Hameed Al-Ahmar did not inherit his father’s sheikhdom as it went to his older brother Sadeq, he did prove himself visibly not only as one of Yemen’s most wealthy businessmen, but also as a strong political figure in the Yemeni opposition.

Hameed Al-Ahmar has also coupled his political savvy and an accumulation of more than 17 years in parliament representing the conservative Islah opposition party, with an honorary doctorate degree in economics. He speaks fluent English and has no inhibitions to speak his mind whether to the media or in political meetings as a part of the National Dialogue Committee between the opposition and the ruling party.

His strong opinions against the president who happens to be from the same tribe are continuously causing a stir in the Yemeni political sphere, yet he says he is not afraid.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Sheikh Hameed Al-Ahmar on his position towards the president, dialogue and his take on the situation in Yemen in recent future.

There have been rumors that you are planning something for next Friday March 4, what is happening then?

Fridays have been proven to be days of freedom in the Arab world. It’s a normal thing, people come together on Fridays for prayer and it’s easier to get things done. But before Friday we had a large demonstration on Tuesday which we termed the day of rage for those killed in Aden last week.

Is the Friday protest going to include people from outside Sana’a?

Yemen is not like other countries. Our capital is just 1.5 to two million people. We don’t have large population centers like Egypt where in Cairo alone there are 20 million. Maybe for the one event, we will bring people to Sana’a.

However, I think keeping people in the area where they live is much safer for them. We care about the safety of the people. We know that our government doesn’t care about their safety.

“I don’t think Saleh has the will to kill Yemenis like Gaddafi is killing Libyans. Gaddafi is crazy.”

If you care so much about peoples’ safety then why are you not protecting them while they’re being shot at? They’ve been told not to go out into the streets after 11 PM.

It’s their freedom and choice, not ours. People demonstrate when and where they please. If the government and the ministry of interior impose a curfew and people go out and are hurt, it’s not the fault of the people but the fault of the government. The people are only exercising their rights to take to the streets and demonstrate. It is the mistake of the ministry of interior who is not protecting people.

What do you want for Yemen?

Change.

That’s vague, can you be more specific?

Changing this regime, including Ali Abdullah Saleh. There are no government institutions in Yemen; it is just Ali and his family. He will be replaced by a functioning state, insha Allah.

You want him changed now?

Well, look. If you review the Yemeni situation today, there are two main positions. The first is the people in the street. They are demanding change and demanding that change happen immediately through Ali’s immediate resignation and removing his relatives from the regime. This is what Yemenis in the streets are demanding.

The second position is the regime’s

position where they have admitted the people are within their rights to ask for change and they have announced their willingness to move forward with this change. The president said he will not run in elections once his term has ended and will not give power to his son. However, this will be in 2013. So, he has accepted the concept of change with some promises and his pledge to step down in 2013.

So, the concept of change is a reality that Ali can’t say no to. But I do believe that he is lying.

In spite of the fact that the Americans believe that he will step down in 2013?

(Laughter) He lies to the Americans! They know that he is the biggest liar in the world.

Even if this time he’s said it with the entire international community watching?

The sin of lying is lying to the Yemeni nation. He is the president of Yemen. So if he is committing a crime, it will not make a difference that he lies to others. The crime of lying to the Yemeni nation, which he is doing.

So, our position...

Your position? The JMP, Hashid, personal?

Our position as the Preparatory Committee of the National Dialogue which I am a member of, as the opposition, may be announced soon.

We, as the dialogue committee, may put ourselves in the middle between the two extreme positions between what the ruling party wants and what the streets want.

We will ask that change starts now but the resignation of Ali may be delayed for up to one year or even by 2013 but the change should start now. This includes removing his sons and brothers from Army leadership.

Starting with his son? Brothers? Cousins?

His sons, his cousins, his brothers, all of them.

“The concept of change is a reality that Ali can’t say no to. But I do believe that he is lying.”

All at one time?

The appointment of these people in the Army and security forces is a clear breach of our constitution. You know, the Yemeni constitution prohibits building the Army up upon a personal, regional, or family basis. We cannot deal anymore with a situation that doesn’t respect the constitution.

So you want to keep the constitution and the institutions in place and only change the people in the government?

Eventually, the constitution will be changed. That doesn’t mean that it will be changed tomorrow. We need to bring people from the south, Sa’ada, people from the streets, people outside Yemen, and have mature amendments to the constitution.

Of course, you need to follow constitutional steps for change. We do respect the will of the people for an immediate change and we will try and find a way to make the transition smooth. Saleh may stay until the end of this year or until the end of his term but he will not remain president. He shall not. He has no right. He has no right to deal with this government as his own property.

Change will happen immediately and maybe, I’m not saying this is now finalized because we will announce our official statement on Tuesday, but I think we will respect the will of the people for an immediate change and we will try and find a way to make the transition smooth.

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What is your role in the Joint Meeting Parties? Do you speak for them?

I am the general secretary of the dialogue committee for the JMP.

Well, the impression I have is that the JMP is trying to reach an agreement with the GPC and there are rumors that Hameed is stopping it.

Who is saying that?

The international community.

No. It’s a partnership. I’m a member of one of the parties in the JMP, the Islah. Of course members of the parties are mature people with a long history in politics and they coordinate their positions properly.

If an agreement is reached between the JMP and GPC, will the protests in the streets stop?

That is not in our hands. Nothing guarantees that the people will follow us.

But many people in the street say they want nothing to do with Islah.

The opposition protests include everyone. It includes people who will not listen to any party. It is their right to demonstrate, of course.

If we reach an agreement that is sufficient enough to fulfill the demands of the people, a good percentage of the protesters would be wisely following up on what we have agreed on. Of course, the number of people in the streets will grow smaller, even if some of these people don’t respect our party.

Is Aden included when you talk about these demonstrations?

We will not deal with the political issues that claim to represent only a part of Yemen. We will not treat this situation as if there is more than one Yemen.

But the violence is more severe in Aden.

It’s very clear that the united position of Yemenis in all cities is annoying the regime. The regime is trying to replace calls in the south for revolution with calls for secession. They don’t care about unity, they care about themselves. They would like to bring back these calls for secession by killing more people in Aden than in Taiz.

You met with the British Ambassador yesterday. What did you talk about with him?

Look, we meet with everybody. We feel that everybody is convinced that Saleh is not an honest man.

I think staying in power for 33 years is a crime itself, regardless of the performance.

What is your message to the international community?

The international community should be confident that Yemenis are mature enough to have peaceful change and keep their country’s unity and stability. The real threat to Yemen’s unity and stability is this current regime.

What in your opinion is the role of the international community?

The same role that they played in Egypt and that they are playing in Libya. They should respect the rights of the Yemeni people to have this change.

What about the Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula factor?

AQAP is a creation of this regime. They will vanish once the regime falls. If there is good governance, there is no reason for AQAP to exist. You know Yemenis. We don’t have this in our nature.

For five to seven years we’ve been hearing about this Al-Qaeda thing. Did you hear of even one tribe that has announced that they support Al-Qaeda? Yemenis are not bad people. Yemen is not a nation of terror. There are perhaps 70,000 Yemenis in the US, almost 40,000 in the UK. How many of them have committed an act of terrorism? Not one of them.

What about Anwar Al-Awlaki?

Anwar Al-Awlaki lives in Yemen now (laughs). But his importance is blown out of proportion.

You’ve said several times that it’s time to have a president from the south. Do you mean Yaseen Sa’eed No’m’an?

Yes. Yaseen Sa’eed No’m’an is a very good candidate. Personally, I will vote for him.

Will the tribal system accept Yaseen?

Yes, yes, yes. There is a big distance between Hashid and his place in Lahj. Yet I think Hashidis will support him. We will vote for him.

“Yaseen Sa’eed No’m’an is a very good candidate. Personally, I will vote for him.”

Do you speak for Hashid?

No. No one can speak for any person. This is against our political practices. What we can do is we can encourage them and educate them. They respect us when we advise them but it is not right for someone to come and say I speak for the people.

If you don’t speak for Hashid then why hasn’t Sadeq come out in support of the protesters?

Sadeq has already announced, one month ago, that he is with the protesters. Sadeq, in his position as sheikh of the tribe, we leave him for the last minute. We respect Sadeq but he should come at the end.

Does Saudi support the dialogue?

I think they do. They have a positive silence.

Is it in Saudi’s best interest for Saleh to step down?

I don’t know, you should ask them. I think we now know that they are silent. I think this is a positive silence.

What happens if Saleh says no, I won’t step down?

Then people will take to the streets. He has one week to remove his sons, brothers and nephews from positions of power. His son Ahmed is in the most important position of the army of Yemen while he

did not fight a single battle for Yemen in his life. He selects people to head the various sections through his qat sessions from whom he likes best. How can you trust him to militarily defend our country when he was never tested in a battle field?

We need men with experience, because army means credibility and that you are prepared to sacrifice for your country. The readiness to kill and be killed for your country.

We are also demanding that the ones in the security who killed protestors are brought to justice.

Then will there be a Libya in Yemen?

I don’t think Saleh has the will to kill Yemenis like Gaddafi is killing Libyans. Gaddafi is crazy.

Is there a personal rivalry between you and Saleh?

No, this is my public, political stance. I stand against him politically. There is nothing personal.

“If we reach an agreement that is sufficient enough to fulfill the demands of the people, a good percentage of the protestors would be wisely following up on what we have agreed on.”

What do you say to the protesters that fear they are simply trading one tribal leader for another?

The JMP is not working to bring another tribal leader to replace Saleh. We are very serious that we would like to see Yemen’s civil society develop. We want good government institutions distributing power across many different bodies. We are very serious in working to bring a leader and a president from the South.

This isn’t because we like this area or that area but because it is vital to maintain Yemen’s unity. One of the things we can do to remedy what has happened with our brothers in the south is to simply give them power. Give it to them. Make them feel like this is one country.

What about Ali Muhsin?

He is much, much better than Ali Abdullah Saleh. He is not his brother as being reported; he is not even a very close relative of Ali Abdullah Saleh. He is only from the same village. Ali Muhsin is a good person as a military commander but he is not fit to run a country. He doesn’t have the political experience. We need someone who is experienced in politics, economics, and understands how to adapt for the better of Yemen. Of course, we need good people in the military but we want them to be separate from political life. The army shall not continue to rule Yemen. The tribes shall not continue having a big influence in ruling Yemen. They all must be replaced by constitutional law. We respect these institutions and structures but they wouldn’t have a say in the government.

Whenever there is a good government in Yemen the political influence of the tribes vanishes.

Aren’t you worried that any new president from the south will be killed like Al-Hamdi?

No. The very fact of Saleh being in power

for so long is proof that we Yemenis have stopped killing our presidents. This was 30 years ago. This is history. No more. We’ll send them to Syria like Ali Nasser (laughs).

After Saleh leaves, will the people forgive him?

It depends. If he makes it easy, Yemenis are a peaceful people. They will forget his crimes. If he makes it difficult, well, we don’t have a Sharm Al-Sheikh in Yemen.

After Himyar accused the National Security of planning your assassination, are you worried?

I know this. There are many examples of political figures that stood up to Saleh and they disappeared. We know that this is the behavior of our regime. It doesn’t mean that we will stop because of it. You have to take care, try and protect yourself, just to continue your mission. This is a very expected thing.

What would your father think of all this?

You mean what he thought about all this? He encouraged me to do this.

Will you be the next president?

No. It’s not acceptable for a businessman to take a position in the political leadership. Choose this or that.

What will you choose?

I’m not in a position to choose now. I’m a businessman.

Well, when that time comes what will you do?

I will tell you at that time (laughs). But I have two of my sons studying business administration and economy abroad. You can say that I am preparing myself to leave business.

There can be a legitimate way of maintaining business and being in politics. Look at all the western leaders, the Queen of Great Britain has wealth but she is not managing it herself.

The human nature is greedy, that is why we need a clear separation between doing business and being a politician.

“The international community should be confident that Yemenis are mature enough to have peaceful change and keep its unity and stability.”

What about women, it is visible that Tawakul Karma who is in the Shoura council of the Islah party is leading the protests for you. Will she have a say in the decision making of the JMP?

We appreciate her role in the streets and she is part of the political system of the party. We are going to nominate female candidates from the party once we have the proportional electoral system in place.

In fact, we even have women participating in the qat sessions where we discuss our policies. We have five women in the dialogue preparatory committee while the GPC have only four.

Will there be parliamentary elections this year?

Yes, there will be parliamentary elections this year and they will be real transparent, free and fair. We may even have presidential elections very soon if Saleh decides not to go peacefully.

Change Symphony

By: Yahya Al-Sadh
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Maybe they listened to the Arab street to late, those who have imprisoned or beaten to steal fortunes to the echo of the pains and suffering of poverty, hunger, injustice and carelessness from their rulers. The rulers have gone so far as to think the people are not able to fight for liberty and change.

Those judges were greatly mistaken when they thought the Arabs would stay disabled forever, because of the damage and frustration that they have caused them. After decades of trying to separate Arab men from their roots, customs, civilization, their own morals and values, their revolution and independent actions. Here they are today revolting against the crises and frustrations, to prove once again that they are the decision makers, and to draw politics back towards the direction that serves their interests and the nation's interest.

There are nothing but delighted people in the Arab world listening to the symphony of liberation that started in Tunisia, with the participation of all the Tunisia society, who were creative in their roles to the extent that they didn't make any mistakes that may disturb the enjoyment of listening to such great piece. It wakes up millions of Arabs who are in poverty and have suffered injustice for many years. It also wakes them up to the liberty and struggles back in the fifties and sixties of the last century. This has frightened the tyrants of this age, and those who have stolen the nation's fortunes.

What is so special in the change wrought by the Tunisia symphony, different from other revolutionary symphonies, is that it was performed at a time when the Arab sense of hearing had almost become deaf from the desperation of catching any rhythm of revolution from a past beautiful age. This symphony has woken the Tunisia giant from sleep. Likewise, the giant of Egypt also woke up and broke the wall of fear that gave a chance for the Egyptian minarets and churches to

call for a revolution that never has been witnessed before in history. A revolution that lets more than eighty million Egyptians release themselves from the last pharaoh who tyrannized his people for three decades.

Every Arab citizen who has lost his compass in life in the mazes of dictatorial Arab systems, will find in the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions the direction he was always looking for in the political and living mess that exists in much of the Arab world. This mess has led to the existence of a soaked social class that climbed the ladders of politics and trade to lead and ruin lives. Also it changed many of the concepts and behaviors leading to a subservience in all Arab societies.

Today, all sights are directed to the future for those systems to fall, especially those who exceed their mandates and stole their nation's fortunes such as Bin Ali and Mubarak's. The only exit for these systems, that so many are betting on which will be the third to collapse, is for their leaders to correct their systems quickly, and repair what they have destroyed during their ruling periods. The call of the Egyptian and Tunisian people was radical reform in all corrupted areas, however, the arrogance that Bin Ali and Mubarak showed only raised the demands and sped their own downfalls.

What I wish from the president, as one of his citizens for more than three decades, is to realize the truth about the revolutions and change in the Arab world. Also to admit that the Yemeni citizen is an extension of the Arab citizen who had brought down two dictatorial systems in less than two months. He also has to realize that the power for change are in the hands of the street, not the parties and that he is in a race with time. A race the result of which depends in the speedy execution of change in reality, not as dialogues, debates, or proposed oral and anesthetic compromises. The bargaining depends on the timing of local events that are not within the system's control at all. The train of Arab change is moving fast after being stopped for more than four decades.

This is the matchbox president

By: Sadam Abo Esam
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I have prayed with Al-Karadhwi at Friday prayers in what has been called Juma'at Al-Naser in Tahrir Square in downtown of Cairo, and before I touched the Bo Auziry carriage, the maker of Tunisian revolution. I shake hands proudly with his mother and friends' feelings of victory in the city Sydi bo Zayed.

I live the daily details of all the Arab revolutions. I wake up with the burning of the green book in Benghazi, the ruling party bullas attacks in Sana'a, shouting for the freedom in Dawar Al-La'alua in Manama city. Refusing to hesitate to stay in the largest streets in Oman, not to mention participating in the angry shouting against the Botafika regime in Algeria.

For a month, the changes have made me happy, and all Arab people feel the same because they are all sharing in these changes. So what acts of greatness are Arabs trying to achieve or do?

At different times, I have shed tears

of happiness, anger, sadness, hope and anxiety, but each time I find a loving feeling surfacing, searching for unlimited optimism. I may not be exaggerating if I say that Arab government media outlets are leading such acts and participating in these events. And the proud Al-Jazeera channel in Qatar is at the head of it.

While I am following the bloody events in the region on Al-Jazeera, I feel that this an honored mission has become so important for those treated so unfairly. You can notice such feelings in the faces of Yemeni citizens who are obsessed, like many millions of others, to following the channel. And also afraid that the events in Libya may well affect the policy of this channel in covering the revolution in this country.

I was thinking deep inside me, what if the most widely watched channel that stands beside the people of the Arab world was to expand its channel and increase its staff? At least until the end of this season of humiliation for tragic Arabic leaders.

What if what is happening now was

treated just like the qualifiers of the Football World Cup, with its own logo - Freedom, Justice, Dignity? And that those who supervised the soccer nets, provided for us the freedom to express our opinions on Al-Jazeera. To provide for us some of the ten sports channels that were used to cover the Arabic games.

Sure, this suggestion is a confused one. I don't deny the fact that Al-Jazeera has led the revolutions of change in Arab countries. It seems that Al-Jazeera, who have stood beside the people since its foundation, and those who are in charge of it, or finance it, do not fear that they may be seen as against the leaders or dictators of Arabic regimes.

For those who are damaged by the media coverage of large channels such as Al-Jazeera, the neutrality in media is a lie. To me igniting the fire to stand with those treated unfairly I think is super professionalism. Especially when it is leading an awareness campaign to detect the crimes of regimes and the corruption of their administrations. Arab leaders have complained in one way or

another about the channel's policy. We still remember the media talking about what the former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said when he visited the Al-Jazeera office in Doha years ago: "All this trouble from a matchbox like this."

Yes, this is the matchbox that lit up your chair Hosni Mubarak, and you Ben Ali. However, it only shows the truth of what happened in your leadership over your peoples and country, and there are still other examples like your own, in their ways the same or even worse.

We simply, and with high ambition, support Al-Jazeera as showing the Arab reality. And with it start to have hope, especially after the Tunisian and Egypt revolutions. Surely the Arab citizen would be happy to hear the reports of Fauzy Boshra resigning, running away, dying as one of the remaining Arab leaders. The Arab countries will be more happy after witnessing on Al-Jazeera the victory of other coming revolutions in Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and the rest of the world, if Allah wills it.

Tribes in Yemen: or down the rabbit hole

By: Gregory Johnsen
For bigthink.com

A little over a week ago I wrote a post on what I saw as the tribal jockeying that was taking place against the backdrop of the protests in Yemen. Since then several newspapers have dipped their collective toes into the murky waters of tribal politics in Yemen.

There have been some very good pieces - see this piece in the Financial Times as well as Michelle Shephard's profile of Hamid al-Ahmar - others have been, well, shall we say, not as good.

First, Hashid and Bakil are tribal confederations not monolithic blocs. This means that Husayn al-Ahmar does not speak for all of Hashid and certainly not for Bakil (hint: distrust any article that speaks of these two as tribes that move as a unit). Remember President Salih himself is from Hashid.

Second, I have been saying for years that political parties aren't as important in Yemen as we in the west tend to believe they are there. This gets at what I see is a bigger problem. US, UK and other western officials go to Yemen - and everything looks so confusing. Then, mercifully, they realize that Yemen has political parties and institutions (just like in the west) and they imagine that what they know from the home is transferable to Yemen. (Big mistake)

While 2+2 is always 4 in the west, it almost never is in Yemen. Eventually most people who spend any time in Yemen realize this is the case, but by that point they realize that scrapping one way of looking at the country requires coming up with a new one. And, well, this is where most people throw in the towel. It is easier to go along pretending that Yemen plays by understandable rules than it is to spend years studying the place and trying to figure out which relationships and personalities matter.

All this means that in the end we get a lot of superficial analysis that treats Yemen as a place that, say, has political parties that command the loyalty and allegiance of their members.

Instead of a place like the one we saw today where Husayn al-Ahmar resigned from the ruling GPC party. (Many articles jumped the gun claiming that both Hashid and Bakil have deserted the president - this is untrue. A number of shaykhs in Bakil have put out a statement, claiming that Husayn al-Ahmar does not speak for them and indeed he does not - it isn't even clear if he speaks

for Hashid.)

But for all this, Husayn's defection wasn't even the biggest news in the growing conflict between what I continue to call Yemen's two Bayt al-Ahmar. That came last night, when the Ministry of the Interior accused the bodyguards of Hamid al-Ahmar (Ar.) (an MP and the real power in the family) and Himyar al-Ahmar (the deputy speaker of parliament) of opening fire on several citizens last night in Sanaa, wounding two of them and kidnapping a third.

This confrontation eventually led to a phone call from President Salih to Himyar. During the call Salih started bad-mouthing Hamid at which point Himyar hung up on the president, who immediately called Sadiq the eldest al-Ahmar brother and the head of the Hashid tribal confederation, who had previously said he would mediate between the gov't. and the JMP. (Despite his title, Sadiq doesn't have much power in the al-Ahmar family - at least not enough to reign in Hamid.)

Incidentally, none of this would be happening if Shaykh Abdullah al-Ahmar - the patriarch of the clan - and the father of the 10 rambunctious sons was still alive.

After the failed phone call the media machines of both sides went into action, trading insults and accusations. During the war of words, Himyar's office put out a statement (Ar.) claiming that the National Security Bureau (effectively but not officially commanded by Salih's nephew Ammar) had plans to assassinate Hamid. - I kid you not, you

can't make this stuff up.

According to the deputy speaker of parliament, the NSB had photos of Hamid's house.

Then, this morning, yet another al-Ahmar, Husayn, broke ranks with Salih's GPC party and threw in his lot with the protesters. (Big surprise, who knew blood and family would beat out political parties in the end.)

Meanwhile, as protests continue across the country, Salih had to navigate a rebellion on a military base in Sa'dah, where troop morale is incredibly low. Days ago members of the 133 mechanized brigade went into revolt and refused to let their commander, Abd al-Malik Arar (a relative of the president) back onto base. Today, Salih caved Ar. (which will be read as yet another sign of weakness) and gave them a new commander, Salih Muhammad al-Mu'ayf. (If anyone wants the full story, read the article linked above, this post already has too many names and tangents.)

What does this mean: The increasing rhetoric and Husayn's defection to the protesters puts Salih in a precarious position. He still has some moves but they are increasingly limited. Particularly as all of his domestic opponents are crystallizing around the single demand that he must go.

The day Mubarak fell and protests started taking place outside the umbrella of the opposition marked the beginning of the end for Salih. The only thing that happened yesterday was that the movement for his ouster picked up speed.

Tribes step up pressure on Salih

By: Brian Whitaker

Nobody can govern in Yemen without support from the tribes and on Saturday influential figures from the country's two main tribal groupings - the Hashid and the Bakil - abandoned President Salih.

"I announce my resignation from the General People's Congress [the ruling party] in protest at the attacks on peaceful demonstrators in Sanaa, Tai'zz and Aden," Hashid tribal chief Sheikh Hussein bin Abdullah al-Ahmar told a huge gathering in Amran province, north of Sanaa.

The Yemen Post says his announcement was "warmly received by a large crowd of tribesmen", including mem-

bers of Yemen's second largest tribal group, the Bakil.

Mohammad Abdel Illah al-Qadi, a prominent leader of the Sanhan (Salih's own branch of the Hashid) also announced he is leaving the party.

Yemen's tribes are not monolithic blocs, as Gregg Carlstrom points out in an article for Al-Jazeera, and Salih still has supporters among them (partly as a result of bribing them with money and cars). Even so, the latest desertions are an important sign of which way the wind is blowing.

A statement from the General People's Congress on Sunday played down the problem. It said "the resignation of some members of the GPC at this timing reveals the reality of the opportunists" and described the departures as "like an operation of purification of the

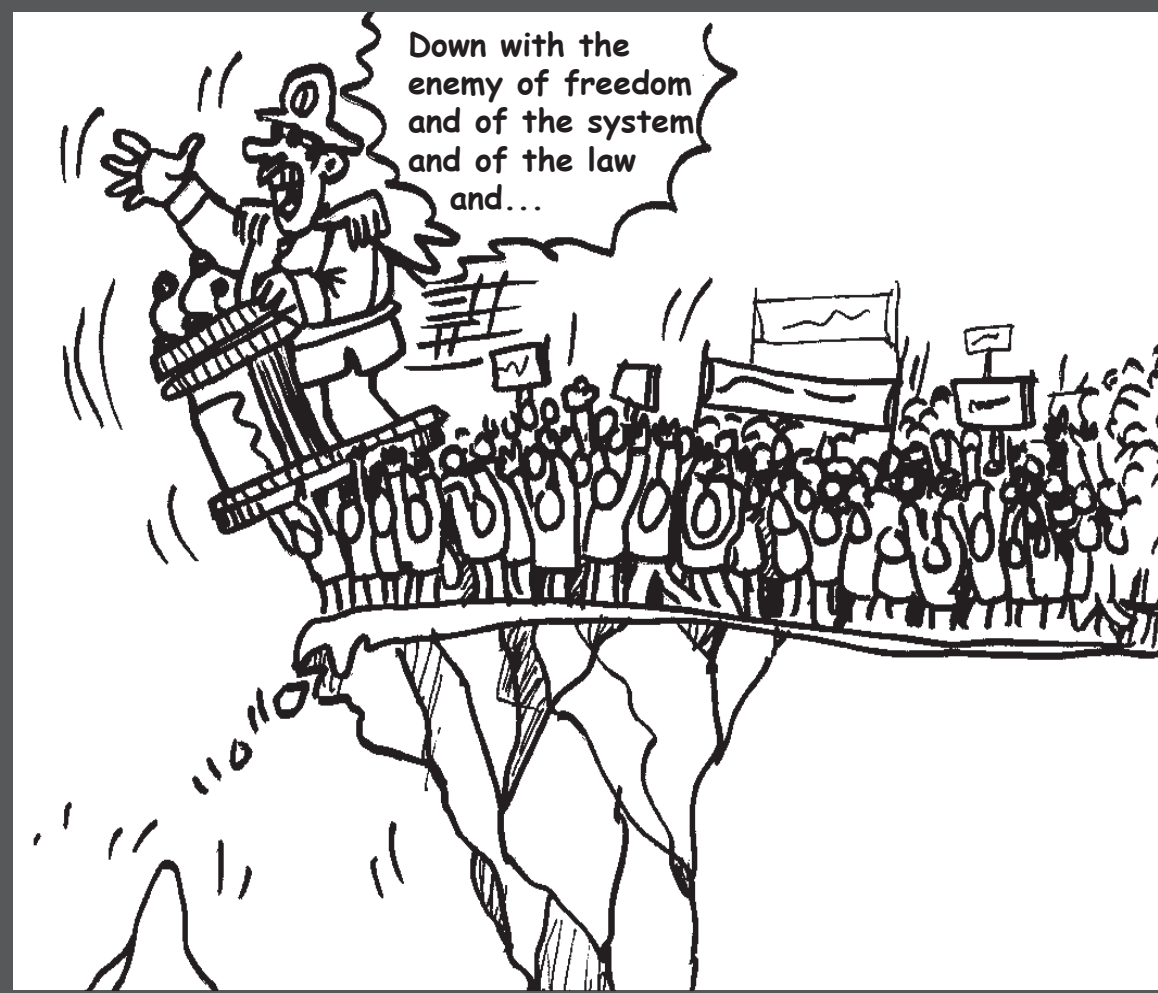
GPC from the parasites that were unable to effect any development inside the organisation". It added that "the GPC has in its ranks millions of loyal and sincere members who have firm stands and work sincerely for siding with issues of the homeland and the people".

All this will come to a head with the parliamentary elections scheduled for April 27, which are likely to be conducted in the midst of unprecedented turmoil - assuming they do go ahead. They have already been postponed for by two years and to postpone them again would be extremely dangerous for Salih politically, as would rigging them to ensure another GPC victory.

Beyond April 27, the shape of events in Yemen is anyone's guess but Salih's survival prospects are clearly fading.

SKETCHED OPINION

By: Hamid



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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position with its Project "EC-UNDP Joint Electoral Assistance Project in Yemen"

Post Title: National Gender Officer
Duration: one year
Duty Station: Sana'a

Duties and Responsibilities:

The national gender officer shall execute the various functions according to the schedule below and shall accommodate necessary adjustments as required by the project review work plans.

Deliverables:

- Liaise with the national mission committee and other independent NGOs and CBOs to obtain their input on the proposed activities and modalities for the revised proposal
- Review the proposed implementation strategies and advice the ETA on appropriate modifications to ensure the proposed activities are viable.
- Prepare budgets and timelines for activities identified in the revised project proposal
- Compile and maintain updated statistics of NGO/Civil society organizations engaged in supporting increased participation of women including contact information and fields of engagement
- Filter and compile detailed statistics on NGOs and CBOs engaged in democratic governance particularly in creating awareness and improved participation of women in the electoral process, human rights and related fields
- Develop TOR for interested NGOs and CBOs on the basis of which they can submit their applications.
- Design a strategy and an evaluation scheme for selection of NGOs and CBOs that can participate in the revised project
- Design a coordination strategy for regular engagement of project staff with the National Women Committee and other independent NGO and CBO engaged in women issues
- Work as a member of the planning cell to define themes that will be included in the implementation of activities under component 2 of the revised project
- Design training materials for implementing NGOs, CBOs supervisors and female civic educators under component 2 of the revised project
- Design training schedules for the different participants under component 2 of the project
- Define codes of conduct for participating organizations and individuals specified under component 2 of the revised project document
- Arrange and conduct discussion activities including one to one discussions, round table discussions to further concretize the implementation modalities according to the new project document
- Review the activities of teams formed in previous projects and make recommendations as to how they can be utilized in the revised project

Qualifications:

Education:

- Master's degree or its equivalent social sciences, arts or related fields.

Experience:

- Minimum 5-10 years experience in dealing with gender issues and women empowerment with a government institution or CBO organization or other related fields.
- Documented evidence working with organizations supporting women advancement and increased participation in public affairs

Language Skills/Requirements:

- Fluency in the English and Arabic languages spoken and written.
- Excellent communication skills

Only Online Applications will be accepted
 For further details on the job description and online application, please visit our website at <http://jobs.undp.org>

Response will only be made to short listed candidates
 The deadline for receiving applications is Saturday, March 12, 2011

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position with its Project "EC-UNDP Joint Electoral Assistance Project in Yemen"

Post Title: Administrative and Finance Associate
Duration: one year
Duty Station: Sana'a

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Keep adequate and systematic records and accounts (hard and electronic forms) in respect of activities implemented for the project.
- Full compliance UNDP rules, regulations, and policies of financial activities, financial recording/reporting system.
- Implement the procurement activities of the project in accordance with UNDP regulation.
- Regular monitoring of the project financial spend
- Maintain internal expenditures control system which ensures that vouchers processed are matched and completed, transactions are correctly recorded and other entitlements are duly processed
- Timely corrective actions on un-coded vouchers, including the vouchers with budget check errors, invalid exceptions, unapproved vouchers.
- Administration and financial implementation of project activities
- Ensure proper cash management system functioning and manages cash receipts and petty cash
- Accounting & Budgeting preparation of Annual work Plan of the Project
- Advise management on project financial and administrative issues.
- Budget Management and Revision
- Monitor and keep records in exchange rate.
- Oversee and prepare financial transactions, payments and purchase orders, in accordance with UNDP procedures.
- To prepare and follow up arrangements for project related workshops and meeting
- Control the expenditure and ensure accuracy of compilation and completeness of supporting documentation.
- Prepare financial reports according to the UNDP System.
- Initiate correspondence to verify data, answer queries and obtain additional information on accounts and financial transactions as required
- Prepare all necessary documents for the contractual process with local consultants

Qualifications:

Education:

- University degree in Finance/Accounting or related fields.

Experience:

- Minimum of 3 years experience in Finance and accounting field, full proficiency in computerized accounting system.
- Experience in electoral projects is an asset.
- Clerical and administrative experience.
- Experience in using Atlas accounting system is an asset.

Language Requirements:

- Fluency in the English and Arabic languages.

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position with the "United Nations Development Programme"

Job Information: Communication Technology Assistant
Duration of contract: one year Renewable
Duty Station: Sana'a, Yemen

Responsibilities:

- Compliance with corporate information management and technology standards, guidelines and procedures for the Country Office (CO) technology environment.
- Support to the use of Atlas (UNDP's implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning/ERP functionality for improved business results and improved client services.
- Provision of inputs to the CO administrative business processes mapping and implementation of the internal standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- Provision of inputs to preparation of results-oriented work plans.
- Performance of specific technical functions, including changing of hardware electronic components (disks, memories, network wiring, power sources, etc.) and routine repairs.
- Assistance in the installation of commercial and in-house developed software and related upgrades.
- Assistance in upgrading patch and anti-virus programs on a timely basis.
- Monitoring of file server traffic, usage and performance on a frequent and regular basis.
- Support to users in backing up and restoring their files, as well as in virus detection, removal and prevention.
- Assistance in trouble-shooting and monitoring of network problems.
- Response to user needs and questions regarding network access.
- Assistance in backup and restoration procedures for local drives. Maintenance of backup logs. Assistance to organization of off-site storage of backups.

Qualifications:

- Secondary education with relevant certifications in hardware and software management and application, Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) required.
- University Degree in Computer Science would be desirable, but it is not a requirement.
- 3 to 5 years of relevant working experience, including network administration, support to management of hardware and software platforms, telecommunications facilities, knowledge of Windows-based packages/applications.
- Fluency in English and Arabic is required.

Monthly Salary is approximately \$1,000

Only Online Applications will be accepted
 For further details on the job description and online application, please visit our website at <http://jobs.undp.org>

Response will only be made to short listed candidates
 The deadline for receiving applications is Tuesday, 15 March, 2011

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position with its Project "EC-UNDP Joint Electoral Assistance Project in Yemen"

Post Title: Communication and Visibility Officer
Duration: one year
Duty Station: Sana'a

Duties and Responsibilities:

The Communication and Visibility Officer shall execute the various functions according to the schedule below and shall accommodate necessary adjustments as required by the project review work plans.

Deliverables:

- In consultation with the Chief Technical Advisor design a strategy of communication and visibility activities
- Prepare and periodically update the project website
- Prepare project fact sheets, periodic newsletters, other written materials for general public
- Conduct public events, such as round tables, lectures, press conferences, etc.
- Translate materials from Arabic into English and vice versa
- Contribute to the regular project reporting
- Liaise with other team members in order to obtain timely information and update
- Perform other relevant tasks as assigned by the Chief Technical Advisor

Qualifications:

Education:

- Master's degree or its equivalent social sciences, arts or related fields.

Experience:

- 8-10 years experience in public relations and/or journalism.
- Documented evidence working with organizations supporting women advancement and increased participation in public affairs

Language Requirements:

- Fluency in the English and Arabic languages spoken and written.
- Excellent communication skills.

Only Online Applications will be accepted

For further details on the job description and online application, please visit our website at <http://jobs.undp.org>

Response will only be made to short listed candidates
 The deadline for receiving applications is Saturday, March 12, 2011

Psychological health in Yemen

Story and photos by:
Ayham Al-Otoom

For Yemenis suffering from psychological conditions, it is often extremely difficult to find quality professional help. Many end up living on the street, as their families may be oblivious to the existence of institutes that offer proper medical care.

But according to Dr. Abdullah Yahya Shwieel, a physician at Al-Rasheed Psychological Hospital, homeless Yemenis with serious psychological conditions represent only a small percentage of the total number of people suffering from such illnesses. Homeless Yemenis are usually afflicted with particularly severe conditions, such as dementia and schizophrenia. But those struggling with mental health issues that are less visible – though sometimes just as dangerous – often strive to live normally, without proper treatment.

Dr. Shwieel stressed that if someone who suffers from delusory thoughts doesn't find proper care, they are at higher risk of being arrested and imprisoned. Those who experience particularly extreme delusions may even be driven to commit violence against innocent bystanders.

Yemenis traditionally enjoy very strong family networks and these structures can enable families to care for mentally ill relatives. Indeed, if it were not for such family networks, many more people would be forced to live on the street. Nevertheless, family efforts alone are insufficient when combating mental health problems in Yemen. The Ministry of Health is currently working on plans to build shelters that will house individuals who do not have access to familial support and who are



Due to social stigmas, many Yemenis dealing with mental health issues are forced to live on the streets

forced into homelessness on account of their afflictions.

Dr. Shwieel also cited the research of one reputable European institute, which claims that approximately 30% of all mental health cases are hard to treat specifically because the patients are so incredibly difficult to diagnose.

Some families lack the financial means to treat relatives struggling with mental health conditions. This further exacerbates the problem of homelessness, as some people pose such significant monetary burdens upon their families that they are simply obliged to leave.

While most hospitals in Yemen have pharmacies that are well-supplied with appropriate medicines, they rarely

house specially designated psychological wards in which patients can be accurately diagnosed and prescribed proper medication. In fact, there is only one psychological ward in all of Yemen – at Al-Thura hospital in Sana'a. It is possible that the widespread lack of mental healthcare facilities in Yemen is indicative of a profound social stigma against mental health patients.

According to Dr. Shwieel, the building of private health clinics across Yemen should be discouraged. He suggests that priority should be given to building new psychological wards in existing public hospitals.

He also added that day hospitals can often help to ease the suffering of families struggling to support mentally ill relatives. These hospitals usually send buses to patients' homes every morning to transport them to centers where they can receive necessary treatment and participate in activities that are specially designed to aid in the improvement of mental health. In the evening, the buses return patients to their homes. This way, they never feel as if they are being separated from their families or isolated from society.

Dr. Shwieel also said that one of the main reasons why a patient's mental state can deteriorate is societal rejection. Many Yemenis actually believe that people suffering from mental illness are actually secret security officers in disguise. Such mistrust can be deeply damaging to the wellbeing of patients.

Mona Salem, the Director of the "Combating Child Labor Unit" at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor,

said that her organization helps assist families whose head of household suffers from a debilitating psychological condition. It provides families with stipends that are given every three months and the size of the stipend depends upon how large the family is.

Dr. Mohammad Al-Khawlidi, Manager of the National Program for Psychological Health at the Ministry of Health, said that, "The health ministry doesn't have any precise statistics regarding the number of homeless suffering from mental diseases and it hasn't adopted any comprehensive programs to aid those who are unable to afford quality psychosocial support. Furthermore, doctors seldom choose to pursue majors in psychological health at university, as there is a profound stigma associated with such a discipline. At present, there are only 25 doctors who specialize in psychological health in all of Yemen and there are only three clinics that offer psychological treatment. On of these clinics is at the Al-Salaam hospital in Hodeida."

He also said, "We cannot improve the status of psychological healthcare in Yemen if we do not have the requisite financial support. If we could afford to open a department of psychology at every hospital in the country, the percentage of Yemenis suffering from delusory thoughts would decrease dramatically."

He went on to say that, "If the number of qualified staff who have received advanced training in psychological health – for example, Master's degrees or PhDs – were to increase, the number of patients suffering from psychological conditions would decrease. In addition, if Yemeni society were to increase its awareness of psychological diseases, then fewer people would resort to potentially dangerous sorcery and alternative medicine."

Afaf Al-Haimi, a doctor of sociology, believes that, "Everything is mixed up and we don't know which patients suffer from psychological conditions and which don't. The government, Yemeni society and Yemeni families should bear this in mind and support the building of clinics that can accurately diagnose and treat patients. The economic conditions of most Yemeni families can make it impossible to tolerate the burden posed by mentally ill relatives."

She also claimed that because many Yemenis suffer from a lack of genuine entertainment in life, men and women with mental conditions are often induced to participate in unhealthy qat sessions. Some even ingest dangerous nuts and drugs during these qat sessions, and this can exacerbate existing psychological symptoms.

HEALTH WATCH

By: Dr. Siva



This weekly column disseminates health information to readers in Yemen and beyond. Dr. Siva currently works at Aden Refinery Company Hospital. Lifestyle, diseases and cancer prevention are his special interests. Complementary medicine and naturopathy are his passions.

Tips to manage anxiety

Hammed is a new doctor who has joined our hospital. Today, he has to give a clinical presentation about Alzheimer's in our Continuing Medical Education Program. He is terribly nervous and anxious whether he can do it well and what are the questions he may face. Feelings of anxiety are a common experience. Anxiety is a normal part of life that affects every aspect of a person's life. If you get nervous speaking in front of a group or have trouble sleeping the night before a big test, you will surely know that when anxiety attacks it can crack even the strongest amongst us.

Anxiety attacks can be one of the most stressful things anybody can go through. All of us experience some degree of anxiety on a fairly frequent basis. When an event in your life causes a certain unexpected and unpleasant reaction, such a circumstance typically results in anxiety. Your body reaction can vary from sweating and stuttering to sometimes heart palpitations, faster breathing and sometimes you may even faint. If such a pattern is repeated, then it becomes imperative for the person to cope with these anxiety attacks.



What is anxiety?

Anxiety acts as a normal alarm system alerting you of danger. It can be a general feeling of worry, a sudden attack of panicky feelings or a fear of a certain situation or object. It is caused by pressure, stress and continuous worry or worrying thoughts. Anxiety isn't always a bad thing. In fact, it can help you stay alert and focused, and motivate you to solve problems. However, when anxiety is constant and interferes with your relationships and activities, you may be suffering from an anxiety disorder.

What are the symptoms of anxiety?

Symptoms of anxiety include:

- Sweating
- Stuttering
- Muscle tension
- Shortness of breath
- Faster heartbeat
- Nausea
- Dry mouth
- Loss of sleep and not being able to concentrate
- Coping up with Anxiety

Managing anxiety is a necessity in our modern fast-paced world. Here are some tips to help you with the same:

1. **De-stress regularly:** In the modern world, stress has become omnipresent. One is stressed out when at home, in school, or at office, which results in anxiety. One of the very effective ways of managing anxiety is to de-stress regularly. To begin, you need to identify what is causing stress in your life, and then look for ways to reduce them. You can take the help of meditation, yoga or even a walk.
2. **Get adequate of Sleep:** Anxiety can cause insomnia, but lack of sleep can also contribute to anxiety. Sleep rests your body and replenishes it physically, mentally and emotionally. It also revitalizes your mind thus improving your general sense of wellbeing as well as your mood.
3. **Laugh out loud:** A great way to ease anxiety is laughter. Laughter can make you forget everything. When you laugh, your body secretes endorphins which relieve the nervous tension. Even in the strongest of anxiety attacks, if the patient breaks out in laughter he will forget that he had a panic attack. Anxiety is a mental state and the only way to conquer it is to get out of that state.
4. **Stay organized:** Most panic attacks occur because a person is unprepared for the situation. By organizing yourself, you will reduce your stress and anxiety. Having everything planned leaves no room for worries.
5. **Take a minute:** If you don't have time and need to de-stress, do this: Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Focus on your breathing, on your blood and the blood rushing through your veins.
6. **Exercise:** Exercise can help decrease feelings of anxiety and can give you a sense of well-being. It boosts the oxygen and blood flow to the brain helping it to relax regularly. It also enhances well-being through the release of endorphins, the brain's feel-good chemicals. Research shows that as little as 30 minutes of exercise three to five times a week can provide significant anxiety relief.
7. **Diet:** Your diet should be filled with foods with a higher complex-carbohydrate concentration such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Complex carbs not only stabilize your blood sugar levels but also boost serotonin, a neurotransmitter with calming effect. You can even add some anxiety reducing herbs like valerian, ginseng and milk thistle to your diet. Essential oil like Lavender also helps. Limit the intake of coffee, tea and soft drinks as much as possible because they increase your sense of anxiety by stimulating the nervous system. Avoid alcohol; it may relax you in the beginning but makes the situation worse in the long run. Also reduce the amount of refined sugar you eat.
8. **Relaxation techniques:** Relaxation techniques such as yoga, Tai Chi, progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness meditation, controlled breathing, and visualization can reduce anxiety when practiced regularly. They also increase feelings of relaxation and emotional well-being.
9. **Confront:** The only way to tackle fear is to face it. If some things have made you anxious in the past, go ahead and do them again and again till you see no nuance in them and get used to them. Totally accept yourself as you are and believe in yourself and you will observe that anxiety just flies away.
10. **Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT):** CBT is a common form of therapy used to treat anxiety. It is a type of psychotherapy that helps you to understand the thoughts and feelings that influence your behaviors. According to the theory behind CBT, you have automatic but inaccurate thoughts or beliefs in certain situations. For example, usually anxiety is a response to a belief in the worst possible outcome in a situation. Cognitive behavioral therapy helps you become aware of these inaccurate thoughts and beliefs. You learn to challenge and replace those beliefs with more accurate statements.

Although feelings of anxiety are scary, they are not meant to hurt you. They are a basic protective human response. The above tips will improve depression and anxiety reaction if followed religiously. Life has so many opportunities for you. Why wait? Just go ahead and grab them!



Yemen's homeless mentally ill population only represents a small percentage of Yemenis struggling with mental health issues

Open air lessons about the environment

By: Malak Shaher

In the flower garden at Al-Sabeen amusement park, a circle of 20 children from the Dar Al-Aytam orphanage in Sana'a were listening to instructions on how to protect their environment.

The children were part of a larger group of 60 youth who were participating in a three-day program spearheaded by the "Youth Eyes Initiative" and the British Council.

"We preferred to have our discussions in the open air of the garden, so that the children would feel more engaged," said Shatha Al-Harazi, a volunteer with the British Council who recently completed a six-month volunteering program in Egypt and London.

The initiative aimed at teaching young children the importance of maintaining a clean and healthy environment. At one point, the kids scattered for ten minutes to talk with other people in the garden about the importance of being kind to nature. At the same time, they picked up litter



Children in a circle listening to environmental volunteers at Al-Sabeen Park, Sana'a

off the ground and collected it in big plastic bags.

The social improvement initiative also involved an open air question-and-

answer period, during which children who gave correct answers to the various environment-related questions were given candies.

The youth expressed their happiness at having been taught such an interesting and joyful lesson, and they cleaned the grounds of the park before they left.

احجز نسختك الآن



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Exclusive interview with Rabbi of Yemen's Sana'a Jews

By most estimates, only several hundred Jews remain in Yemen today, split into two communities that have little to do with each other. An enclave numbering fewer than 100 Jews is located in Sana'a, Yemen's capital city. Its residents, the remainder of the community of Sa'ada, were forced to leave their homes by the Houthis, who in 2004, began a rebellion against the government of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, whom they claimed was "an ally of the Americans and the Jews." Sana'a Jews, who claim their property was confiscated by the Houthis, live in a closed compound under the protection of the government. They are funded and influenced in religious observance by Satmar Hasidim.

The Media Line's Felice Friedson interviewed Rabbi Yahe Yousif Mousa, the spiritual leader of the Sana'a community, in Yemen's capital.

By: Felice Friedson
The Media Line

How many Jews are there today in Yemen?

There are many Jews, around 400 people.

What happened in the last few years? There used to be 50,000 and now the number has reached 400.

There are people who traveled away from Yemen, some live in America; the U.K.; Israel and around the world. There are people who emigrated in search of a livelihood just like Muslims who left the country for economic reasons.

Why are you here?

I am here, and will stay here, and will never give up on my nation, regardless of the circumstances. The nation is dear to me.

Do you feel that you have been treated well? Your community is gated. Is this protecting you or making you a target?

Definitely. We live with Muslims as part of Yemeni society. Yemeni society is one, regardless of religion. Religion is for God, but the nation is for all. The President, may God save him, is interested in the entire population and assists everyone. And he protects us, definitely.

How can you practice Judaism if you're only 400 people? Where is it going to be in a decade as a community?

There are people in our community who

marry (Jews) in the Rayda community. There are those who travel abroad to work and return. We can never leave our nation.

You told me earlier that you believe thousands of Jews will return to Yemen. Were you serious? Do you really believe that?

Certainly. God willing, they will return. God decides everything.

What kind of Judaism are you practicing? Do you teach your children Arabic or Hebrew? What happens on a daily basis?

Our children study in schools with Muslims under the order of the president. They study Arabic, English and Hebrew; and I, myself, am a certified teacher in Yemen and teach Hebrew. I teach in the Hebrew school.

What school is that, where you teach?

Al-Mustaqbal (future) School.

Who attends the school?

There are about 26 Jewish students, from elementary to high school, out of a total of 900 students.

Does everyone learn Hebrew?

Yes, there are Muslims who learn Hebrew too. Education is important for everyone; it is their right.

Where did you learn Hebrew?

I learned from my father here in Yemen, and also completed my studies in England and in the United States.

Where in the U.S.?

In New York, with the Satmar Hasidim. Also in London, in the Solsky community.

Are there other teachers in the Jewish community?

Yes, there are two teachers – a man and a woman.

How many synagogues are there?

There is not synagogue at the moment, so we pray at home in the living room. We have a vacation, because God created all creatures in six days and rested on the seventh day. We worship God then. All men come and pray in the living room.

And the women?

They pray as well, but elsewhere.

Are you restricted in your performance of religious practices?

We practice all our religious practices with full liberty. The President sees to this.

Who is trained to circumcise the babies?

Yes, we have everything.

How many Rabbis are there in the community?

There's me, here in Sana'a, and others in Rayda. My father is the great Rabbi, but he is partially paralyzed as a result of a stroke.

As its rabbi, you are the focal point of the community. How are you going to pass on the traditions?

In Reida there are more Jews than here. There are around 320 there, and some emigrated from the country. I hope they return. Only Sana'a and Reida have communities. Every community practices separately.

Do you have Arab friends?

Yes, all my friends are Arabs.

Do they visit you at home?

Yes, and I come to theirs. There is no difference or racism. We visit them on holidays and weddings, and they also share happy and sad events with us.

Do you observe the laws of kashrut – kosher?

Yes, I do. We prepare the food and slaughter the animals ourselves. I slaughter the animals, and I also marry the people.

What will happen when you can no longer do it?

There are now other people who are studying, and preparing for that event.

How many children do you have? And how many wives?

I have only one wife, but my father had two. I have five children: 3 girls and 2 boys. Shama'a, Maryam, Sa'id, Nabila and Mousa. The eldest girl is 14. An Arab proverb says that a woman is like fire, so one is enough.

Do others in the Jewish community have more than one wife?

Some have two.

At what age do girls get married?

Now we don't marry girls before the age of 18.

Do they go to university? Do they work?

Definitely. They will finish their university education.

Will they then work?

Of course. The nation educated them, so they should return the favor. Without education we cannot fulfill the simplest needs.

Israel spends millions of dollars to bring Jews from all over the world.

Of course, they trade in people the way men trade in livestock.

Do you speak to family members in Israel and the United States?

I have friends all over the world.

Do foreign Jews come to visit you here?

We marry Jews from abroad, but no one will leave this country regardless the circumstances.

What do Jews work at?

Before, they used to work as silver-



Rabbi Yahe Yousif Mousa

smiths, in wood, in metal, and agriculture. But now we don't have the equipment to practice our profession. We ask American NGOs to help us financially to provide us with the equipment we need for our profession as silversmiths.

Why didn't you approach Jewish organizations?

I direct an appeal from here to all organizations, not necessarily Jewish. Many people promise to help, but we see nothing of this. Without the help of God and the president, we would have already died of hunger. No one supports us and we have no work. Earlier we had all this in Sana'a, before the Huthis came and stole our homes, cars, and belongings. We left with the clothes on our skin.

I asked you earlier about living in a

guarded area. Aren't you and your neighbors more of a target living under those conditions: guarded and not free to come and go?

We believe in God and the protection of the Yemeni government.

Are you a Yemeni, or a Jew, or both?

I am a Yemeni. The most ancient religion here was Judaism.

How long has your family lived in Yemen?

Hundreds of years.

I wish you continued growth and I hope you receive the help you need.

I would like to thank the president for allowing this interview.

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Stories from Real Life

By: Nawal Zaid
For the Yemen Times

Why men seek wives from villages

He left the girl he loved because he was a miser

Ahmad Jarrah, 60, is married and has a daughter. He is a private sector employee in Sana'a. Ahmad traveled to many countries before his work in Sana'a, and spent a long time abroad. When he returned to Yemen he decided to marry and settle in Sana'a.

He became acquainted with a woman, Najla'a, who was 30. She was unmarried and worked in the same company as Ahmad. Najla'a was from Sana'a city. A short time after Ahmad met her he decided to marry her because he wanted to marry a woman from the city.

When he went to her family to engage her, he was shocked by their demands for the engagement. He thought that the situation in the city was not so different as that in his village. He was in a dilemma between his love for Najla'a and the demands of her family.

Ahmad could afford the expense of the marriage, but he refused the idea thinking that these things were old habits he did not want to follow. He wanted to marry Najla'a, but in the way he wanted. What he wanted was to pay only 5,000 rials for the engagement, and 2,000 rials to the marriage official without any wedding celebrations.

Najla'a's family flatly refused and told her to forget him, because he was belittling her honor. But Najla'a want-

ed to help Ahmad to get married without problems. Ahmad, unfortunately, insisted on his opinion and ignored his responsibility to hold a wedding.

They remained in love for six years, but Ahmad lost Najla'a because of his obstinacy and his fixed way of thinking. Najla'a tried to forget him and started a new life with others who wanted to engage her. But she could not forget and still had hope as Ahmad was helping her in her work.

A long time later, Ahmad tried to forget Najla'a who loved him, and decided to marry a girl from his village. This girl was not educated and did not know much about the responsibilities of marriage. But Ahmad thought that she would be better for him than a civilized girl.

He thought she would improve in the future and be an obedient wife. She would be loyal to him and would accept anything he gave her, even if it was a small thing. He also thought he could control her as she was a villager.

Soon he engaged a villager from a family in Radfan and quickly married her. He took her with him to the city to take care of him and his house. He forgot Najla'a, who loved him so much for so many years. He forgot Najla'a and his dreams with her for the sake of money and because he was a miser.

After his marriage to the woman from Radfan, Ahmad became strange and a person of weak personality. His life has changed for the worse and his status diminished, because Najla'a al-

ways prays for Allah to punish him as he has destroyed her life.

He divorced his wife to marry a weak willed villager

Murjan Ali, 32, is married and has a son and daughter. He was a government employee and lived with his family in Sana'a. Murjan married Ruwaida who was from the city, educated and knew life well.

Murjan was not happy with Ruwaida because she was always asking for money to buy the things she needed. He always hoped to marry a girl from the countryside, thinking that she would accept the little she could get from him.

A short time later, Murjan divorced his wife for a number of reasons, the most important of which was that he believed she thought herself better than him, as she was educated and elegant. He married a girl, Halima, from a village in Sana'a. She did not know much about life or anything else.

Problems started between them for small reasons. Their life became difficult to the point that they simply did not understand each other. Halima dealt with Murjan as any woman does who wants to take care of herself. She wanted to be a wife and mother who has a personality and her own identity. But her husband Murjan wanted a

weak woman without her own will, and now he feels sorry for marrying her.

He wants to marry a girl from the city as he sees her as better

Walid Alil, 33, is unmarried after he divorced his wife. He used to work as farmer on his land in Taiz. He has two sons and three girls from his first wife. Walid used to live with his family even after getting married because he is the eldest son.

His wife, Wedad, was from the same village as Walid. They were almost related. Whilst they were married there were problems between them, because Wedad did not respect her husband and did not listen to him. She was always doing things he did not want her to do. She did not respect anyone from his family and always neglected her husband.

Wedad did not understand what married life meant, and Walid always advised her and directed her towards the right path. He even controlled himself to avoid further problems with her.

Many years later, Wedad betrayed her husband and took some documents concerning his land. She gave them to his relatives, who shared the land with Walid. She did this only to create problems between her husband and his relatives. When Walid realized what she

had done, he decided to divorce her.

After he divorced her, he locked himself away from his family and remained in the house. He wanted to forget the bad past with his wife. His wife's conduct had left him in a miserable psychological condition. He shut himself inside his house and left his sons and his family without any support. The family needed him, however, because he was their only means of support.

Some time later, Walid became acquainted with a girl via the telephone. He used to call numbers on the phone randomly whilst he sat in the house. He called the number of this girl by chance, and she answered him, advising him to go to the mosque instead of bothering people by phone.

Walid admired her way of talking and her politeness. He requested that she be his friend or sister, despite the fact that he lived in Taiz and she was in Sana'a. Nada, who was 33 years old and unmarried, accepted. She was educated and worked in the private sector besides doing her housework.

Nada understood that Walid had psychological problems, and understood from his voice that he was full of grievances and worries. She decided to listen to him and to be his friend and sister. Walid started telling Nada his concerns and problems because he felt relaxed with her. He listening to Nada's talk and advice.

He started to improve psychologically. He started leaving the house and began taking care of his children and

family. He gradually started forgetting about the past and its pains, and a short time later Walid was restored his ordinary life. He thanked Nada for her help.

Nada herself was calm and happy when talking with Walid. After they got to know each other more, Walid told Nada he wanted to marry her. He said that he felt she was the only person who understood him, and he understood her despite he being a villager and she being from the modern city.

Nada agreed, and accepted to live with him and endure all the conditions of his life. She accepted to bring up his children because she was educated and noble. Within a short time, Walid traveled from Taiz to Sana'a to engage Nada, and her family accepted. Walid decided that after they were married, he would live with Nada in the city, even though Nada had accepted to live with him in the village.

He wanted to educate his children well and make his daughters finish their studies. Walid also did not oppose Nada working and even encouraged her to finish her studies. He saw in her a wise woman who could understand his position and condition.

Walid was also very sure that Nada will be a mother, sister and friend to his children. So he accepted her with all her conditions, and did not oppose anything she did. He sees her as better than the girl from the countryside and the women who surrounded him in his village.

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Abayas: Faith or fashion?

By: Safiya Al-Jabry

According to one Internet source, the world's most expensive abaya was recently appraised at USD 350,000. Designed by a world-famous British fashion house, this abaya was made of real gold and professionally cut diamonds.

The traditional abaya is a simple, black, long-sleeved, robe-like dress that Muslim women wear to conceal their bodies. It usually covers everything except a woman's face, feet and hands. Sometimes colored abayas will be worn, but even then, earth tones are preferred so as to not attract too much unwanted male attention.

In Prophet Muhammad's time, abayas were called "khumir" and were compulsory for all women. Again, the idea was to guard women's bodies from the gazes of strange men.

It is written in the Holy Quran (Surat Noor, Verse 31):

"And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what [must ordinarily] appear. Thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons, or their slaves whom their right hand possesses, or their male servants free of physical needs, or small children..."

Today, however, the religious symbolism of the abaya is starting to become confused with its newfound fashion ap-



The world's most expensive abaya, tagged at around USD 350,000

peal. Many people now think that they are trendy and some men have started to see abayas in a sexual light. Others, however, complain that today's abayas look more like dresses than hijabs (i.e. veils).

Ishaq Issa from Sana'a wonders why women cover their faces while at the same time wearing attractive abayas. "A woman either wears a respectable abaya or she doesn't wear one at all. Nowadays, some abayas actually reveal

the female figure rather than conceal it. I would never let any members of my family wear such an abaya when going out."

Saleh Mohammad, another Sanaani, agrees with Issa. "To be honest," said Mohammad, "girls nowadays actually look prettier with abayas than without. Most modern abayas are either too shiny or too tight. Some of them are even designed to look like dresses. They are not as plain and simple as they

are supposed to be, so what's the point of wearing one anyway?"

In the pre-Islamic urban centers of the Arabian Peninsula, privileged women were the only one's permitted to cover themselves. The abaya was a sign of wealth and luxury, and it distinguished rich women from the less fortunate and slaves.

Some contemporary abayas are designed to look like short tunics that are worn with leggings, so as to attract non-Muslim clientele. Other times, non-Muslims living in Islamic countries wear the traditional abaya as a sign of cultural respect.

Stephanie Yourey is a young Christian lady who wears the abaya on her way to university. She says that she wears such clothing because it is Yemeni culture and it makes her feel more secure, as people don't look at her quite as strangely. "I wear the abaya at university because I want to safeguard my reputation and I don't want people to judge me in a bad way, even though I feel I dress quite modestly underneath," said Yourey.

"I sometimes think that Yemeni girls who wear tight, shiny and trendy abayas do so because they want to be attractive. I mean, they see attractively dressed girls on TV and it makes them want to look the same. Some abayas actually look like black evening gowns."

According to Sadeq Al-Wessabi, the owner of an abaya shop at Al-Assahi called Ruwat Fawasel, abaya prices in Yemen tend to range from YR 1,500 to YR 100,000.

"Women from the Gulf countries will often purchase tailor-made abayas of up to YR 50,000. For them, this is much less than what they would pay in their own countries," said Al-Wessabi.

Muslim women who like to wear

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designed clothes also want to wear designer abayas. Fashion houses are now starting to shift focus so as to meet the demands of this demographic. An increasing number of websites and fashion shows feature abayas, and some top European labels like Blumarine have showcased models wearing couture abayas.

Rua Ahmed says she wears fashionable abayas not to attract male attention, but rather to feel young and alive. "Why shouldn't we wear designer abayas?", asks Ahmed. "Yes, we are Muslim women, but abayas do not define us as being respectful or not. I follow the Quran's teachings and I heed the Prophet's sayings. As long as my body is completely covered, I don't see the reason why I shouldn't wear shiny abayas or the new stretch abaya. My abayas are black in color and cover my

whole body as well. I believe that this is what is required of me as a Muslim woman."

Others like Fatima Mohammad say that they're aware of when it's appropriate to wear a fashionable abaya and when it's better to wear a plain one. "If I'm going shopping," explained Mohammad, "I usually wear a plain abaya that covers me well because I know I will encounter men on my way. But if I'm going to a wedding or if I'm invited to a friend's house, then I will definitely wear a nice shiny abaya, since I know for a fact that no men will be at that place."

In Fatima Mohammad's opinion, trendy, tight and glittery abayas are more attractive than the more conservative variety and should not be worn at work places or in public, as it is not proper within Islam.

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