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# Saleh rebuts exit plans as **GPC members 'jump ship'**



Several Yemeni MPs, sheikhs and businessmen resigned from the ruling General People's Congress in protest against the crackdown on anti-government protesters. Yemen analysts say the number of resignations will increase in the following days

### By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, Mar. 6-After days of delay President Ali Abdulah Saleh officially rejected a proposal that he step down this year and reiterated that he would remain in power until his term ends in 2013.

"The peaceful and smooth transition of power is not carried out through chaos but through the will of the people expressed through elections," said a statement from the presidential office on Saturday.

On Wednesday, leading members of Yemen's political opposition, the JMP, presented Saleh with a five-point plan that would allow the president to leave power by the end of this year, after tens of thousands of anti-Saleh protesters demanded the president leave immediately on Tuesday.

The plan also stated that Yemenis should be allowed to protest peace Continued on page 2

# **Deaths in Amran protest** violence

#### By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANA'A, Mar. 6 – Two people were allegedly killed and one wounded by the military in Amran governorate at a "peaceful anti-government protest" last Friday. The protest was organized by the rebel Houthi group, who were calling for the overthrow of the regime. The Houthis accused the Yemeni military of opening fire on the protesters.

"The dead bodies are still with the military and also the wounded," Ali Al-Dailami, head of the Yemeni Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, told the Yemen Times. "We won't check the legality of the military keeping the bodies as the whole behavior is against the law that guarantees the right of life and the right of expression," he added.

The government claims that the protest wasn't peaceful and that the Houthis started the violence against

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Anti-government protesters in Sana'a. The Banner reads 'Leave to maintain unity'.

soldiers which led to the injury of four soldiers.

"Around 11am today [Friday], an armed group of men attempted to overrun a military checkpoint in Tamthalah. Both sides exchanged gun fire which injured four soldiers - two of which are in a critical situation – and additionally three armed men were injured. There were no peaceful demonstrations in the vicinity of the checkpoint," read a statement from the government.

The Yemeni Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, which is concerned about the relationship between the Houthis and the government, condemned the targeting of anti-government protesters in the south and in the northern areas (Amran and Sa'ada) of the country. A statement from the organization claimed that the violations against anti-government protesters are systematic, not individual mistakes, and should be taken as war crimes to be dealt with by the International Criminal Court.

The state spent six years at war with the Houthis which ended last year in

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a truce. According to Al-Dailami, the Houthis this time chose a peaceful way of protesting in harmony with other Yemeni governorates that are holding peaceful demonstrations calling for the overthrow of the regime. The government responds differently to protesters in different governorates.

"The state is using violence in the areas that they are scared of, such as the southern governorates, because of the absence of a strong media role there, and tensions in the government of the protests increasing," said Al-Dailami.

The government uses the participation of some Houthis in the capital's anti-government protests to throw suspicion upon the aims of the revolution. Some people who want to join the antigovernment protests do not because of the presence of Houthis. "I would be crazy to join the protests while the Houthis are there," said Nuha Saif, who works at an international organization. She believes the protests would be dangerous to attend if Houthis are there.

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## **Around the Nation**



#### **By: Malak Shaher**

SANA'A, Mar. 6 - The Yemeni Parliament has introduced a new press law forbidding security forces from arresting and harassing journalists, according to Ahmad Al-Lahabi, head of public relations at the Ministry of Information.

Al-Lahabi said that the government has already approved the new law and mentioned that journalists will no longer be arrested, merely fined when certain laws are violated.

"The new law [introduced by the cabinet to the parliament in Nov. 2010] is considered a turning point in Yemen. Journalists can now work without fear of arrest or harassment," said Al-Lahabi.

He added that there is an article in the law clearly stating that journalists should not be arrested when expressing their opinion. Al-Lahabi also expressed that restrictions on journalists have been reduced to a bare minimum.

However, Yemeni Journalist Syndicate deputy, Sa'eed Thabet, claimed that this new press law is simply a way for the government to hide their "malicious" policy towards the treatment of journalists. He argued that, in spite of this law, journalists are continually attacked by security forces.

Yemeni journalist, Abdul Ilah Haydar Shae, is still being detained by the Yemeni government after the US President Barak Obama requested he not be released. He was arrested in Aug. 2010 after the government accused him of having active ties with Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsular. Close to 40 Yemeni journalists were arrested and released in 2010.

According to Thabet, the new law is also impractical considering that it allows the government to fine journalists for insignificant violations.

"I can say that the law presented by the Ministry of Information is phony. It is simply a ploy to placate human rights organizations that are calling for Yemen to stop violating the rights of journalists," said Thabet.

Thabet added that the syndicate demanded that the parliament do away with the entire law governing journalists, not simply change the legislation currently in place. The Yemeni Journalist Syndicate has demanded that parliament come up with an entirely new law, legally mandating respect for journalists and the freedom of the press.

"There is almost no freedom of the press in Yemen. Many news websites, like Al-Masdar online, have been blocked by the government in the past months," said Thabet. "Instead of releasing a new law banning the arrest of journalists, more restrictions are imposed on them."

#### New law still under debate

The new law presented by the government four months ago is an alternative to the law issued in 1990, and the law presented in April 2010. A year ago, the Minister of Information, Hasan Al-Lawzi, presented a new law specifically designed for dealing with electronic media. The law was rejected out right because MPs recognized it as a move to ban the free press entirely. The law, which was not approved by the parliament, suggested that a USD 100,000 fee should be paid to the government to establish a radio station, and USD 150,000 for a TV station.

In 2009, eight independent newspapers opposing the regime were temporarily shut down and accused of supporting the Southern Movement and calling for secession, according to Ali Al-Garadi, editor-in-chief of Al-Dyar, one of the newspapers shut down.

Al-Garadi told the Yemen Times that cars carrying copies of the newspaper to Aden have been blocked from entering the city over the past two weeks. According to an anonymous source at the Ministry of Information, these newspapers supported the southern Yemen secessionist movement.

"The only thing these press laws achieve is the restriction of our freedom," said Al-Garadi. He claimed that his brother, Muhammad Al-Garadi, who works as a reporter at the newspaper, received threats that he would be beaten. Al-Garadi called on the parliament to approve a law proposed to the parliament recently that is said to give journalists more freedom and protects them from harassment.

Since 2009, newspapers that were closed have again been given permission to publish, with the exception of Al-Ayam which is still banned. According to the Ministry of Information there are more than 460 print newspapers in Yemen.

# Anti-regime protests enter their fourth week nationwide

#### By: Mohammed bin Sallam

Public demonstrations are continuing for the fourth week in a row with an increase in the numbers joining sit-ins, and more tents being put up in many governorates including Sana'a City.

In Sana'a, the youth at Al-Tagheer Square confirmed that their sit-in will continue until the regime leaves. They also refused any initiatives calling for the protests or sit-ins to stop before the regime's departure, rejecting the custody of political parties.

In a statement distributed on Friday, the coalition of the "Youth for Peaceful Change Revolution" welcomed Shabwa joining other governorates in demanding the regime be ousted. The statement also praised the Yemen Children Association Party (Ra'ai) for its early siding with the peaceful popular revolution against the political system that, according to the statement, is represented by an individual and his family. The coalition renewed its call for all Yemenis.

men and women, and active powers all over Yemen, to join the new revolution and engage in this final showdown between the Yemeni people and President Saleh.

On Saturday night, security forces tried to confiscate the tents of demonstrators at Sana'a University, but failed when many young men stood up to them. The security attacked some of the youth with electric batons.

In a statement on Saturday by the protestors, they said that they had prevented the premier, Dr. Ali Mujawar, from entering the sit-in at Sana'a University at noon on Saturday. He was forced to leave and meet with members of the GPC, who the media later claimed were representatives of the demonstrators.

The demonstrating youth reiterated their rejection of any talks with the regime or any of its officials, and their adherence to the essential and express demand of Yemeni people: the downfall of the regime and the departure of its president and its symbols of corruption.

In Shabwa, thousands of the governorate's

youth conducted a peaceful rally on Saturday. It was called for by the Youth for Change, the JMP, and other political bodies in the area to condemn acts perpetrated by ruffians, and the killing of peaceful protestors

In Hodeida, hundreds of people in various locations went out onto the streets in support of thousands performing sit-ins at Al-Sha'ab Park to the south of the city, the cor-

In Aden, hundreds of Al-Nahdthe school.

Tens of academics, teachers and

Al-Mualla and Al-Mansoura the pervious week. In a remarkable development, this protest included many women headed by the mothers and relatives of the martyrs.

In a statement published by alsahwa.net, the Dehm tribes in Al-Jawf governorate announced their support for the right of those performing sit-ins in all governorates who are demanding the regime to be ousted, and the legitimacy of such peaceful protests as guaranteed by the constitution.

The tribes' statement warned against avoiding the requests for change and revolution, and of "opportunist powers" exploiting the protests for personal interests. The release was issued at the end of an extensive meeting of the tribes that affirmed their continual backing of national principles, as well as the goals of the September and October revolutions, and what they have achieved including unity, multiplicity, democracy and freedom.

The declaration also denounced all types of violence against protestors demanding change, such as that inflicted by security and other groups in Aden, Sana'a, Taiz and Hodeida. It asked for the people behind such crimes to be tried promptly. The tribes called upon their youth to join the revolution and the Youth for Change in all governorates without delay.

In response to these protests, GPC supporters in Dhamar, Taiz and Sana'a continued their backing for President Saleh and his administration

The JMP in Dhamar censured the local authority's use of schools, the university and other government facilities for the purposes of the ruling party, while depriving students of their right to study. A JMP spokesman also criticized schools headmasters and headmistresses for forcing their pupils to go on rallies to support the president's initiative.

The Yemeni Teachers' Union in Dhamar decried turning educational institutions into an instrument used by political factions. It considered such act as a frightening deterioration of political practice, and the final nail hit by the authority

# In Brief

#### Dialogue panel meets with university protest-

SANA'A, March 05 (Saba) - Prime Minister Ali Mujawar along with the President Saleh's handpicked ministerial panel met on Saturday with the representatives of demonstrators at Sana'a University.

The panel listened to the youth representatives, who discussed issues and challenges facing antigovernment protesters, including those limiting their say in political, economic and social issues at the national level.

They also expressed their view towards the initiative President Saleh recently offered for political reforms as well as his order to include creating a fund to help recent college graduates to find fitting work.

Mujawar talked to the youth, pointing to the large amount of attention President Saleh gives to them. He also stated that the president has taken an interest in increasing the role of youth in governance.

Mujawar reviewed challenges and dangers facing Yemen at this turning point with the youth and expressed that all parties should work together for the betterment of their nation, regardless of political views. He also warned of various dangers threatening Yemen's stability, security and unity and stressed that the youth should be aware of these dangers.

Reforms are moving forward as the government is determined to implement economic reforms and develop the political system through constitutional amendments. The goal of these amendments will be to improve the electoral system, establish a bicameral legislature, affirm the role of the women in government and promote administrative and financial decentralization, added Mujawar.

The government is fully aware of issues affecting youth and is interested in addressing them, particularly in helping them find jobs, he said, adding that the youth have the right to express themselves through peaceful means.

"The youth should seek clear means and good approaches to help translate their aspirations into reality in the way which leads to a positive dialogue".

#### New USAID mission director to Yemen sworn in

WASHINGTON, March 5 (Saba)- The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Special Assistant to the Administrator for Middle East George Laudato administered the oath of office to Senior Foreign Service Officer Robert Wilson as the new USAID Mission Director to Yemen.

"We are pleased that Mr. Wilson will lead the Agency's efforts in Yemen. He brings an outstanding record of service in high profile, transitional posts and exemplary leadership skills to this critical post" Laudato said in a press release.

"We are confident in Mr. Wilson's abilities to partner with the people of Yemen on critical development issues.

As Mission Director to Yemen, Wilson will lead an innovative strategy designed to increase stability in highly vulnerable areas of the country. He will oversee a mission whose USD 48 million bilateral budget this year is improving livelihoods and strengthening governance capacities in order to mitigate drivers of instability.

A member of the US Foreign Service, Wilson most recently served as the USAID Mission Director to Pakistan, where he oversaw a USD 1.1 billion program focused on improving education and health care, expanding political participation, increasing economic growth and job creation, and improving administration of justice. Wilson joined USAID in 1982 as an agricultural economist intern and has served in Georgia, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Mozambique, Peru, Barbados, Honduras, and Haiti. He was a Peace Corps volunteer for rural development in Togo, West Africa and holds an M.S. in agricultural economics from Purdue University.

## **Continued from Page 1**

## Saleh rebuts exit plans as **GPC** members 'jump ship'

fully without fear of violence, that a committee should be formed to investigate attacks against protesters, and that the families of all protesters killed or injured should be compensated by the State. Finally, all political parties in Yemen would discuss the best means to transfer power democratically.

Early Thursday morning, officials close to the president said there had been an "initial acceptance" of the plan, but later clarified that the proposal was only "favourably received."

According to Saba news agency, a source in the presidential office said that the plan was 'vague and confusing.

The president's rebuttal coincided with the resignation of several officials, social leaders, businessmen and parliamentarians from the General People Congress (GPC) in protest at the recent violence against peaceful protesters and continued governmental corruption.

narty that doesn't care about the advice and demands of its members," said Abdul Aziz Jubari, the former are aiming for the separation of Yemen, a prominent parliamentarian who quit the ruling and the latter for turning the republic to a Shi'ite party last week.

anti-government protesters," he said.

"These members were ashamed by the government's recent repression of protesters. Their continuation in the party was causing them embarrassment with their families and friends," he said.

## **Claims of deaths and** violence against protesters in Amran

The general impression at anti-government protests in Sana'a is that there is no harm from the Houthis, and that they are part of the Yemeni people who have the same right as others to reject the regime

'We noticed their presence at the Sana'a University sit-in, but they are Yemeni citizens before anything else," said Al-Dailami. "They are there as individuals, not as a group, and they didn't try to organize themselves with any group.'

President Ali Abdullah Saleh has warned that the "My resignation came after years of dealing with call to overthrow the regime is made by the Southern Movement and the Houthis. He has claimed kingdom. "The regime is desperate. This shows when the by treating the southern people as separatists, the Houthis as royalty, and people from the central area's as 'burgholis'. This is a word used to denigrate someone," Al-Dailami explained.

niche and the fishermen's coast.

ha Secondary School students in Sheikh Othman staged a protest on Saturday shouting: "The people want to oust the regime." The school administration later closed

detainees' families conducted on Saturday a sit-in in front of Aden University's gate. They were protesting against the arrest of university professors and political activists who are believed to have been moved to a prison in Sana'a over calls for the regime's fall. This sitin is an extension of the massive

protests of Friday noon during the

According to Jubari, the ruling-party bloc has paid little attention to the demands of the southern regime is trying to create zones of discrimination movement and the northern rebellion in Sa'ada and a large number ruling party MPs are considering resignation.

"I think that many members will resign from the party because they joined it for personal interests in the first place," he said.

Jubari said that recently-resigned politicians will establish a 'national salvation bloc' to re-activate the role of the parliament.

#### **Jumping Ship?**

According to independent parliamentarian Ahmed Saif Hashed, the resignations of GPC members is too little too late.

"Where were they [GPC members] last year when the Yemeni forces attacked people in Sa'ada and cracked down on protesters in the south? These were far stronger justifications for resignation," Hashed told the Yemen Times.

Hashed said some members of the ruling part are "jumping ship" now that the future of the GPC seems uncertain.

"Some of these guys are just opportunists. They joined the party for financial reasons, that's why they've resorted to resignation so quickly," he said.

Journalist and political analyst, Jamal Anam on the other hand praised those who had resigned, describing them as 'honest MPs.'

the resignations were an indicator of the failures of the GPC and the steadfastness of the President.

"The president's stubbornness is damaging him and his party; he has lost many of his allies and most of the tribes have defected to the side of the

The state is now accused of trying to incite peaceful protesters to become violent, and to distort the values of the "peaceful revolution," according to Dr. Al-Murtadha Al-Muhatwari, a Shi'ite scholar who is concerned with Houthism.

"After six years of war between the Houthis and the government, for them to choose peaceful protests is something that should be encouraged, but the state doesn't know anything but violence," he said.

Al-Muhatwari said that the message the state wants to send is that they don't acknowledge peaceful protests and all they know is violence. "The regime is the one who is tearing apart the country. If the regime is overthrown, the country will be more unified than ever, including with the Houthis," said Al-Muhatwari.

From a religious point of view, some Islamic scholars have announced that calling for the overthrow of a regime is wrong as it is disobeying the ruler. Al-Muhatwari responded by saying "It's prohibited for the state to kill its citizens, and they have killed over 20,000 citizens in Sa'ada because they are Shi'ite. Enough! They are citizens after all, whether they are Shi'ite or even Jews. Even Speaking to the Yemen Times, Anam said that if they were animals they shouldn't be killed," he said angrily.

> Al-Dailami said that the truce between the Houthis and the state is in danger after the violence on Friday. Al-Muhatwari said that the regime can't afford a seventh war with Houthis.

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#### Some JMP five presented points ambiguous, says presidential official

SANA'A, March 05 (Saba) - An official source at the Presidential Office stated that the five points submitted by the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) through a number of mediators of members of Al-Islah party and others contained ambiguity and confusion.

He announced his refusal for the explanations on the fourth point by those parties' leaders as it contradicts with the constitution and the people's will expressed by them in the ballot boxes.

In a statement to Saba, the source said that the four points stated "making a time schedule to implement the necessary steps in the framework of a transition period so as it does not exceed this year according to the initiative provided by president in that regard." The source went on to say that this point totally contradicts with those reported earlier in the third point which states on "peaceful transfer of power in accordance with the President's commitment not to extend or bequeath power and not to seek presidency for a new term.'

The source added that the peaceful transfer of power does not happen through chaos but through ballot boxes, away from any acts of violence or rioting or destruction of the nation's interests.

## **Around the Nation**

# The Republic of Freedom Square in Taiz, marriage, auctions and cakes

#### By: Emad Al-Sakkaf

any political analysts have admired the organization of the antigovernment sit-in taking place in what is now called "Freedom Square" in Taiz. For three weeks, an administration committee made up entirely of youth has elicited support from all members of society to feed, house and support people demonstrating against the Saleh regime. Over the past three weeks, different societal sectors have sprung up naturally in the sit-in to ensure that the demonstration will be able to remain for the long term. These groups and committees are detailed in the following report.

Delegating responsibilities to various committees is one of the reasons why the demonstration in Freedom Square has been so successful. These committees include a security committee, an organizing and supervising committee, a media committee, a services committee, a financial committee, a rights committee and a charitable contribution committee. These committees employ more than one thousand youths who organize the space 24 hours a day.

#### Security Committee

This committee is considered one of the most important committees by demonstrators and was formed in the early days of the sit-in. It includes more than 100 volunteers from the youth who constructed a security fence around the borders of the demonstration. Its members also search all those who enter the space for weapons.

Anas Ahmed Ghaneem, a member of the security committee, said, "The committee is the safety line to protect the revolutionary youth. We thoroughly search all those who are enter the



Security Committee checking for arms





Freedom Space. We have stopped several armed people from entering the space during our period of operation. In the most dangerous instance facing the security committee, sometime attempted to infiltrate the space carrying a gun equipped with a silencer. The man was arrested and his weapon was seized."

#### Media Committee

Abdualwahed Mohammad Alsami, a member of the media committee, said, "The tasks of the committee started before the sit-in by arranging the logos that are suitable for the event and

the communication." He added, "We have members who are specialists in the electronic media they communicate via the facebook and other websites to send the youth message of change the governmental system at the Freedom Space."

#### **Rights Committee**

The committee is contained of a group of the prominent lawyers in Taiz city that study all the movements from the legal side and follow those who were arrested from the revolution youth and defense upon their rights.

Ghazy Al-Samai, a lawyer and a member of the rights committee said, "Our tasks represented by defense upon the youth of all the cases weather they were arrested or attacked." He added, "About the case of the grenades incident throwing it over the sit-in youth. We have followed all the procedures of collecting the evidences and questioned the accused people and we are waiting to take them to the court and the security forces to catch other wanted men in the case."

#### Marriage and Honey Moon

The Freedom Space has witnessed last Thursday the marriage of two brothers, Anas and Osama Ali Ahmed Al-Batah, they are from the sit-in youth. The sit-in youth have shared them their celebration with microphones of the national and revolution songs instead of the usual weddings songs. Thousands of the sit-in youth shared them with their happiness

and congratulated them and gave them symbol gifts too. Osama Ali Al-Batah one of the bridegrooms said to the Yemen times, "we preferred my brother and I to have our wedding at the Freedom Space with the revolution youth, and our wedding to be the beginning of the freedom wedding that we hope." He added, "We also preferred to spend our honey moon in the freedom space with the full approve of our wives. We hope for a better life different from our current reality." the revolution fund and the committee such as generators, trunks of water, tents, blankets, audio systems and other means of support to keep the sit-in and its successfulness.

#### Golden days for the sellers and the Peddlers

The Freedom Space has turned to an opened public market were peddlers are coming with their goods to sell the different kind of drinks, snakes and fruits. Also there are the cassettes' sellers of the national songs that had a huge popularity.

Shaker Dabwan, a seller of lemon juice, has a diploma in business he said to the Yemen Times, "This Space is the only place the municipality has not reached and chased us in our living income. Those days are considered as precious chances to earn money with no fear of the municipality." He added, "I wish that the sit-in would stay for long or the government would change and comes another government can work for our interest."

#### Woman an effectiveness attending

The Freedom Space was not only for the revolution youth of male only, women have a special attending especially when they are who are mostly affected with the social and economic situation by neglecting them, beside they are the poorest class in the country. The women's role is represented by its active participation with the youth revolution and its continuous attendance at the different time with their different age and education such as teachers, lawyers, doctors and housewives also college and high school students also with special attendance of university female professors too. Those women cheers and hold logos demanding for the government system to leave.

Women's role didn't stop at that, they recorded touching situations by given money support and supplied them by food and they even wrote "Leave" and "Allah with you Leave" on the cakes and the breads that they made.

Rahma Al-Aghbari, a housewife who is at the Freedom Space, The Yemen Times has seen her supplying youth with home cake she said, "We went to the Freedom Space to look for better future for our children. We have broken the rules of traditions and customs that were forbidden us from going out to streets only in specific times." She added, "Despite the hard financial conditions that I live with my family, but my daughters and I are participating from our allowance to prepare cakes. It is the only thing as a duty to do to them.' Nowria Saeed Haider, a teacher said "the woman is one who is affected the most by poverty and taken the responsibility of it with some problems that she faced as has been considered the weakest party in her family." She also said, "With my salary and my husband's we still cannot provide the smallest needs for our family such as good education, health and food." She added, "We make sure that the women participate and attend from the first day of the revolution. We take shifts with the rest of the women and prepare some meals for those youth who make our history that we always dreamed of." She also said." We trust the youth a lot. We never trust parties." Om Ahmed Abdalrahman said, "My husband spent most of his time at the Freedom space. Immediately after he came back from work he went to the Space with some food, then in the evening he came back and I already have prepared the cakes and breads and we took it together with our sons, Ahmed and Mohammad. I didn't forget to write "Leave" all the time to rise up the spirit of youth and to let them know that we stand beside them.'



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Bridegrooms celebrating marriages in the Freedom Square



Freedom Square has become a permanent home for many



According to a member of the financial committee, donations reach YR 350,000 per day, and all coming from normal people

#### The Watch of the Martyr in the Auction

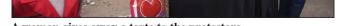
Last Friday, the Freedom Space has witnessed the announcement of an auction for the personal watch of the martyr Mazen Al-Badhaji who was killed the previous week 18-2-2011 in the grenades incident that was thrown over the sit-in youth and 86 were injured.

The auction Started with YR 1000, a lot have crowded to have it until it reached the price of YR one million by one of the crowd, after a woman has offered to buy it with YR 700 thousand as a tender touch for the martyr's family.

Worth to be mentioned, that the martyr Mazen Al-Badhaji is 26 years old of a poor family, he graduated from university with computer science major. He is unemployed. His death has a huge impact over the crowds. He was buried on Friday morning with the present of half million citizen after praying at the Freedom Space that were filled and the streets around it in a scene never has been witnessed in Taiz before.

#### In-kind contributions fund

The prominent and amazing thing is the cooperation situation between the people in Taiz who demanded with the change and who raced to give the kind contribution through



A woman gives away a torte to the protestors



Female members of the Order Committee



Tent erected in honor of a demonstrator that was killed





Snacks and juice vendors in Freedom Square

Female protestors

#### 4 7 March, 2011

## **Advertisement**





### VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites MGDs to apply for the following Position with its "EC-UNDP Juint Electroid Assistance Project in Yemen"



Title: CSO activities aloned at increasing women's participation Deration of Assignment: 3 modifier Date Station: Senate, Yearen

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#### RIGLESS SUPERVISOR Posifion # 1108 & 1109 (B14) CPF - Massile For Yemeni Nationala Only

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- Supervises sub-contractors, preparation for, during, & bilowing the job. Planning all operations and alignment of all equipment for the execution the job.
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- Prepares daily operational reports.
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Temen careats of I erme equally of electroni institutions, supporting the legal reform process, and increasing women's participation in the electoral process

The third project component, Women's Participation aims at increasing women's role in political decision making processes, raising women's awareness, shills and knowledge on their considuational rights to vole and lobe elected, encouraging their active participation in the country's political life, etc.

One of the major directions of the component is engaging CSOs to conduct diverse activities in the context of the above mentioned goals. These may include workshops, trainings, seminars and conducting public avareness casing comparigns targeting both men and women, conving out round table discussions with women political party members and influential women, as well as voters, including these from marginalized groupes.

#### Dufies & Responsibilities:

Under the direct supeniision of the JEAP Gender Officer the selected SCO will contribute to the implementation of the project component "Women's Participation" through implementing its own project under small grants scheme in a timely and efficient manner.

The proposed project should foresee activities in a given direction (either round tables, or awareness raising comparisms, or trainings and other similar activities). A combination of diverse directions is also possible. In that case, limited financial possibilities should be borne in mind.

#### Deliverables:

Selected CSOs shall perform their respective tasks according to the schedule before and shall accommodate recessary adjustments as required by the project review work plans.

	Description	Location
1.	Preparing the necessary materials and conducting	Sana'a and other locations as appropriate
	other preparatory activities as necessary for project	
	implementation	
2	Conducting project activities	Sana's and other locations as appropriate

#### Qualifications.

- At least 5 years of experience in conducting activities aimed at warmen's empowerment and warmen's participation. Participation in at least two projects aimed at enhancing women's empowement
- Knowledge of methodology of the activity to be conducted under the project proposal project, as well as ability to produce tool kits, training materials, public campaign materials, etc.

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Response will only be made to short listed NGOs The deadline for receiving applications is March 20<sup>4</sup>, 2011

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## Interview

# **Tourism Police at your service**

Established in 2002, the Tourism Police Authority had one objective – to ensure the safety of tourists while they enjoy Yemen.

Dr. Musaid Az-Zahiri is the deputy chair of the authority. Other than his PhD in law and constitution from Russia, he speaks Arabic, Russian and English fluently, and can communicate in Japanese and Italian. His good nature and charm has left its mark on many tourists who had been to Yemen since he joined the authority in 2007.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Az-Zahiri to talk about the authority, what is expected of tourists, and what they should expect from Yemen.

here is no country in the world that can entirely prevent crime. But what the Tourism Police are trying to do is minimize crimes against tourists and to provide them with an enjoyable experience in Yemen.

"It was clear that we needed a dedicated authority to deal with the problems tourists faced in Yemen, such as kidnapping and explosions," explained Az-Zahiri on why the Tourism Police were established. "The difference between a crime and a tourist crime is that the impact of the latter affects the whole country, and reverberates long after the crime was committed."

The Tourism Police is made of six administrations dealing with different issues ranging from tourist travel permits, to the protection of historic and cultural sites.

#### Quality control

Az-Zahiri is a man on a mission. Not only does he help run a critical establishment for the country, he and his team are adamant in fighting corruption and providing their beneficiaries with quality services.

"We carried out several events at the authority and even announced them on the radio. We called on tourists and tourist agencies to report any misconduct on the part of the Tourism Police.

So far we have documented 40 cases of attempted bribery, our men were the ones to report these cases," said Az-Zahiri.

He asserts that his office, at least the headquarters of the Tourism Police, is corruption free. And calls on anyone who faces problems with the Tourism Police to contact him personally, and he will ensure the right procedures are carried out.

"It is all about quality control and good management. We treat tourists as clients and we are trying to provide them with a high quality service for a low price," he added.

Although the authority is very much part of the national security system, officers working in the Tourism Police are highly educated. Most of them speak more than one language, and they must conduct themselves in the highest possible manner.

There is also a gradual trend to educate all officers in computer applications and in using the internet.

"I and a number of my team personally do the training in-house. We take from our time and energy and have created a syllabus and use the computer facilities in the office. We give our staff the chance to learn, but if they prove unable, we send them off to the Ministry of Interior and replace them with more qualified cadres," explained Az-Zahiri.

<image>

Mariana Panic (left) and Nina Slamnik from Slovenia are fans of Yemen.

He understands that the way his office deals with tourists will have a long standing impact on them, and will affect Yemen's image to the outside world. He also knows that there have been some incidents involving soldiers from the authority or connected bodies that have damaged the authorities image.

"We are a relatively new body, and given the size of the task allocated us, it is to be expected that we are not yet able to do it perfectly. This is why we need the help and cooperation of tourists and tourist agencies," he said.

#### **Protecting tourists**

The international definition of a tourist is any foreign person who visits and stays in the country for a period of more than a day and less than a year. This definition includes researchers, students of Arabic, interns, etc.

All these people, says Dr. Musid Az-Zahiri, are the responsibility of the Tourism Police whose highest concern is to keep them safe.

"We also facilitate their mobility inside the country. We provide them with travel advice and work out plans to ensure their safety while traveling inside Yemen. We also come to their rescue if they need any help," he explained.

For that same reason, he needs the full cooperation of tourists and calls on them to abide by the travel regulations, and when traveling, to stay within the routes they have declared.

The Tourism Police know which areas in Yemen are safe and which are not. Through their direct relations with other security authorities, they are also informed of any new threats, and directly inform travel agents or tourists if they happen to be near any of those areas. Az-Zahiri recalls when some tourists from Slovenia experienced a problem with their travel agency and demanded a refund, but could not stay in Yemen to go through the process. Dr. Az-Zahiri personally followed the case on their behalf and eventually sent their refund to the tourists' home town in Slovenia. The authority also ensures all tourist agents to have a minimum credit of YR 2 million as a guarantee to protect tour-

ists' financial rights. Another incident Az-Zahiri recalled is when an Italian woman misplaced her passport just one day before her flight out of Yemen. He remembered that she was frantic and devastated, so he arranged for her to get a travel document from the Italian embassy and personally took it to her hotel.

"I did not want her last memories of Yemen to be sad. So I bought her a flower bouquet and took it with me to comfort her. She was very touched and pleased, and said that although she had

travelled to many countries around the world she had never been treated with such kindness," said Az-Zahiri.

The Tourism Police are also designing a website through which updated information needed by tourists will be made available, as well as contacts to answer any question or demand made by the website users. Az-Zahiri hopes the website will be up and running by the middle of this year.

"It will also be a legitimate platform for tourists to express their opinions and share their experiences and find answers without any speculation," explained Az-Zahiri.

#### Synchronized efforts

Foreign tourists who needed visas to enter Yemen in February 2011 reached 3,046 tourists with Italians coming in the first place. The favorite tourist destinations inside the country are Shibam, Kawkaban, Taiz, Hodeida, Socotra and Hadramout. Those tourists make 25 percent of the total tourists coming to Yemen in general. The other 75 percent come from either Arab countries or are Yemenis with another nationality and hence do not need an entry permission.

"It depends on the situation at the given time. All interested tourists need to do is contact us and we will provide them with the latest updates. It is very important that they abide by our instructions in order for us to ensure their safety," Az-Zahiri emphasized.

Because of the size of the job the Tourism Police have to perform, it has to have clear coordination with different security authorities. For example, when tourists need security escorts for their travel between cities, the Tourism Police coordinates with the local police and those based at check points. The responsibility of escorting tourists is divided across all the security authorities operating along the travel path in a sort of relay.

The only problem with this method, explains Az-Zahiri, is that it is all based on paper work and phone calls. He hopes that a time will come soon when all security offices, not just those affiliated with the Tourism Police, have an electronic network through which the movement and status of all tourists can be updated electronically.

"I want a time to come when all I need to do is press a button to find out how many tourists are present at that specific moment, and which police groups are responsible for their safety," he said.

He hopes that by the end of 2011, the Tourism Police administration will be without paper. Corruption can be limited when paperwork is kept to a minimum.

## **4**0

For any enquires on Tourism Police or complains, contact Deputy General Manager of Tourism Police Dr. Musaid Az-Zahiri musaid110@yahoo.com 777364932 or 733364932 or telefax: 01-486537/8



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### **Testimonies**

Mariana Panic is a Yemen travel guide from Slovenia. She can understand Arabic enough to find her way around Yemen which she has been visiting for years as a tourist and a tour guide.

"Before coming to Yemen all I had as background information were some pictures and information from the internet. The websites I found useful for information on Yemen are that of the Ministry of Tourism and different forums where previous tourists posted their comments," said Panic.

Now Yemen is one of her most favorite tourist destinations in the world.

As an experienced traveler, the travel warnings on Yemen did not deter Mariana Panic, who has been to other countries with similar conditions. She says she knows how the media portrays a country's image and how it can blow violence out of proportion. She says she feels safer in Yemen than in her home town in Slovenia, especially as a woman moving at night.

"The truth is that I don't feel in danger at all in Yemen. After reading and seeing so much on TV, when I ended up here I was surprised at how peace-ful everything is," she explained.

Her only advice to tourists coming to Yemen is to come with an open mind and an open heart.

"Just make sure you have what you need and Yemen will provide you with the rest," said Panic.

She also advised tourists to respect Yemeni culture by dressing modestly. Panic says that Yemen is still a country which maintains its rich culture despite the modernization that is dominating the world of tourism. "If you want to enjoy rich Arab culture, Yemen is the place to be. But you must hurry because there is no guarantee that Yemen will remain authentic culturally," she said.

Nina Slamnik is another tourist from Slovenia who is in Yemen with Panic's tourist group for the first time. She was also excited to be in Yemen and feels very safe. She did, however, discover that the concept of credit cards is not very common and it is advisable to carry enough cash for the trip.

"Also you need to know that you can't really plan that much in Yemen. So it is better to be more flexible and enjoy it while you can," said Slamnik. "Tourists in Yemen should realize that no matter what the situation is, every-thing can be solved with a big smile."

Before she came to Yemen, Nina Slamnik heard that many people carried Kalashnikovs. However, when she met them face-to-face she did not feel threatened at all. "The security though armed, always smiled and greeted me warmly so I never felt threatened, rather protected. So probably the best advice regarding this issue is to prepare oneself mentally to see such arms and not be threatened by them."

"In some areas of Yemen we are obliged to provide tourists with security escorts from the local police to ensure their safety. In other areas we arrange for them to be escorted or followed by a security vehicle from one check point to another between cities. But most of the main cities are safe, and tourists don't need anything more than a travel permit and they can enjoy Yemen on their own," said Az-Zahiri.

He is aware that there were some incidents in Hadramout where a soldier who was told to escort tourists behaved badly and annoyed the tourists. He was repremanded, demoted and will never accompany tourists again. "He now works as a security guard at the gate, and has learned not to bother tourists anymore," said Az-Zahiri.

He also mentioned that some tourists or travel agencies demand escorts even when not strictly required, just to feel safe. Although the escorts are essentially the responsibility of the security apparatus, there is a common understanding that the travel agency or tourists offer the security men to either eat with them, or separately if the trip is long.

"It is embarrassing for us to impose upon tourists the need to feed security men. But this is the reality, although cash is not acceptable and if any escort demands money from tourists or the travel agent we should be notified immediately," said Az-Zahiri.

Even if tourists face problems with their tourist agency and not security, the Tourism Police can be of assistance. As we look back at 10 glorious years and our satisfied customers, we know it wouldn't be possible without the diligence of our staff and the support of our customers. On our 10th anniversary, we would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you to help us become Yemen's most trusted telecom provider.

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Heritage meets communication

## Opinion



# YT vision statement **"To make** Yemen a good world citizen."



Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saggaf, (1951 - 1999)

Founder of Yemen Times

## **OUR** TIMES **OPINION** Yemen's different scenarios

here are four main players in Yemen's political process at the moment - the ruling General People's Congress (GCP) headed by the president, the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), non-party protestors in the streets, and the international community.

What happens next in Yemen is highly dependent on the interaction between those four elements mainly the two parties, and how, and whether, they reach an agreement of some sort.

Currently there are two processes happening in parallel. One is a political dialogue between the parties (GPC and JMP) which the international community still recovering from Egypt and Libya are supporting.

Currently a group of religious scholars are trying to facilitate. And the other is the civil society organizations mobilizing in the streets, which are not totally dependent on, yet also not far from, the influence of political parties.

The future of this country totally depends on the dynamics of these two processes and their outcome.

The president and his party face the following dilemma: Saleh is torn between sacrificing his ego and just letting go, despite being the most powerful man in Yemen for three decades, and between saving the country from a potential conflict.

The JMP is facing the following dilemma: to reach a political agreement through compromise and trust that Saleh is a man of his word, or to stick to the streets and win their faith

If Saleh really steps down, it is not only his loss. There are many others outside his direct family who are dependent on him and who do not encourage a sudden release of power.

There is a saying in Yemen that a soldier does not give up his horse when in combat. Very apt considering that the symbol for the GPC is actually a horse.

The other concern Saleh may have is what does this mean morally? That after serving 32 years he is thrown out just like that. Anyone who knows Saleh would understand that he is a very proud man, and what he needs now is a graceful exit, but the JMP and the people in the streets are not giving him this option.

# Yemen: A revolution in waiting?

In a country torn by internal divisions, the risks posed by a power vacuum must not be underestimated.

### **By: Murad Alazzany**

nspired by the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions, thousands of Yemeni youth are continuing to call for the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has ruled the country for more than three decades

The protesters may represent a new, educated generation but their protests are inspired by the old problems of widespread poverty, corruption and inequality and the deep sense that the longentrenched regime of Saleh and his puppet government is unable to fulfill their aspirations.

While the protesters share similar motivations to those who dislodged presidents elsewhere, it is still far from clear whether Yemeni demonstrators will attain the same level of success. But what is certain is that Yemen's political landscape is becoming as complicated as the country itself.

#### **Tribal politics**

In the twists and turns of Yemeni politics, the past week has been particularly significant and the country's complex tribal dynamics have been at the fore of the unfolding developments. A key moment came when Hussein al-Ahmar, a chief in the Hashid tribal confederation Yemen's second-largest but most powerful tribal confederation - joined the protesters, promising to offer them protection from attack by regime loyalists.

Hussein al-Ahmar is the son of the late Abdullah al-Ahmar, the former leader of the Hashid, who as a longtime ally of the president was showered with the rewards and privileges Saleh has long utilised to maintain his grip on power.

Al-Ahmar announced his resignation from the ruling General People's Congress at a rally,

attended by members of the Hashid and Baqil - Yemen's largest tribal confederation, in the northern Amran province - joining his brother, Hamid, an outspoken critic of the president's policies, and in particular the appointment of Saleh's relatives to top military positions, in the ranks of the opposition.

Saleh's tactic of lavishing rewards upon tribal chiefs in return for their loyalty seems to be unravelling and the president is now harvesting the seeds of his unjust policies. But he responded firmly to the tribal challenge, stressing that the country's armed forces would not hesitate to defend the security of the nation and vowing that he and his colleagues in the army would fight until the last drop of their blood is spilled.

#### Joining the revolution

The actions of the established opposition parties, however, seem to have pushed Saleh to soften his stance.

When the demonstrations began there was a wide gulf between the demands of the established opposition and those of the protesting youth. While those out on the streets of cities across the country wanted Saleh overthrown, the opposition leaders appeared to be in favour of negotiating with the president in the hope of securing concessions that might lead to more fundamental political reforms.

Despite these differences, the established opposition welcomed the leaderless street revolt from the sidelines

But when the opposition threatened to join the protesters in their push to bring him down, Saleh showed a new-found willingness to negotiate. He ordered the formation of a government committee to establish dialogue with the protesting youth and declared his readiness to form a unity government with the opposition.

The president even convened a meeting with a committee of religious scholars who put forward eight points that they felt might halt the country's descent into turmoil. Saleh accepted their recommendations, but there has, so far, been no response from opposition figures.

But, sensing that the revolutionary fervour sweeping the region might provide a golden opportunity, the opposition now seems unlikely to accept the offerings of the president and will, in all likelihood, respond by increasing their demands.

Far from wanting to negotiate, the opposition now seems to want to inject more momentum into the street protests - possibly motivated in part by a concern that tribal leaders might try to hijack the movement and use it purely for their interests

#### Dominoes

The broader Yemeni population is more torn. While most resent the economic and political state of their country and would welcome a revolution, they are concerned that the ouster of Saleh could set off a domino effect that, in turn, would lead to more violence

Few see a viable and charismatic alternative to Saleh who could be entrusted with running a tribal society in which literacy levels are low and weapons plentiful.

What unites everyone in Yemen - the president, the opposition and the broader population - is a concern about the post-revolutionary phase and what many see as looming threats.

On the one hand there is the separatist movement in the south of the country, where many complain that the Saleh regime has marginalised them and treated them as second class citizens. Although the movement would like to see the president toppled, it has not joined forces with the protesters. If Saleh were to fall, however, it seems certain that the separatists would use this as an opportunity to establish an independent state.

Then there is the threat posed by the Houthis in the northwest of Yemen, whose insurgency has flared sporadically over the past six years. Many Yemenis fear that this group would also seek to take advantage of any power vacuum ensuing from Saleh's removal.

#### Dancing to a different tune

In conclusion, Saleh is in a very tenuous position, but the ball may still be in his field. Despite his autocracy, the president is widely perceived as a shrewd and patient leader - and he may, therefore, be the person best placed to stop the country descending into chaos.

He once likened ruling Yemen to «dancing on the heads of snakes». With the protests growing stronger and opposition and tribal leaders lending their backing, the president, far from being obliged to stop dancing, must quickly learn some new steps and quicken his pace. He must not wait until the demonstrations have gained such momentum that any concessions he offers fail to meet the protesters' demands. If he does not, his historical achievements, which culminated in securing the unity of the country, may be erased.

He must remove all of his family members from top military positions, restructure the army, declare a six-month transitional period, call for the formation of a unity government and, most importantly of all, be serious in pursuing his pledges. This would allow for a smooth transition of power and would be of benefit to the country and its people

If this does not happen, chaos may reign. The protesting youth understand that their country is already reeling from internal conflicts, but they are currently convinced that the future cannot be worse than the present. And while they may recognise that their movement is not as inclusive as the one which ousted Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, they have faith that they can unite against a nepotistic regime that has plundered their resources and given them little but misery. Unfortunately, they may just be underestimating the risks.

Murad Alazzany is a professor in the department of English Studies at Sana'a University. Yemen. His main research areas are 'the representation of Islam and Muslims in the Western media' and 'the political discourse of Islamic movements in the media'

# A woman leading change in Yemen

#### By: Alice Hackman

Tith two presidents unseated in Tunisia and Egypt and highly publicised protests across Libya, the recent demonstrations in Yemen

are catching the world's attention. The escalating violence is worrying and only time will tell if it will lead to a quick overthrow of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh or whether change will take much longer in Yemen. But one thing is different in Yemen: the international face of the Yemeni pro-change movement is a woman

Profiled in high profile outlets including The Washington Post, The Toronto Star and Time Magazine, journalist and human rights activist Tawakkul Karman represents a positive image of Yemeni women. Long before she was photographed leading February's protests against the government, she was called a brave defender of freedom of expression and human

rights in Yemen. In a January 2010 interview with Al Jazeera, she spoke of detained journalists, a sheikh's tyranny against villagers in Ibb, a governorate south of the capital, the lack of justice for the family of a murdered doctor, and – long before

so far as to accuse the government of being "in alliance" with Al Qaeda. Today, she continues to protest, demanding peaceful change.

Finally a refreshing change from the "oversized post box" image of the Yemen's women in the niqab (a face veil worn in addition to the headscarf), or the photos of child bride Nujood Ali that have fuelled Yemen's early marriage debate since April 2008.

Of course, all is not rosy for Yemen's women. Yemeni parliamentarians (one out of 301 is a woman) still have not agreed on a minimum age for marriage to prevent girls like Nujood, nine years old at the time of her divorce, from being married before they finish school. Illiteracy among women is still a whopping 67 per cent, women are typically the first victims of food shortages (one in three Yemenis suffers from severe malnutrition according to the UN) and many have difficult and limited access to healthcare. Women's participation in politics is minimal and, despite two female ministers, Yemen has consistently ranked at the bottom in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index since it was first included in the ranking in 2006.

But there is hope.

Karman and fellow female human rights acvists, such as journalist Samia al-Aghbari, are

By: Hamid

tal. They may not be representative of Yemeni women in general, but they are indeed inspiring. In fact, one Yemeni man was so impressed by al-Aghbari's courage during the protests of 13 February when she was knocked onto the pavement by a member of security, that he wrote her a poem, "Revolution of the Green Hijab... To Samia al-Aghbari and all the other revolutionaries", which was published the following day on the Nashwan News website.

Although they are not all out on the streets. there are a number of inspiring women in Yemen. In addition to Karman and al-Aghbari, Yemeni women are human rights activists. journalists, doctors, educators, members of civil society, academics, wives of political detainees, photographers, and even tweeters.

Dozens of brave women have run against all odds and lost in local council and parliamentary elections. According to Nadia al-Sakkaf, female Editor-in-Chief of the independent Yemen Times, winning is difficult without the support of a political party, and most politically ambitious women at the moment are waiting to see how the current situation develops.

Then there are the women who quietly start their own revolutions. In May 2010, a literacy eradication course inspired women in rural Dhamar, a governorate south of Sana'a, to go

their rights to education, inheritance and political participation. Course organisers received phone calls from confused male family members asking what they had been discussing. Participants also rallied together and prevented a man from marrying off his 12-year-old daughter.

When Karman was detained by security for organising protests on 22 January, she made the most of a bad situation by chatting to her fellow female detainees about their rights. "I was happy to discover the prison and talk to the prisoners," she told The Yemen Times after her release.

But perhaps the most inspiring thing about Karman is that she is not speaking up only for Yemeni women, but for Yemeni society as a whole, addressing national grievances such as unemployment and corruption.

It may be too early for a female president in Yemen, but Karman adds a new, welcome dimension to the media coverage of a country usually associated in the Western mind with Al Qaeda, poverty and oppressed women.

Alice Hackman has recently returned to London after two years as reporter and Features Editor for The Yemen Times in Sana'a, Yemen. This article was written for the Common

In return, he may well listen to his ego and make the transition very difficult.

On one hand, the JMP know that despite the ruling party's compromises, they are still the weaker entity. So they need to get the most out of the situation today. They are currently arguing over which party gets which ministry. If they enter the parliamentary elections free and fair, they may get less than they can outside of elections over the bargaining table.

As it is, most of their demands today have to do with the sharing of power.

On the other hand, if they do 'strike a deal with the devil', they will lose their legitimacy among the euphoric idealistic youth. Even worse, they may be deceived in the deal after two or more years, and have bargained away their only chance at real change.

Decisions.. decisions... decisions.

So much is in stake. Yemen and the whole world awaits to see how these two parties will play their cards. Let's hope they know what they are doing.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

January's WikiLeaks revelations - even went on the frontline of protests in the Yemeni capi-

home and ask their husbands and brothers for Ground News Service (CGNews).

## Yemen President: Arab uprisings orchestrated by Tel Aviv; oops sorry!

#### By: Aimée Kligman Foreign Policy Examiner

esterday, hundreds of thousands rallied across Yemen in the largest anti-government wave of the past month, including a gathering addressed by an influential cleric, Sheik Abdul-Majid al-Zindani, whom the U.S. has linked to al-Qaida.

In the capital city of Sanaa, Tuesday's 'day of rage' demonstrators chanted "With blood and soul we support you, Aden," referring to the southern port city where most of the 24 people killed in the past two weeks of protests have died.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh addressed about 500 students and lecturers at Sanaa University on Tuesday, where he claimed that protests had been orchestrated by Tel Aviv, under the direction of Washington DC. Saleh, a U.S. ally against Islamist militants, has failed to

quell two months of protests in a country of 23 million where 40 percent live on less than \$2 a day and a third are undernourished.

Below is an excerpt of his speech:

"Every day we hear a statement from Obama saying 'Egypt you can't do this, Tunisia don't do that. What do you have to do with Egypt? Or Oman? Are you the president of the United States, or president of the world?'

There was no direct comment from President Obama, but Press Secretary Jay Carney advised Saleh to respond to the demands of his people rather than use scapegoating.

Today, President Saleh called John Brennan, Obama's top adviser for counter-terrorism in Washington to express regret over comments that the United States and Israel have orchestrated the protests in Arab nations.

Yemen has been among the Arabic countries facing mass protests calling for a change in leadership

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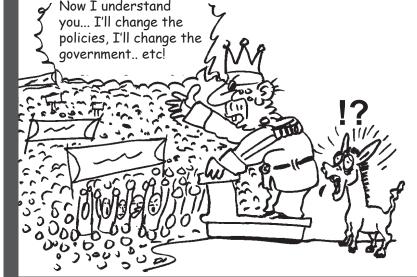
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## **SKETCHED OPINION** Now I understand



## International

#### **Huffington Post**

TIMES

gypt's military rulers appointed the first post-Hosni Mubarak prime minister Thursday, replacing an air force pilot close to the ousted leader in a bid to appease thousands of protesters who had threatened to renew the occupation of a central Cairo square.

The opposition hailed the decision as another victory for "people power" but many warned pressure must be maintained on the military to implement other democratic reforms, including an accountable police agency and a new constitution.

Leaders of the 18-day uprising that forced Mubarak to resign had been pressing the military to fire Ahmed Shafiq, arguing that a prime minister sworn in by the ousted leader should not stay in office. They also were angry that his Cabinet was filled with figures from the old regime.

The military's official Facebook page said former Transport Minister Essam Sharaf had been chosen as prime minister and asked to form a caretaker Cabinet during the transition to civilian rule. Activists say they had recommended the choice of Sharaf.

"First we ousted Mubarak. Second, we got rid of Shafiq. We have become again the owners of this country," said Bassem Kamel, a member of the Youth Coalition, an umbrella group of activists who launched the protests Jan. 25.

Sharaf, who served in the Cabinet for 18 months between 2004 and the end of 2005, has endeared himself to the youth groups by visiting them in Cairo's central Tahrir, or Liberation, Square, the uprising's epicenter. An engineer, Sharaf also appeared to fit the image of a professional civil servant who after leaving office founded a group of like-minded scientists called "the age of science."

"He is a reformer and was a vocal critic" of the old system, said Shady Ghazali, another protest leader.

The youth celebrated in the way that was the pillar of their uprising: on social networking sites. Soon after his appointment, the name of the new minister started trending on Twitter.

"We are writing the electronic revolutionary history. Long live Egypt," wrote Abdel-Rahman Mohamed, a 20-year-old student.

The Youth Coalition also canceled a Friday sit-in in Tahrir Square calling for Shafiq's resignation. Instead, there will be a rally to celebrate their latest victory and they invited Sharaf to deliver his oath in the square.

Pro-democracy activist and Nobel laureate Mohamed ElBaradei thanked the military for "listening to the people."

"Today (the) old regime has finally fallen. We are on the right track," ElBaradei said on his Twitter account. He is a likely presidential candidate who has returned to Egypt since the protests after a long absence that upset many of his supporters.

"Let us all get down to work and start rebuilding our country. We want the world to know that Egypt is open for business," said ElBaradei, the former head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency.

The military's prompt acceptance of Shafiq's resignation shows the sensitivity of the generals to the demands of the upris-

ing's leaders and concern that long protests could complicate returning life to normal. Since Mubarak's ouster, Egypt has experienced a crime wave not seen in years, with a marked rise in armed robberies, arson and battles between rival criminal gangs over territory. Demoralized and hated by many for their perceived brutality against protesters, security forces have yet to fully take back the streets. They numbered around 500,000 on the eve of the protests.

Many believe the military should focus on restoring law and order in the country of 80 million people.

Since it took charge of managing Egypt's affairs on Feb. 11, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces promised to hand power over to a new government and elected president within six months. It disbanded both houses of parliament and promised to repeal the emergency laws, though only when conditions permit.

The council also appointed a committee to amend the now-suspended constitution to allow for elections. But many are concerned the military rul-

ers are moving too slowly.

"They do respond to pressure but they make sure it is on their own pace," said activist and blogger Alaa Abdel-Fattah. "We want decentralized democracy. They will resist. They want it highly centralized to keep control."

The military has yet to tackle the more complicated issues of dissolving the former ruling party and local councils, and restructuring security agencies\_ seen as the main tool for propping up Mubarak's regime.

There has been no release of political prisoners or prosecution of security officials behind the deaths of protesters -- key opposition demands.

On Thursday, two leading Muslim Brotherhood figures were released on medical grounds after serving almost twothirds of a seven-year sentence.

One of the two, Khayrat el-Shater, the brotherhood's chief strategist, said he expects the charges of money laundering and terrorism against him to be dropped because they violated international legal standards.

"We understand these trials were imposed on the military before by the tyrant



Mubarak. But now we won't find them any more excuses. They should drop all these sentences," he told The Associated Press after his release.

The military, however, continued to be criticized for its human rights record. The New-York based Human Rights Watch said the new rulers use military tribunals to prosecute dozens of civilians, all charged with criminal offenses, including weapons possession and curfew violations.

"Egyptian military authorities are continuing one of the worst practices of the Hosni Mubarak government by prosecuting civilians in military tribunals," said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch.

# Saving the Egyptian Revolution

EL AVIV – Revolutions throughout history have proven to devour their children. Their final outcomes are seldom congruent with their prime movers' intentions. Too frequently, revolutions are hijacked by a second wave, either more conservative or more radical than what was first contemplated by the initiators of change.

What started in France in 1789 as an uprising of the middle classes in alliance with the sans culottes ended up with the return of the monarchy in the form of Napoleon's dictatorship. More recently, the first wave of the Iranian revolution, under the presidency of Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, was by no means exclusively Islamist; the second wave, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, was

The question for Egypt is whether the agenda of a truly pluralistic democracy - proclaimed by the avant-garde young protesters at Tahrir Square, the admirably self-empowered Facebook and Twitter generation - can prevail against the resilient forces of the past. Indeed, according to a Pew Research Center poll, only 5.5%

of people have access to Facebook, while 95% want Islam to play a major role in politics, 80% believe that adulterers should be stoned, 45% are practically illiterate, and 40% live on less than \$2 a day.

Ideally, the new democratic order should be based on a common platform adopted by the forces of change, both secular and Islamic, and on a transition pact between these forces and those representing the old system, first and foremost the army. Indeed, one of the Egyptian revolution's odd features is that it now operates under the exclusive trusteeship of a conservative army.

True revolutions occur only when the old repressive system is thoroughly dismantled and purged. But Egypt's revolution is one whose initial stage ended with power fully in the hands of the old regime's repressive apparatus. The risk is that the fraternal ties between the army - not exactly innocent of the Mubarak regime's repressive practices - and the protesters might prove shortlived.

So far, the army has acceded to only one of the protesters' central demands - getting rid of Mubarak. It has not endorsed the wide array of liberal demands voiced by the revolutionaries of Tahrir Square.

Arguably, the military concurred with the protesters' demand for Mubarak's removal as the best way to circumvent a move towards a dynastic republic under Mubarak's son, Gamal. The masses called for a revolution, while the army conducted its own coup d'etat in the hope of saving what is essential in the system while sacrificing the man who embodied it. The army's temptation to limit change

reflects the conservative profile of its hierarchy, the extraordinary privileges it enjoys, and the economic interests with which it has been tied. Egypt was ruled as a police state, and, with a gigantic and all-pervasive security apparatus, the army might be tempted to assume the role of guardian of order and stability if democracy proves too messy.

Fortunately, there are limits to the Egyptian military's capacity to impede change. A Western-leaning army, funded and trained by the United States, it cannot allow itself the liberty of shooting peaceful protesters. Indeed, limiting the army's political role will certainly be a fundamental condition for maintaining Egypt's warm relations

with the West. A free-trade agreement with the US and improved access to EU markets might be powerful incentives that the West can offer to Egypt's young democracy.

So, no matter how conditioned the Egyptian army may be by its worldview and vested interests, it has no option but to facilitate the democratization process. It should have to accept, however, that no Arab democracy worthy of the name could refuse to open the electoral gates to political Islam.

Indeed, Egypt's formidably historic task now is to refute the old paradigm according to which the Arab world's only choice is between secular and repressive autocracy or obscurantist and repressive theocracy. But the regime that emerges is bound to be more attuned to local conditions, and thus to religion's vital role in the social fabric.

A democracy that excludes religion from public life entirely, à la France, cannot work in Egypt. After all, such a democracy does not work in Israel, or even in the US, a country that G. K. Chesterton described as having "the soul of a church." Building a modern secular state for a devout people is Egypt's main challenge.

That said, a scenario in which the Muslim Brotherhood usurps the revolution does not seem plausible, if only because this might lead another strongman on horseback to take over. Although still inspired by staunchly anti-

Western conservatives who believe that the "banner of Jihad" should not be abandoned, the Brotherhood today is not the unconditionally jihadist organization that Mubarak regime's portrayed to the West. It has long disavowed its violent past and has shown an interest in peaceful political participation.

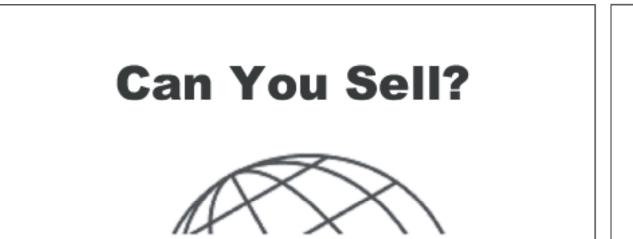
The tense relationship between the incumbent Arab regimes and political Islam is not necessarily a zero-sum game. It is in this context that the abortive Palestinian "Mecca Agreement" between the religious (Hamas) and the secular (Fatah) to form a national-unity government for Palestine



might have established a new paradigm for the future of regime change in the Arab world. Such compromises may be the only way to stem the slide to civil war, and possibly co-opt Islamists into a settlement with Israel and rapprochement with the West.

Shlomo Ben Ami is a former Israeli foreign minister who now serves as the vice-president of the Toledo International Centre for Peace. He is the author of Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Trag-

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## **Business**

# Yemen's accession to WTO delayed

#### By: Ali Saeed

he Yemeni government has not yet finalized its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) despite widespread expectations that it would join by the end of 2010, Dr. Hamood Al-Najjar, the WTO's chief communication and coordination officer, told the Yemen Times.

Set up in 1995, the WTO is an organization that intends to supervise and liberalize international trade by providing a framework for negotiating and formalizing trade agreements. Yemen's accession to the WTO would bring its trade legislation into conformity with the multilateral-trading system which organizes and administers 95 percent of trade flows in the world. According to Al-Najjar, "Yemen cannot afford to be outside of this system."

Yemen has not joined the WTO because it "has not yet finalized negotiations with one member of the WTO on market access for goods," Al-Najjar explained. Yemen is also yet to finalize amend-

ments on certain key legislation included in the action plan for its accession.

WTO officials had said Yemen was expected to join the WTO by the end of last year, but its application has been buoyed by slow progress and it is still unknown when Yemen will become a member, according to Al-Najjar.

The General Council established a Working Party to examine Yemen's request for accession in July 2000. According to Najjar Yemen is one of many countries that have been striving for over ten years to obtain WTO membership.

"Applications are often a slow process," he said "Saudi Arabia took 11 years and China took 15 years."

The key legislative amendments required are now being discussed in the Yemeni parliament, according to Al-Najjar.

Many of Yemen's neighbors, especially the GCC states, are WTO members. Yemen's accession to the WTO would help Yemen negotiating its ac-

cess to the GCC council, a step that analysts say is crucial to Yemen's future economic and political stability.

Al-Najjar highlighted Yemen's strategic location on the Arabian and Red seas as a through route for trade said that for this reason "Yemen should play a major role in the trade of the region as it did in the past."

But others are not so convinced by the WTO. Dr. Mohamed Jubran, professor of economics at the University of Sana'a told the Yemen Times that accession will not benefit Yemen as it is a country that is importing and not exporting."

"For those countries exporting goods, WTO membership makes a lot of sense, but 96% of Yemen's export are oil-related," he said. Adding that if Yemen joined the WTO its public budget may lose significant sums of money as its customs fees would be canceled.

"Those seeking Yemen's accession are doing so for their own political interests rather than out of concern for the economy."



WTO membership will not benefit Yemen in the trade sector as the country is importing and non-oil exports do not exceed more than 4 percent of all exports, accprding the professor.YT photo by Sade

# **Protests affect some small businesses**



Orange juice seller, Basheer Ali is optimistic through increasing his income during the demonstrations ,





Al-Hatimi,owner of a bookshop considers the tents as a hinder to his businesss

versity expressed his frustration with the sit-in. "My business has been damaged by these protests. Our average sales have decreased a great deal. With no students attending classes, no one needs to make copies, buy notebooks or other supplies," he said.

He added that the tents in front of his bookshop make it harder for customers to get to his shop. "Most of my costumers are female students. If they want to come to my shop, their families know that strange men will be watching them. Most of them prefer to simply avoid this place," he said. Al-Hatimi considers the camps and tents as an invasion and attack on

th ty. In addition, a group of paramedics
are roaming the area with first- aid
kits. Lines of security have also been
set up to screen people entering the
protest area for weapons.

"It's for your and our safety," said one of the women inspectors.

Basheer Ali, a man selling oranges from a wheelbarrow said "We are not affected by the protests, in fact these are the best protests I have ever seen because they're peaceful. Street vendors, shops, and restaurant are working day and night."

"Bookshops are sufferin but cafeterias and restaurants are experiencing an increase in business," said Abdullah Al-Nakhlani, the owner of Qurtoba Bookshop near the University. ing greatly.

"Can you imagine that we used to get among 50 to 60 thousand riyals a day? Now we barely get 10 thousand."

Al-Bada'ni says that many of his customers are hesitant to enter the square for fear of getting caught up in violence.

As you pass by Tahrir Square, the shops are open, street vendors are selling their products, watch repair-

ers are working and calling for passers-by to buy used phones. At noon, the clothes shops open up while pro-Saleh supporters gather in groups inside large tents for lunch.

Ahmed Ali, an almond seller in the square said, "There are still large amounts of people that pass through Tahrir in spite of the demonstrations. However, when there crowds swell, I take my staff and flee from the area."

#### REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTANT SERVICES) Public Works Project –Yemen Credit n No./ 4419

The government of Yemen has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Public Works Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consultant services

The services include:

- 1. Validate current base-line date so as to measure various outputs and outcome performance indicators
- 2. Conduct Socio Economic impact assessments:
  - **a. Physical objectives**, in terms of infrastructure to be constructed and delivered to beneficiaries /concerned agencies: and
  - **b.** Socio-economic objectives, in terms of alleviating poverty through the generation of increased employment and improving community livelihoods through better public services (particularly, services of direct need to women and children ).
  - c. **PWP improved procedures** and extent to which recommendations of the previous SIA were incorporated in aspects of improved data collection, social and environmental aspects.

The Public Works Project now invites eligible firms to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff,etc.)Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications

Abdullah Al--Nakhlani - a seller in a Bookshop- University area sits down as no students buy books or photocopy papers.

#### By: Ola Al-Shami

n the midst of calls for the regime to fall and those pledging to forever protect President Saleh, it is easy to forget that Tahrir Square and Sana'a University are surrounded by houses and small shops. In one way

or another, these protests are having a huge impact on small business owners in the surrounding areas. The Yemen Times went to both Tahrir Square and Sana'a University to find out how these business owners were faring in a time full of uncertainty. Tawfiq Al-Hatimi, owner of Al-Batool Bookshop near Sana'a Uni-

his business.

Om Mohammed lives on the second floor of a building near the university. "The local businesses must be suffering a great deal," she said, while pushing her way through a crowd of people buying groceries. "They scream on their microphones until midnight. It makes our lives very difficult," she said.

The anti-government protesters have erected almost a thousand tents, taking up most of the street in front of and leading up to Sana'a Universi"During the protests we stay open because they usually remain peaceful. However, if the pro-government thugs come, we close to avoid damage," added Al-Nakhlani.

Just a few miles away in Tahrir Square in, thousands of progovernment supporters are camped out under massive beige marquees. Mohammed Nabil Al-Bada'ani, the owner of a large business in Tahrir Square said his business was sufferenate to enhance then quantications.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World

Bank's <u>Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultant by world Bank Borrowers</u> (current edition)

Interested firms may obtain further information the address below during office hours  $8{:}00am$  to  $3{:}30pm$  .

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by {three weeks from Mar 5, 2011}

Attn: Saeed Abdo Ahmed Project Director

Almahrokat St .Brach from Zubairy Street, Telephone :+ 967-1-409683/7, facsimile:409303 E-mail: pwp-yem@y.net.ue P.O. Box: 18316 sanaa-yemen

## Invitation to Pakistan Community for Attending Flag-Hoisting Ceremony on 23 March

A FLAG-HOISTING CEREMONY WILL BE HELD AT THE EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN SANAA TO CELEBRATE THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF "NATIONAL DAY OF PAKISTAN" ON 23 MARCH 2011 AS PER FOLLOWING PROGRAMME.

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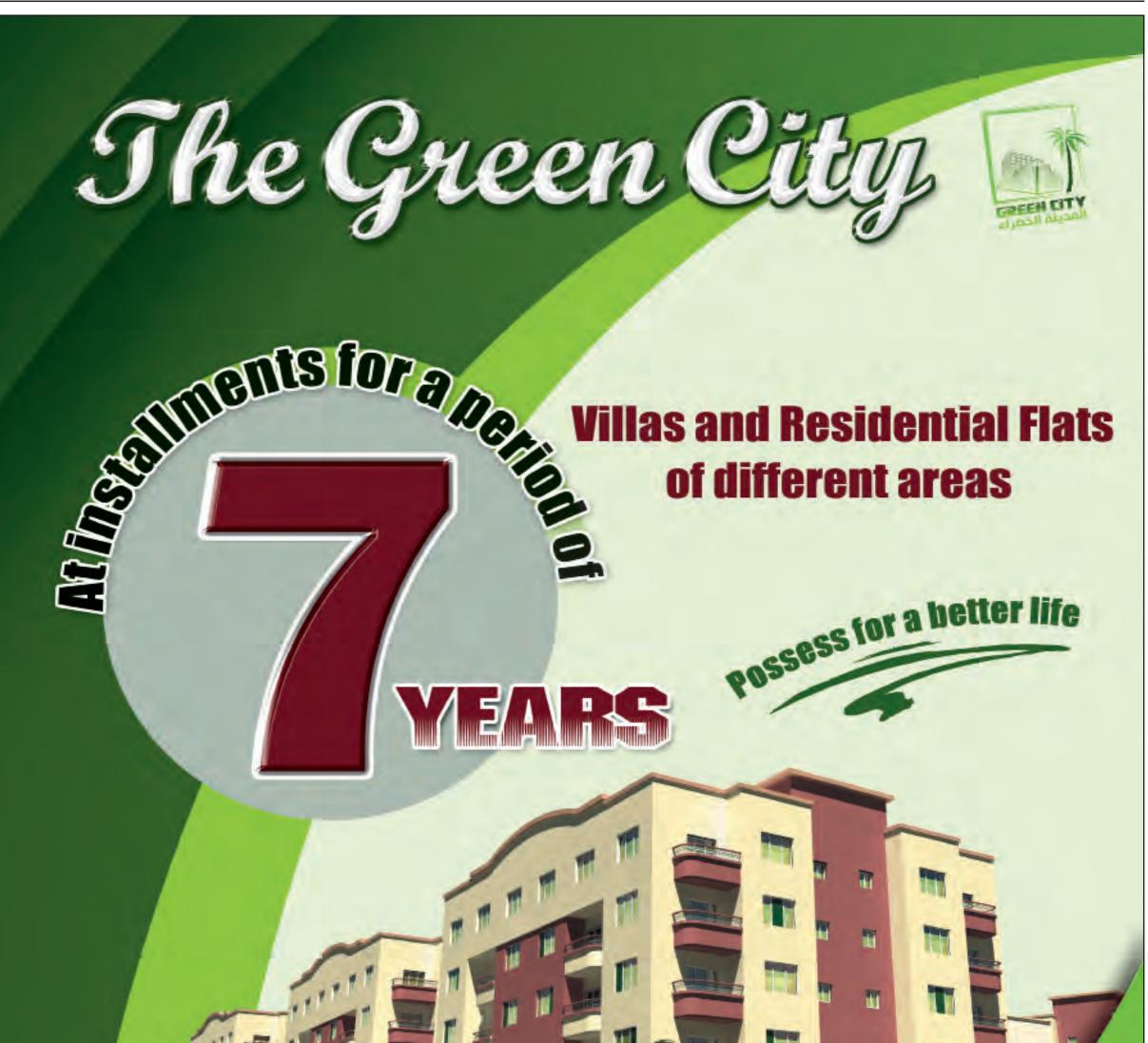
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## **10** 7 March, 2011

## **Readers View**



Compiled by Mahmood Al-Matari and Safiya Al-Jabry

In this new section we talk to young people about their concerns, hopes and dreams. Every week we hit the streets and share what young people have to say right here.

#### This week's question:

## How do social networks like Facebook and Twitter have an impact on people?

#### Fathiya Al-Jabry

Internet plays a great role in our lives nowadays. Social networks have made it easy for people around the world to connect. I use these networks more than my phone sometimes. I reconnected with people i never thought i would ever meet again. Distant family and friends have become closer through these cheaper forms of communication. On the other hand, these networks also have a down side to them. People can become addicted to them and have virtual friends which could lead to phsycolocigal problems.

#### **Riyadh AlHarazi**

I think that facebook and twitter have made a lot of changes in our lives. They have been recently used as tools to change the dictatorship regimes in Tunisia and Egypt. These networks also make it easier for people to connect and make friendships from all over the world.

#### **Ameera Al-Muhares**

I feel like these networks are just wastage of time as no important topics are discussed. They can be addictive and take up all of a person's time. People become isolated and they forget about important things in their lives like family and friends.

#### Nada Mohammed

Nowadays, social networks have been the backbone for demonstrations and uprisings. They are basically considered the center for youth to share ideas freely without restrictions both directly and indirectly. They make youth feel like they can express their ideas without much care of whether they are accepted or not.

#### **Muna Bajaber**

I think for the most part it has had a good impact because it has provided a means of renewing relationships with people you had lost contact with a long time ago and had no way of reconnecting with. I also believe that even though it can be a good thing, it needs control and limitations by the person using it.

# My beautiful home (Yemen)

**Bv: Redwan Mohammed** redwan200033@yahoo.com

O my beautiful home where I live in, With ancient houses there isn't din, Comfort and love your heart fill in.

Doves sit on their high roofs, As a white scarf covering fair hair, Ah, illuminations like sky stars, Wastefully light life here and there.

The sun flirts you from time to time, And sedately kisses your head and mine,

Neither hate you know nor spite, Love you are filled with and pride.

High mountains are adorned by clouds, Making the white crown your with unique gems, A new green dress wearing when it rains. Either beauty I'll feel or magnificence.

No home like you I surely say, I can't leave you even one day, If you ignore me, I will pass away.

# Being a successful manger

his team. They do not believe in tricks,

does not instigation one employee to

trick another, and respects individual

differences. In other words, a successful

manger behaves in such a way as to

control the situation by using his or

her intelligence, and to find reasonable

ways to solving problems. Evaluation

is also an attribute of a successful

manger. He or she always steps back to

evaluate how well different programs

have worked. A successful manger asks

themselves many questions. Are the

current ways of managing resulting in a

good profit? Are there ways to improve

performance to get more benefits,

cheaper and in a shorter time?

By: Shamsan Dabwan Saeed shamsan@blumail.org

enerally, management is a term which describes the way that people control and organize different situations that happen in their lives or their work. The central meaning of management is a series of activities using different resources, both material and human. So management is not only a group of principals, systems and procedures. Basically management is a mixture of relationships, communications and interactions among different people. Here I would like to mention some tips that make a successful manger.

Cleverness is one of the most important traits of a successful manger. He or she should have an awake consciousness, a white heart and a sober tongue. He or she should have the ability to understand and analyze problems of work and teamwork, estimate the psychological mood of a team and have a vision of developing and training his team to the best level. They need to plan ahead to anticipate the needs and the costs of production, clever manger also has the ability to



For a few rials, this boy trades his day's collection of recycled metal and plastic waste before he launches on another expedition. It's not about protecting the environment, it is about fending off poverty.

successful manger should understand Successful mangers do not use

### **YT Photo by Amira Al-Sharif**

#### humorous expressions, do not speak Building a team is another trait of a in anger or slam down the phone successful manger. He or she always while someone is speaking. He or she encourages participation, the sharing listens carefully to their employees of ideas and mutual respect at work. or customers. They seek out and give

He or she looks for different ways that allow and help employees to make connections, and to refresh their connections by leading by example. A successful manger give employees autonomy. They need to meet their goals in their own away within a budget and deadline. He or she provides support, training, recognition and necessary knowledge leading to success. By building a good team, the work environment can cope in the absence of a member of the team. A good manger is one who conducts meetings weekly or monthly to discuss problems. In short, a successful manger keeps the relationship amongst his team intimate, respectable and collaborative.

I have mentioned some attributes of a good and successful manger. In general, they can be considered as a point of view, and may be right or wrong. Is it time to improve your chances of success and plan for your own project in the future? Re-evaluate your priorities for getting things done program is working. I hope success

good teamwork.

good and appropriate feedback to achieve a good result to a problem. The successful manger provides good outlets for expression, ideas, the voicing of concerns and the allowing of suggestions. By encouraging and

Effective and responsive interpersonal that he had written a complaint to his relationships are a trait of successful manger, requesting him to address a mangers. Reporting to staff members, specific problem. His manger did not care about his complaint, and days discussing happy moments and conducting executive decisions together later, the problem lead to bigger and bigger problems. He wrote another creates respect in the managers' ability to demonstrate care, collaboration, complaint stating that "as a result of respect, trust and attentiveness. Such your carelessness about the former traits create a network of professional complaint..." This time the manger and personal connections that make a responded, saying that he would bear successful management environment the responsibility of the problem, through good communication skills. and reward his employee. Here the Good communication skills are a manger behaved in a reasonable way as well as maintaining profitability. A very important attribute of a good that cultivated the trust and motivation in time, and evaluate how well your manger. Communication is achieved of his employee to do well. Here the

practicing open communication, you

can motivate employees and customers

very easily. They will be more satisfied,

and create a ready organization that

responds well to a changing workplace.

One of my friends reported to me

#### Waleed Muthana

Social networks play a great role by being sources of news and information of occuring events in the world. In fact, i feel that sometimes they offer more realistic information than other channels.

#### Sadeq Abdi

They make life much easier by assuring away of connecting people even though they are miles apart from each other. They are much cheaper and convenient.

#### Sitora Yuldashova

I was inspired by the story of a homeless man in America who found his daughter through twitter. I deeply believe that these networks provide that connection that people long to find. They are also a good platform for advertisments.

#### Next Week's Question:

## How do you think tribalism affect the people in Yemen?

Follow this section for a new question every week and feel free to reply with your answers or feedback by sending an e-mail to ytyouth@gmail.com

So this is your chance to share your humorous stories, poems or opinions with other young readers!

get work done in a timely manner, and through many different ways: in manger used his intelligence and to set priorities. On the other hand, a person, writing, email and telephone. learned from his mistakes to encourage

for everyone in their life, projects and workplace.

# **Three Yemeni models worth watching**

#### **By: Naseh Shaker**

he Yemeni Yard this week experiencing three extraordinarily interesting models of political action and change - in Aden, Sana'a and Taiz - that share only a common problem, but do not offer insights into the best solution.

The common problem is that the existing political and economic order in the Yemeni Yard is unstable and unsustainable, because it is unsatisfying to a majority of citizens. These three models of change - not to mention other drastic ones, like the invaded South or shattered Sa'ada in the north – provide very different transformational paths that attempt in their own ways to narrow the gap between state and citizen, and activate to some extent the principle of "the consent of the governed."

The mechanisms for change in Sana'a, Aden and Taiz – rather than their results - represent important new dynamics that in turn reflect the increasingly desperate need among ordinary citizens for a better way to run their country. Of the three, Aden is the most complex and troubling, Taiz is the most sophisticated and heartening, and Sana'a is the most dramatic and universal, and thus most likely to be copied in other Yemeni provinces.

Sana'a is unique in the region and the world for a number of reasons. The nature of its governance system requires consensus among four different parties and ethnic groups. And achieving consensus is immensely more complicated due to the Houthis in Sa'ada being militarily stronger than the government, and is willing to use its weight to block government decisions that it rejects, for instance, Bahrain's collaboration in the special mediation for Sa'ada's war.

The simultaneous expression in the country of separate strong-arm tactics alongside a perpetual quest for consensus among four opposition parties is impressive, but probably unworkable. The move by the JMP and its Houthis ally to withdraw from the ruling party and bring down the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh is in keeping with how this system has been structured, allowing the majority or opposition to veto decisions that do not have a consensus.

The political battle now under way over the next president, the parliament, and Houthis status and role in Yemen will be epic, probably prolonged, and very messy. If the Yemen consensusbased model of pluralistic governance can be made to work in these difficult

conditions, using constitutional and peaceful means, we should all cheer.

The situation in Aden is unique in being a rare case of citizens of the Yemeni Yard enjoying the opportunity to vote to determine their future status. Two massive gaps in the modern history of the Arab world are corrected by this move, which will probably see South Yemen emerge as an independent country. Self-determination by citizens of an Arab state who are able to define their borders, their national values and their system of governance; and, a corrective mechanism that allows the countries and peoples of this region to reconfigure themselves into more natural sovereign states that correspond to their ethnic-national identities (as the former Soviet Union was reconfigured after 1990).

This ideal model of change allows citizens individually and collectively to determine their fate and to give birth to more natural, democratic, and productive countries that have a better chance of success than has been the case to date among Yemeni security units.

The widespread demonstrations in Taiz - unlike Sana'a and Aden - mirror a universal pattern of change by citizens who reach a breaking point and go out into the street to brave the bombs of

the eternal ruler's military (thugs) and security services. When citizens are no longer afraid of the ruler's bullets, the ruler's days are numbered.

I have been saying for two weeks that we cannot predict when, where, how and by whom transformations from autocracy to democracy will start in the Yemeni Yard, but we know for sure that they will start. It is possible that Taiz will emerge as that starting point, just as Tunisia and Egypt started a liberation movement in 2001, which ultimately led to the collapse and transformation of the empire a decade later. The Yemeni regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh will probably try all sorts of creative and deceptive measures to remain in power, while liberalizing just enough to absorb the anger of its citizens. That's why this process must be watched closely to see if real change in the totally autocratic Yemeni Yard and the Arab world will end in Yemen and Libya this year, as it did in Tunisia and Egypt last month.

It is very satisfying, even spellbinding, to watch several Yemeni governorates simultaneously grappling with their inevitable need to leave behind the dark arenas of incompetence, stagnation, disparity and autocracy, and embrace something more humane for their people.

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# Helping youth connect to opportunity in Yemen

**Interview by: Roger Burks** 

melto (Alto) Labetubun is Mercy Corps' representative in Yemen, the organziation's newest country program. Originally from Ambon, Indonesia, Alto began working for Mercy Corps in 2000, when his home island was rocked by a sectarian conflict that killed thousands and displaced more than a half-million people. He worked with our emergency assessment team, helping begin a rebuilding and reconciliation program that still continues today.

After his work in Ambon, Alto moved to the island of Sulawesi to continue working for Mercy Corps Indonesia as a program coordinator. He then took on new roles for the agency outside his home country: first as a peace-building advisor for Mercy Corps in southern Sudan, then as a program manager in Iraq.

He arrived in Yemen at the beginning of 2011 – just in time to experience the protests and change that are sweeping through the Middle East. Alto took time to answer questions about the current situation and Mercy Corps' work in Yemen.

#### What are you seeing, hearing and experiencing from the protests there? What are youth saying?

Alto: The youth want to be heard and, so far, they have neither experienced enough nor adequate opportunities and venues to express their voices. They're mostly protesting over a lack of economic opportunities and the feeling of inequality. So far, the protests have been peaceful and we've seen both pro- and anti-government shows of force.

However, there have also been a number of incidents in various parts of the country that have claimed casualties The Yemeni people that I've talked to about the latest dynamics of their country are confident that ongoing protests will not turn into violent.



Young people in Yemen, who form the majority of the Scene from a peaceful protest in Yemen on February 25. country's population, are upset at lack of career opportunities and voice in their communities.

#### What are the unique challenges that youth face in Yemen?

Yemen has one of the highest percentages of youth in the world: around 75 percent of the population is under 25 years old. It also has some of the highest economic and employment challenges in the Middle East region - the inadequacy of employment opportunities is the biggest biggest challenge that Yemeni youth are currently facing.

I've been down to Aden (Yemen's second-biggest cities) a few times and spent time talking to the taxi drivers, as well as small restaurants cook near the hotel where I was staying. What was fascinating about these discussions was that these people have had more education than these jobs would dictate. Many of them went to college or technical college because they had the belief of a better life through better education. However, the reality is, there are just not enough jobs for them.

The youth also often feels ignored by the system at all levels of government, both formal and informal. They don't know where to voice their concern about their challenges. They feel that there is gap between them and their representative in the government. For example, I



spoke with a few young people I met during my trips, and some of them do not even know the local council member(s) from their areas and districts. None of them could recall any interaction such as community meetings with their government officials.

These grievances create a void that put these young people at risk - not only to their own community, but more importantly to the influence of radical ideas. They could easily become clients for radical groups or ideology, if radical groups promise them opportunities that their current government, society and social roles cannot provide.

#### How is Mercy Corps helping youth meet those challenges?

Our program in Yemen is designed to work with the key stakeholders in addressing these grievances. We acknowledge that there are gaps in the relationship between youth and the governance structures in their community. These gaps of relationship weaken the trust between youth and their government.

Our program works directly with the youth and the formal/informal governance structure in selected districts to re-strengthen this relationship. As a start, we equip the leaders and youth with skills on consensus building, leadership and decision-making through trainings. Beyond the skills development provided by these trainings, we use these events as the vehicle or medium to increase interactions among these stakeholders.

Knowing and understanding of the other parties leads to an increase in productive, collaborative relationships, furthermore increasing trust between youth and the governance stakeholders. The youth will also function as the proxy to channel not only their peer voices, but also their community's voice to the leaders

In order for youth to become community leaders who can voice concerns to the leaders in the government, youth first needs to be appreciated and trusted. There is a perception in the community that Yemeni youth are only care about chewing qat, an addictive leaf that is chewed as a stimulant. And so, to change the perception of the community about their youth, the program will conduct a series of trainings on skills and business development, as well as conflict management skills and fundraising.

Again, the added value that we're



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looking for is the opportunity to bring youth from various groups together and increase the positive connections among peers. Then we will financially assist these young people in development projects that they have decided to implement in their communities. We believe that, through tangible and demonstrable activities in the community, the perception of adults in the community towards youth will change - and, reciprocally, that will change the perception of youth towards themselves, as well as redefine their place in their communities.

Lastly, the program is planning to address the issue of unemployment, by connecting youth with the potential employment opportunities in their areas. We will be working hard to identify potential employment, not only in the business sector, but also on government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to host these youth as interns, apprentices or even potential fulltime employment. We also planning to connect youth who want to create their own businesses to potential stakeholders who can provide mentorship.

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#### What are the strengths that Mercy **Corps brings to Yemen?**

Mercy Corps has extensive experience from various parts of the world that can be adapted to the Yemeni context. Since we've just arrived in Yemen for the first time, we have a clean slate to start it right. We also have very dedicated and experienced staff - particularly young Yemeni citizens who are originally from the areas where we're working - who give us strength of local knowledge and wisdom, as well as local networks of leaders and influential citizens.

Mercy Corps always believes in local knowledge and resources, and this program reflects that. Program startup is always a challenge, especially to start a program and to establish our presence in a new country. Yemen at this time is an especially challenging context; here, we must plan for the worst but we're always hoping for the best.







