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Dr. Abdulqawi Al-Shameeri "Thugs destroyed ambulances and beat up female medics"



GPC resignations continue amidst growing protests

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

Hertz لفرنز

SANA'A, Mar. 20-More members of the ruling General People's Congress (GPC) have resigned the last three days in condemnation of the crackdown on pro-democracy protesters outside Sana'a University last Friday, including Yemen's ambassador to the UN, Abdullah Al-Saidi.

Those figures that have resigned include the Ministers of Human Rights and Tourism, the head of State-run Saba News Agency, many academics and sheikhs. Several different officials and employees in the public sector have also resigned after the attack that was described as a massacre and left at least 52 dead and about 600 wounded.

Resigned officials have severely criticized the violent crackdown on peaceful protesters by security forces and pro-government thugs, calling for president Saleh to step down immediately.

The recent resignations came after many several other ruling party offi-



Huda al-Ban, Minister of Human rights and one of Yemen's only two female ministers resigned today in condemnation of violence against pro-democracy demonstrators

cials stepped down in protest earlier this week. Yemeni observers and analysts indicate that the number of resignations from the GPC will increase in the days to come.

These resignations coincide with international and national condemnation for 'heinous crimes' by security forces and government loyalists

against pro-democracy protesters. Ali Al-Jaradi, a political analyst and editor-in-chief of Al-Ahali newspaper told the Yemen Times that there is no ruling party in Yemen, implying that the president controls all decisions in the party and other members and leaders have no ability to make

Continued on page 2

Military court begins investigation into Friday's bloodbath



Three pro-democracy demonstrators that were killed in last Friday's violence. All three were killed by highly accurate shots to the head by snipers.





By: Shatha Al-Harazi

Sana'a, Mar, 20 - A military prosecution has begun interrogating some of those accused of firing upon protesters on Friday, the Yemen Times has learned. A source which asked to remain anonymous said that only military personnel were present at the investigation session on Sunday which was organised by President Saleh to probe those implicated with Friday's onslaught which left at over 40 protesters dead.

"Military prosecutions are usually only for cases which involve members of the armed forces, which makes it possible to think the attackers are part of Yemen's army," said Abdul Rahman Barman, activist and lawyer.

Meanwhile, Yemen's General Prosecutor, Abdullah Al-Olofi, who went to the scene of the attack to investigate the murders, was forced to hide in an ambulance after being met by a crowd of angry demonstrators. Riot police surrounding Sana'a

Continued on page 2



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Around the Nation



Two journalists killed by snipers

By: Malak Shaher

SANA'A, March 20 – Jamal Al-Shar'abi and Mohammad Al-Thulaya were the first journalists to be killed in Yemen's unrest on Friday when snipers opened fire on anti-government protesters in Sana'a.

The two journalists were shot by snipers while taking photos of the protests, according to Abdul Rahman Barman, lawyer at the National Organization for Human Rights (HOOD), who also was at the protest when snipers opened fire.

Eyewitnesses say the snipers were highly skilled marksmen who shot protesters in vital areas such as the head, neck and chest. According to

the Ministry of Interior, 24 people were killed on Friday. However, the number is increasing as more of the injured succumb to their wounds.

"They died holding their cameras," said Barman. "Journalists are simply observers and should not be treated as part of the protest."

Al-Shar'abi, 34, worked as a photographer and a freelance journalist. He was originally from Taiz but worked in Sana'a. Al-Thulaya, however, lived in Amran and worked for a newspaper run by the Islah opposition party.

Barman added that HOOD received complaints from a number of journalists who said that they received death threats and were told they would be

fired from their regular jobs if they continued to work as freelance journalists

Ahmad Al-Lahabi, the communication officer at the Ministry of Information, told the Yemen Times that the ministry will endeavor to protect journalists who have received threats.

Al-Lahabi added that the ministry is not the source of these threats and that it promotes press freedom.

Last week, national security forces deported eight foreign journalists who were covering recent events in Yemen. Of the deported journalists, two were British, three were American, one was Italian and the others were Aljazeera Arabic employ-

ees. Al-Lahabi said that the journalists were in possession of tourist or student visas, not press visas. However, the journalist's claim they were invited by the ministry to press conferences before and after demonstrations

began in Sana'a in mid February. Corruption cases behind deaths of journalists

Jamal Al-Shar'abi and Mohammad Al-Thulaya were not the only jour-

nalists killed fulfilling their professional duties in the wake of violence against protesters. In February last year journalist Ali Al-Rabo'e, who was working for Al-Qahira newspaper in Hajja governorate was killed by an unknown group of armed men



Jamal Al-Shar'abi (left) freelance journalist and a photographer was killed in the protest. However, journalists are still concerned as covering protests is not the only cause behind the abuse or deaths. Last year, Ali Al-Rabo'e (right) journalist in Hajja governorate, was killed by unknown men for his reports on corruption cases.

YEMEN: Timeline of 2011 protests

SANAA, 10 March 2011 (IRIN) -Nationwide protests demanding an end to the 32-year rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh have entered their sixth week, but the Yemeni leader is refusing to step down until 2013. Below is a timeline highlighting key events since the protests began:

2 February 2011: Thousands of Yemeni opposition supporters take to the streets of Sana'a, Aden and Taiz on the "First Day of Rage", protesting against the government's constitutional amendment allowing Saleh to run for another term.

3 February: Tens of thousands of protesters in Sana'a on "Second Day of Rage" decry government corruption, and Saleh's control of power and resources. Saleh again calls for dialogue with the opposition.

10 February: Thousands of Southern Movement (SM) supporters march in several parts of the south in protest at a military siege imposed by the government.

12 February: Thousands in Sana'a celebrate Mubarak's downfall, call for Saleh's ouster, but are confronted by pro-Saleh demonstrators in al-Tahrir Square. Thousands of university students head towards Egyptian embassy

calling for an end to Saleh's rule; two are injured after being attacked by Saleh supporters with daggers and sticks.

13 February: Tens of thousands rally in front of Sana'a University as well as in Liberty Square in Taiz. They are confronted by pro-government demonstrators in both cities.

17 February: At least 25 injured in clashes between pro- and anti-government protesters in front of Sana'a University.

18 February: Four killed, 11 injured when the authorities attempt to disperse thousands of protesters in Aden in a demonstration called "Friday of Start". A local council building, police station and several police vehicles are set ablaze, Mohammed Salim, a riot police officer, tells IRIN from Aden. At least three killed and another 87 injured when a grenade is thrown at tens of thousands of protesters in Taiz's Liberty Square.

19 February: One protester killed and another 15 injured in clashes between police and anti-government demonstrators in front of Sana'a University. Another protester killed in Aden

21 February: The Joint Meeting

Parties (JMP), an opposition coalition, and Houthi followers in the north declare their support for the young protesters demanding Saleh's ouster.

23 February: Ten MPs resign from ruling General People's Congress in protest at the government's crackdown on protesters. Two protesters killed and 23 injured in Sana'a.

25 February: Hundreds of thousands of protesters stream onto the streets of Sana'a, Taiz, Ibb, Amran, Sa'dah, Aden, Dhalea, Mukalla, Lahj, Shabwa, Abyan, Dhamar, Marib, al-Jauf and Hodeida on the "Friday of Immovability". At least 7 killed and dozens of others injured in Aden, according to HOOD.

26 February: Senior sheikhs from Yemen's main tribes (Hashid and Bakil) declare their support for the protesters. «Saleh and his regime must leave now,» said Sheikh Fasail al-Dheli from the Hashid tribe. «How is it possible for a regime to reform things in two years after it failed to do so in more than three decades?» he asked.

27 February: Eight killed, 36 injured in Aden protests, raising death toll since 2 February to 26, according to YHRO.

1 March: Hundreds of thousands

rally in most main cities to express solidarity with the families of protesters killed in Aden in a day named "Tuesday of Rage". 4 March: Two killed, six injured when army attacks anti-government protest in war-torn Harf Sufyan District, Amran Governorate

6 March: Some 25 protesters injured in Ibb after being attacked by ruling party supporters.

8 March: Some 70-80 students injured and one killed after government troops fire at protesters in front of Sana'a University. "The troops used a toxic gas against the protesters," said Hussein al-Shawjali, a volunteer neurologist at a mobile clinic providing medical services to protesters at the university. "Dozens are comatose or suffering spasms... Their lives are at high risk as we don't have information about this toxic gas to prescribe the right serum for the victims,» al-Shawjali tells IRIN the following day. Sixty injured (20 of them police) in clashes between prison inmates and police in Sana'a central prison.

10 March: Saleh goes on TV to announce plans to change the constitution to move to a parliamentary system.

Continued from Page 1

GPC resignations continue amidst growing protests

decisions."Yemenis want a peaceful exit for president Saleh. Our president doesn't really see the previous experience in Egypt and Tunisia," he said. "President Saleh thinks that he is different from the presidents who have been overthrown recently."

Al-Jaradi indicated that the presi-

again peaceful pro-democracy protest-

"I resigned from my post in the newspaper to express my sympathy with the youth in the Change Square," Bajjash told the Yemen Times.

He described what happened last Friday as a mind-boggling, calling for all Yemenis to be more rational. "The government run and partisan newspaing them to the prosecution.

"Some of the security forces helped us to arrest them "said Marwan Al-Zoubairy from the security committee at the protest."An armored division close to the sit-in helped us stop some of the attackers."

Local and international NGOs have condemned Friday's violence against protesters while a group of Yemeni pers are not objective and need to religious scholars and sheikhs released statements holding president Saleh personally responsible for the attack. The JMP, Yemen's opposition coalition have also blamed the government for the violence

the Arab league, and the Islamic Conference Organization to stand by the Yemeni people to protect their lives and freedoms. State of emergency declared

Many activists and lawyers have said that Saleh's announcement of a 30 day state of emergency on Friday is against the Yemeni constitution.

Article 121 of theconstitution states, The House of Representatives shall said to be involved in "a dirty deal". The case involved a contractor who was responsible for providing people in Hajja with non-potable water.

Al-Rabo'e was killed when he was on his way to work in the morning, an incident that spread fear among journalists that they may be killed at any time, even outside of conflict zones.

"If a day goes by where I don't receive a death threat, I think something is wrong," said Abdul Kareem Al-Khaiwani, former editor-in-chief of Al-Shora newspaper run by the Islah opposition party.

According Al-Khaiwani, he received threats from "people in power" he knows but refused to name them. The last threat he received was a week ago.



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dent's decision depends on his relatives. "His powerful relatives pose a threat to him now." In Al-Jaradi's opinion, if the president insists on staying in power, the situation in Yemen will worsen and the economy could collapse. He also argued that the most recent initiatives and concessions made by the president have come too late. "If he proposed these initiatives five years ago, Yemenis would have welcomed them," he said

"Now, Yemenis will not accept anything from the president save his resignation."

Several Yemeni officials, activists and lawyers launched initiatives laying out a smooth exit for president Saleh. However, they said that all initiatives are 'meaningless' after Friday's attack.

The most recent initiative was announced by a member of the GPC, Mohammed Abu Lohoom, but he withdrew it after the recent attack, pointing out to that there is no more time for negotiation.

Zakaria Hassan, a journalist in the state run Al-Thawra newspaper said that most journalists in the newspaper condemned the recent attack on protesters, criticizing the cover-up of real events by state media including their own Al-Thawra newspaper.

He said to the Yemen Times that his colleagues in the newspaper demand the president's resignation.

Following condemnation of those journalists, Abdul Rahman Bajjash, managing editor of Al-Thawra newspaper, resigned from his post last Sunday in condemnation of violence

learn more about journalism," he said.

"I hope that my resignation can motivate the youth and will contribute to efforts for change," he added.

Military court begins investigation into Friday's bloodbath University were withdrawn and replaced by heavily-armed military personnel on Sunday morning to protect over a hundred thousand protesters leading a funeral march in memory of those killed on Friday.

"The military has been forced to interveneto protect the protesters and to stop this violence," said Shawqhi Al-Qhadhi, an M Pfrom the Islamic opposition party, Islah.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh announced that Sunday was to be a day of mourning after 52 people were killed on Friday by gunman firing from the roofs of nearby houses.Most of the victims were shot directly in the head or the chest. Doctors say at least 617 injured, 347 suffered from inhaling tear-gas. Eyewitnesses said that some of the gunman were caught by the protesters; one died after being thrown from the roof of the Yemen Bank of Reconstruction and Development.

The Yemen times was told that snipers were spotted on four separate buildings and that five gunmen had been caught and handed over to the general prosecution early Saturday. Members of the protest security committee interrogated the snipers and took their testimonies before deliver-

be called to session within one week and be presented with the declaration of emergency. If the House is not called to session, or the declaration of the state of emergency has not been Saleh has claimed that clashes presented to it, then the state of emer-



One pro-democracy demonstrator that was shot in the shoulder on Friday still insists on peace

between the protesters and angry local residents caused the bloodshed.

President Saleh went on to call those killed,"martyrs of democracy" and renewed his call for the protesters to coordinate with the interior ministry and move their sit-in to another location that is not full of residents.

gency shall cease to exist according to the Constitution." Shawqhi Al-Qhadhi told the Yemen

Times that what happened Friday is not a sufficient cause for calling a state of emergency.

This is an abuse of a public post. The president is using the constitution The JMP has called on the GCC, to serve his own benefits."



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Around the Nation

Tens of Thousands mourn those killed in Sana'a in a defiant display of grief



Two of over 40 people that were killed in last Friday's violence. One protester mentioned that the morgue at the nearby hospital where bodies were taken was overflowing



Bodies of those killed last Friday were carried from the Science and Technology University Hospital to the protest camp in front of Sana'a University

Yemen imports cooking gas as local supply is cut

By: Jeb Boone

SANA'A, March 20 - Fighter jets soared overhead as thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators carried the bodies of their martyrs through the streets of Sana'a.

The funeral marched stretched for nearly a mile as the bodies of more than 40 anti-government protesters that were killed in last Friday's slaughter were carried to "Change Square" in front of Sana'a University.

Thousands marched through the streets hoisting placards with photos of the "martyrs of the revolution", chanting, "The martyrs are the beloved of God."

"This is the systematic murder of political dissidents," said one flustered demonstrator. "They are coming for us," he added.

Wrapped in Yemeni flags, bodies were carried from a morgue and released to their families waiting with crowds to march their dead loved ones to their graves.

Portraits of the dead were put up along roads leading away from the hospital where the bodies were being carried. The funeral marched stretch for almost half a mile as body after body was carried out of the hospital and towards Sana'a University

Audha Saleh Abdul Gowi, a 22 year old student, was one of those shot by snipers last Friday. His cousin, Waleed Audh, hung a huge portrait of his friend and cousin on the side of his car. "He was shot in the side, the shoulder, and the leg," said Audh, solemnly.

"Ali Saleh [the president], the murderer, is the enemy of God," chanted thousands of grieving protesters.

More than 75,000 people gathered at the center of the anti-government protest at Sana'a University to mourn the dead.

After prayers were held for the dead in front of Sana'a University, bodies were buried in a nearby cemetery or taken by their families. Many of those killed were tribesman from villages in Arhab and Amran, two very powerful tribes in **PROVIDING A HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION FOR 35 YEARS** A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

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northern Yemen. The men killed from those tribes will be taken back to the countryside and buried in their villages.

Resignations continue

Following the resignation of Yemen's ambassador to Lebanon Faisal Amin al-Ras yesterday, more prominent political figures are resigning in condemnation of last Friday's "massacre" of anti-government demonstrators.

In a move similar to the early days of Libya's revolution, Yemen's ambassador to the UN Abdullah al-Saeed has resigned in protest. Joining in his resignation is one of only two female ministers in the

government of Yemen, Minister of Human Rights Huda al-Ban. Her deputy, Ali Saleh Taisir, also resigned in reaction to what they termed as an "excessive" use of violence again peaceful demonstrators

Sadeq al-Ahmar, one of Yemen's most powerful tribal Sheikhs, also joined protesters today in demanding that President Saleh relinquishes power. The al-Ahmar family is made up of nine brothers, all of which have considerable power and influence in Yemen's enormous Hashid tribal confederation. Sadeq is the oldest and most influential of these nine brothers.



Student Councils Project, Yemen

The Academy for Education Development, an independent, nonprofit organization, is seeking candidates for MEPI Student Councils Project, based in Sana'a, as follows:

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, March 20- The Yemeni government said on Sunday that a ship carrying around 6,400 tons of cooking gas is on its way to Yemen's shores.

This shipment will ease the acute shortage of gas in the country caused by the suspension of the local supply from Marib due to the ongoing unrest in the country, Mohamed Al-Bawsani, director of the technical department at the Yemen Gas Company, a state-owned company responsible for the marketing and supply of cooking gas.

The Safer cooking gas plant in Marib and Aden oil refineries fill Yemen's domestic supply of cooking gas. According to the director, whenever there is a crisis, Yemen resorts to imports.

"Trucks supplying gas cylinders from Safer to Sana'a and from Sana'a to other cities were suspended from bringing gas due to the unrest in the country," he said.

Al-Bawsani explained that the company has stores of cooking gas cylinders stockpiled in the capital Sana'a and other Yemeni cities to face similar shortages. At the moment the company, distributes the gas itself directly to citizens in its shops around various cities.

He highlighted that the company is looking for an alternative supply to use until the nationwide uprising is over.

Mohamed Hassan, a citizen in Sana'a city told the Yemen Times that he has been looking for gas for a week and could not find any. He claims that gas shops in Sana'a are running out of gas



The gas shortage is an old problem in Yemen, but this time with the unrest in the country, it caused panic among citizens. The Yemen Gas Company said that now there is a ship on its way to Yemen carrying 6,400 tons of gas to cover the current need.

cylinders.

"I went to several gas shops in my area, but there was nothing," Hassan said.

Abdo Al-Hubaishi, a gas shop owner in Sana'a said that his shop has been short of gas for more than a week. He is now waiting for the gas company to provide him with supplies so his customers can obtain gas in his neighborhood.

Um Khaleel, a housewife in Hodeida told the Yemen Times that she has been looking for gas for two weeks ago and could not find any.

"The gas suppliers here distribute only to a few people and many citizens are left without gas for their homes," she said.

Al-Bawsani said that this shortage has caused a panic among citizens and has resulted in an increase in demand for gas nationwide.

"Some people want to buy more than they need. We have seen some people who usually buy two cylinders and now want to buy seven," he said.

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- Maintain contact with trained MoE officials to ensure they are conducting trainings as scheduled and to offer assistance and/or provide evaluations of the workshops
- Participate in the training of the Student Council Ambassadors (including students, parents, and faculty members)
- Assist Student Ambassador teams in scheduling visits to other governorates to perform their outreach duties
- Participate in parent council trainings that foster partnerships with student councils
- Participate in summer centers to build awareness about the student councils program
- Carry out other tasks, as needed, by the student councils project staff

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- ⇒ Experience working in the education sector and/or implementing community-based civic participation projects
- ⇒ Excellent written and oral communication skills
- ⇒ Established technical expertise in youth programming and development
- \Rightarrow Experience in performing similar technical assistance and training programs in schools
- \Rightarrow Not less than five years experience in training.
- ⇒ Working Experience in the education sector and/or implementing community-based civic participation projects
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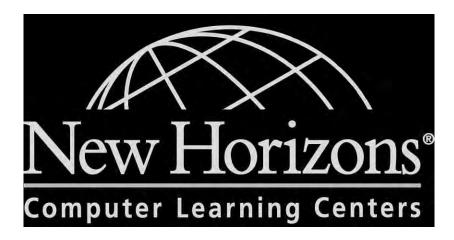


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- c. Consults with department teams to assess needs and develop an understanding of their operations and business processes and sort out the challenging within each department to improve the organizational effectiveness and business solutions.
- d. Works with internal leaders and HR professionals to identify key issues to ensure the successful implementation of management change and fostering the effectiveness and efficiency.
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- f. Designs and facilitates small and medium size group interventions, especially in the areas of team development, team communication and change management. This may include such activities as leadership coaching, focus group discussions, gap analysis, team building exercises, strategic thinking skills, succession planning, mentoring, 360 degree feedback, behavioural assessment techniques, team retreats and educational trainings.
- g. Provides direction, support and guidance to various stakeholder groups / entities as required in the launch and implementation of corporate initiatives (e.g., Fair Process Leadership / Change Management / Pay for Performance Management).

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Interview / Feature

Dr. Abdulqawi Al-Shameeri to the Yemen Times **''Thugs destroyed ambulances and beat up female medics''**

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

octors and medics are facing increasing resistance from security forces as they attempt to reach those wounded at Tagheer Square by Sana'a University.

Speaking to the Yemen Times, Dr. Abdulqawi Al-Shameeri, the secretary-general of the Yemeni Doctors and Pharmacist's Syndicate, said that the role of the syndicate in this revolution is critical.

"Most workers in the health sector have taken part in this revolution. They are enthusiastic about helping injured protestors in unbelievable way," Al-Shameeri said. "All doctors and medics are important partners in helping people at the sit-in."

The syndicate, in collaboration with Private Hospitals Union and Yemeni Charity Medical Association, provides protestors and the injured with medical services and medicines.

He said that ambulance workers have been repeatedly attacked by baltigiya, plain-clothed government loyalists, preventing them from reaching the injured.

"They have destroyed ambulances and beat up female medics who came voluntarily to help people there. Police also arrested an ambulance crew working for the Red Cross," he said.

Al-Shameeri said that security forces falsely accused medical staff of detonating a bomb in the square. "It's shameful to accuse those selfless volunteers of doing such a thing. Those medics were only there to help people."

He also indicated that a Dr. Shawqi Abdul Qafi was detained until very recently. Moreover, Dr. Hosni Al-Jawshai has received numerous death threats and Dr. Mutahar Al-Ashwal was kidnapped by unknown criminals as he was on his way to the protest to aid in the treatment of the wounded there.

Last Saturday, March 12th, hundreds of doctors came to treat injured people without orders from the syndicate.

"I have never seen such cooperation among doctors and medics in my life. They selflessly offer themselves and their services to injured protesters and do their very best to help them," he

Officials from a number of private

said.

hospitals in Yemen have declared that they are ready to receive all the injured from sit-ins and treat them free of charge.

"Unfortunately, the thugs who prevent us from treating the injured are protected by security forces," he explained.

"Yes to dialogue, yes to stability... these expressions are written on thugs" sticks but they use these sticks to beat medics and doctors," he added.

According to Al-Shameeri, the field hospital in Change Square has X-ray machines, anesthesia machines and operations room run by medics who are working day and night for protesters.

"There are many anonymous benefactors who provide the field hospital and medical tents with money and medicines. Also, many pharmaceutical companies have declared their willingness to support the revolutions in the governorates by providing them with different medications, free of charge," he said. He indicated that hospitals in Sana'a have been receiving many serious cases from different governorates due to lack of health services in those governorates, calling for all doctors and medics to help people and take part in light of such critical circumstances.

Poisonous gases

"Until now, we have no been able to find an antidote for the poisonous gases that were fired by riot police on peaceful protesters," he said.

"CN, CS, CR and OC are kinds of gases that used by riot police to disperse protesters. I've searched about these gases and I discovered that these kinds of gases do indeed incapacitate people," he explained.

According to Al-Shameeri, there is a difference between these poisonous gases and tear gas. He said that protesters can recover from tear gas easily and quickly by rubbing their eyes with wet towel.

"The Health Ministry claimed that these gases are not poisonous although they didn't take blood samples to examine them," he said.



Dr. Abdulqawi Al-Shameeri

Yemen's blind: From darkness to light

By: Mahmood Al- Matari

6 6 I lost my sight when I was child, I was fighting with my brother and he threw a stone at my head. From that day forward, I haven't been able to see," said Nassim Al-Obal a 20 yearold secondary school student.

Nassim's life changed dramatically after she was blinded. "I was always sitting at home afraid and shy, imagining all the people mocking me behind my back."

After joining the Aman organization Nassim says that despite being blind she is more confident than others in her village because now she has the 'power of education.'

Relying largely on personal effort and little material support, the Aman Organization, provides accommodation for 65 blind women and looks after a further 860, a number that continues to increase every year.

The organization was founded by Fa-





Jwaher Al-Muhjami, a blind university student reading her book

tima Al-A'aql in 1999 with the aim of caring for seven blind students, teach them, integrating them into different schools, and defending their rights.

Al-Aman helps blind students from the moment they start school to the day they graduate, providing them with learning equipment such as Braille books, computers, and diction programs, as well as teaching them how to write stories and poems. blind people after we train them or after they graduate from university because we believe in them," said Al-Absi.

There were only 15 blind students registered in Yemeni schools in 1997. Now there are at 115 students spread across fifty-five schools.

According to Najla Hizam, an employee who helps integrate blind students into schools some schools are apprehensive about taking their students.

"Some schools refuse the blind because they believe they are not able to study like others."

But according to Nassim Al-Obal, she feels welcome in her school.

"I do not feel any difference now because all the students here and most of the employees are blind like me. Even if I go outside I feel like others," said Al-Obal.

She added that she spend her free time on writing stories or reading Holy Quran and sometimes listening to the news on TV.

"My wish is to finish studying and





Blind students using computers in the computer lab



"These activities help fill what would otherwise be empty time," said Taiseer Yahea Matar, activity organiser.

"Integrating blind students in schools is very important because the management believes that there is no difference between blind people and other students," said Ausan Al-Absi, director of the organization's integration office, who is himself blind.

She said they offer many other things for the blind like accommodation, health and social services, and social security for every student.

"We inform families and the society at-large about the condition of blind people through distributing brochures. The organization also employs all the



Shruoq Al-Rda'ai a blind media university student

became a teacher for other blind people whose families refuse to let them go to school," said Al-Obal.

Shrouq Al-Rda'ai is a blind media university student who works as director of public relations in the organization.

"I once thought that I was the only blind person in this world," she said. Shrouq was born blind. At the age of nine she joined Al-Aman. While

she found difficulties at the beginning and longed to return home she soon felt empowered and discovered a passion for learning.

"Integrating in school has changed my life, the students at the school thought that I was from a different world," said Al-Rda'ai.

"Al-Aman has taken me from the darkness to the light, I would like to turn the handicapped from frustrated and depressed people to qualified citizens ready to serve their country." Oxfam, an international NGO working with others to find lasting solutions to poverty and suffering, has been working in Yemen since 1983. Oxfam announces the following vacancy for its programme:

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Opinion



YT vision statement



"To make Yemen a good world citizen."

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951 - 1999) Founder of Yemen Times



How many more lives must be lost?

t looks like Saleh is losing trust in an increasing number of subordinates and officials to advance the regime's interests. This has been the trend as he continues to empower family members and close loyalists for the last year or so, doing this on the expense of alienating other respectable officials and military generals. What is most worrying perhaps is his fear of these alienated people turning against him, which is a valid fear, given the increasing number of resignations in both the civil and military spheres, decisions of religious leaders to side with protestors, and the stronger popular voice calling on Saleh to step down. This voice is a voice that is gaining impressive momentum across all segments of society.

Saleh's inner circle is getting smaller while the needs for his regime's survival are increasing. Leading him perhaps to the nearest power broker who has been support the regime's survival, thereby posing the question: would Yemen be the nest stop for Saudi military, following Bahrain? It is obvious that the winds of change in Yemen will spill over to Saudi Arabia, as it is perfectly normal for people in the region to yearn for freedom and stand up for their rights. It makes sense for Saudi Arabia to do what it can to buy time, as it is only a matter of time for these winds find their way to Saudi Arabia as well. This, coupled with unconfirmed news of Saudi military support to Saleh, is a rather alarming indicator to what may be coming in the weeks ahead.

The declaration of a state of emergency following Friday's massacre is another indicator of what the regime is planning in the weeks ahead. Since the protests started, Saleh did not commit a single act of good faith towards his people, in fact his regime continues to commit atrocities against peaceful protestors. They also seem to be planning for more, through sourcing additional troops and military equipment into the streets of Sana'a, mobilization and recruitment of thugs and organized criminal factions, and the kidnapping of a large number of activist and protestors.

So the Saleh regime is effectively destroying Yemen in its attempts to buy more time. Such actions are proved contributions to increased regional instability, while the state of lawlessness is providing a perfect environment for any grouping with a specific agenda to reorganize and prosper, it is no secret that Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsular intensified its operations with the unrest; armed tribesmen are more proactive in contributing to a state of chaos and extending their areas of influence; while economic activity at all levels have paralyzed forcing millions more into poverty, to name a few.

All these costs aside, how many lives must be lost for Saleh to accept the national demand to step down? How much longer will the international community remain silent, making only shy condemnations for use of violence? Hasn't the lessons of Tunis and Egypt taught the international community anything? How many more lives must be lost?

Raydan al-Sakkaf

Al-Gadhafi should follow the example of Al-Sanousi

A king too poor to pay for his dinner!

By: Abdul Bari Atwan

here were Libyan pilots who refused their commanders' orders to bombard revolutionists in Bin Ghazi, Darna and al-Baidha and instead jumped out with parachutes, leaving their aircrafts to crash. Others flew to Malta and sought asylum there for the same reason. Those pilots, along with the Libyan officers and soldiers who joined the revolution deserve the highest salute. Libya and its people are greater than leaders and regimes be they republican or royal and one blood drop of their blood is more precious than all of the oil and lust for power.

The Libyan Air Force does not belong to Colonel al-Gadhafi and his family but to the whole Libyan people and its pilots are part of the people and some of their best children. Therefore, people were confident that they would not strike their own countrymen or destroy their country's installations. They were brought up to defend Libya against any external aggression, not to crush their own people's revolution.

My friend Abdul Rahman Shalqam who was a long-standing classmate of mine at university called me the other day from New York where he heads his country's delegation to the UN. I could almost see the tears in his eyes and I found it difficult to make out his words because of his shaking voice. He told me that he felt deeply sorry for the statements made by Mummer al-Gadhafi in which he threatened to kill the Libyan people and use force to suppress their revolution. "Is it possible for King Idris to unite Libya for us to scatter it into opposing and fighting 'emirates'?"

Mr. Shalqam's fear for his country is understandable. Anyone who listened to Al-Gadhafi's speech and the threats it contained about possible executions and bloody violence has the right not only to fret, but to panic. The Libyan people are not familiar with such language even in the darkest periods of their history. And from whom? From a leader who had introduced «popular» mottos and emphasized that the power is in the hands of the people.

King Idris al-Sanousi, Libya's former monarch, did not shed a single drop of blood throughout his reign. The only capital punishment sentence he approved was for Ibn Saffi al-Deen, Queen Fatima's nephew and the king's cousin at the same time.

Ibn Saffi al-Deen had wrongfully murdered Ibrahim al-Shelhi, chairman of the royal council utilizing his relation to the king and the queen and believing that he could do whatever he wished. How wrong he was!

President Jamal Abdul Nasser mediated to commute the sentence and so did other world

leaders, but King Idris rejected all those mediations because he respected the court's verdict and executed his cousin.

Col. Al-Gadhafi his sons and his retinue are in possession of over \$200 billion, squandering billions here and there without the slightest worry. They behave like ancient Roman emperors' children. They also commit disgraceful acts in European capitals that we see on newspapers, although we know nothing about their attitude inside Libya for there are no newspapers to expose them or just courts to inflict punishment on them for what they have perpetrated against common people.

When the 1969 coup d'état was launched against him, King Idris al-Sanousi was on an official visit to Greece and he had only \$25,000 on him to cover his visit. He returned it in whole to the treasury through the Libyan embassy in Athena. When he reached Cairo, he had not enough to pay for dinner and the late Jamal Abdul Nasser was generous enough to send him a meal.

These were the manners of kings. The manners that have died out and are, regrettably, not present in our current kings or presidents. Kings, princes and presidents are all the same when it comes to corruption, extravagance, and waste of public funds, power bequeathal and nepotism. And should they give their leftovers to their people, they would do that with heaviest reminders of their generosity and some even boast, as their newspapers say, that they donate such funds from their own pockets and not from their states' wealth or budgets.

For forty years, Libya has been drifting aimlessly under the slogans of the Revolution, but the consequences of this were catastrophic. Many Libyans left their rich country in search of a better life. Hundreds and thousands of highly qualified Libyans are living in America, Canada and Europe. From my personal experience, I can say that the most successful, most knowledgeable and most experienced physicians in Britain and Canada are Libyans, while an average Libyan person would not find a single hospital in their country able to offer them a minimum level of medication.

I was anguished when I met a group of Libyan young men in Istanbul. At first I thought they were tourists, but I was deeply saddened when they told me they were illegal immigrants who had come looking for a good living and that they were washing dishes in Turkish restaurants for a minimum wage. Col. Al-Gadhafi certainly did not hear such stories because he was living in his tent believing that everything was under control and that the people loved him. He was misled by some demonstrations staged by Popular Committees member hypocrites who blindfolded him from seeing the miserable conditions his people were living in.

Maybe the simple life he was leading in tents, drinking camel milk, made him believe he could convince people of his renunciation of luxury and humbleness. But he forgot that his people were reading about his family members' adventures and follies in the West or the time he declared war against Switzerland, cutting off oil supplies to it and arrested some of its citizens in Libya just because a police station in Geneva had interrogated one of his sons for abusing a chambermaid. People may be patient, but they never forget. They just culminate their suffering and anger and they wait for the right time to give vent to their wrath. A volcano of congestion erupts as we are currently witnessing in Bin Ghazi, Darna, al-Baidha'a, Zawia, Tabraq, Masrata and other Libyan cities. Col. Al-Gadhafi should abandon his intransigence, refrain from using the language of threat and intimidation or insulting and uttering obscenities at his good people. The people who are sounding the alarm and screaming out that they have suffered for 40 years under his rule.

COMMON SENSE

Bloody Friday: If you can't beat'em, kill'em!

e beginning unfolded in Tunisia early in the year and represented a sincere effort and a qualitative leap into modern political and social thought in the Arab World. Political and social development had hence stopped for almost sixty years in the Arab World. For Tunisia, the timing and the context was almost perfect for a rapid relatively peaceful change that could not be reversed by any mean. The fossil regime of Zein Al-Abidein was sent off into the desert domain of the fossilizing regime of the Saud Family. Nevertheless, this transformation was not expected to be greeted with roses by all the



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

stakeholders in the Middle East, in all their manifestations. With the shock still yet to be absorbed by some of these stakeholders, the resounding call for freedom, justice and human rights echoed loudly in Liberation Square, Cairo and other boulevards and municipal centers of the Land of Kinanah - Egypt - Umm Al-Dunia - and within a month's time, Husni Mubarak was sent to exile to another obscure desert hideout (some say in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, but no matter, the youth led protestors of Egypt succeeded in their quest!)

The tsunami driven by the Tunisian political earthquake was rapidly pursuing other fossilized regimes of remarkably similar attributes (tyrannical, suppressive, incompetent and horrendously corrupt) that were propped up here and there in the Arab World, mostly by regional and international stakeholders over the last half of the Twentieth Century. These latter breed of stakeholders never saw any significance at all in the most important stakeholders of the region - the grass roots masses in the populations of the jigsaw puzzle that made up the Arab World. Needless to say this jigsaw puzzle was the magnificent work of previous map making by former stakeholders/world powers, some of which continue to think that they have the right to map out the destiny of human kind although they are in fact finished as world powers. In any case, history is not static, and cultural winds do not recognize fictitious border lines drawn by people in far away distant plush meeting rooms. Never mind that many of these have never even set foot on the grounds they are dividing up, or deciding who should settle in these lands and who should be uprooted to make way for the new settlers.

Common Sense has observed the derailment of the Libyan people's effort for change and to dislodge the eccentric ruler and longest reigning Arab dictator. The peaceful revolt has regrettably dramatically been turned into an international war theater, thus returning the world to business as usual, with the classic rules of international strategic positioning and influence peddling, again out of the hands of the people most concerned - the Libyan people. That takes care of the Libyan effort to bring about change

In Yemen, the next longest reigning ruler (a third of a century), in the Arab World, Ali Abdullah Saleh had focused the mission of his 33 year old regime on purely insuring that Yemen literally belongs only to him and His Excellency and his relatives. Accordingly the Saleh family, their close of kin and in-laws enjoyed an uncontested mandate to do as they like with the country, and own as much as they can, not only of the public resources of the country, but of everything and anything that generates power, influence, income and continuously mushrooming wealth. After thirty - three years of what may be described as out and out mob rule, the people of Yemen, simply could not stand to watch their country pulled out from underneath their feet, while the Saleh regime and its band of cutthroat peons ate up everything and anything of value on the ground, below the ground, above the earth, in the sea and in the air. But worse than that, the regime insisted that it could use death, injury and torture to the maximum degree possible to insure that this criminal aura remains operative to the benefit of the regime and only to the benefit of the regime. Blood can be simply spilled anytime and anyplace to ward off any challenge that arises, no matter how mild or subtle, or that might potentially arise to stop the regime from pursuing its autocratic agenda and instill the dynastic rule of the family forever. The Commandments of Moses were shelved a long time ago and the regime used every tool of mischief, pain and suppression to fulfill the selfish and narrow minded designs of the Ruling Family. Even the regime's perception of the Al-Mighty was changed to be as used only as a fuel for the regime to ignite a Jihadist fever among a sadly gullible public to help the regime overcome its long stretch of subsequent enemies.

For a week before Bloody Friday, the regime has been gearing for the massacre. It started when it brought out thugs (disguised policemen, security and military personnel to kick out the residents of the buildings overlooking the Square of Change, adjacent to the Old Sana'a University complex and replaced them with the hired killers and snipers from their Republican Guards and Central Security. They have excelled in carrying out their penchant to kill, maim and disable anything and anyone that moves.

This last Friday, the regime has shown that it indeed mastered the art of cold

SKETCHED OPINION

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He should cut short the miseries and agonies of his people, prevent bloodshed and leave for good as Kind Idris, may he rest in peace, once did.

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blooded murder and brought the spilling of human blood to new heights of horrific excellence. On Bloody Friday, the toll was at least 52 dead and nearly 400 wounded. All of them were sentenced to death by the regime for insisting that they and their children really do have a right to look forward to a better life and to remove this ugly aura of evil and mischief that has deprived almost two generations of Yemenis of any hope for a meaningful life for them or their children. Kill and terrorize any potential protestors from continuing to give momentum to the people's revolt against a regime that has monopolized political, social and economic power to suit the narrow minded quests and interests of the members of Murder Incorporated. To have maximum terrorizing effect, the guns of the murderers pointed to the heads, necks and chests of the helpless unarmed targeted victims, most of whom aged from 15 - 30 years old - the flowers of Yemeni youth - that were seeking to bloom this spring and herald Yemen to a new age of freedom, justice and political and human rights. A new age where the guns will be put away as they have always been put away in the past to be taken out when the country was encountering a threat or an invasion.

The murdering rampage did not work to deter the protesters. The protesters camp continued to expand to the north and south and it was just impossible for the regime to bring in bulldozers to try to knock down the encampments, which they had hoped to do after their shower of bullets had driven the protestors out of the Change Square, as they mistakenly anticipated. After one hour of continuous firing, the bulldozers had to leave, because the protesters would not budge and aimed their chests at the snipers in a show of defiant courage and bravery that drove some of the snipers nuts. The protests grew everywhere in Yemen and by midnight an additional five ministers and senior officials resigned to join the protestors.

Hassan Al-Haifi has been a Yemeni political economist and journalist for more than 20 years. His blog may be read at: http://com-senfromyem.blogspot.com

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International

Libyan fighting is reaching decisive moment

Western aid to rebels could turn tide, now working in Al-Qadaffi's favor

By: Arieh O'Sullivan For the Media Line

TEMEN

ith the momentum currently in his favor, Libyan strongman Muammar Al-Qaddafi faces a decisive weekend that could see him striking a coup de grace that puts down the rebellion, or forced to hunker down in the face of foreign intervention.

Al- Qaddafi's armored and mechanized battalions appeared on Thursday to be maneuvering for a final assault on Benghazi, the rebel capital in the east of the country, as Western leaders were going down to the wire in debate over what kind of military support they could or should offer. The Arab League has called for a no-fly zone, which would deny Al-Qadaffi that edge he now enjoys with control of the skies, but has so far refrained from committing any forces.

Foreign powers have had harsh words for the Libyan dictator, who is waging a no-holds-barred fight to preserve his 41-year rule. But the world has shown little readiness to actually arm or give air cover to the outgunned rebels trying to topple him. So far, even cries for a no-fly zone to be imposed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have been relegated to debate in the United Nation Security Council. Even if approved, it could be too late to have an impact, as Al-Qaddafi's forces appear to be better equipped, trained and motivated than the rebels.

"Time is running out," Jeffrey White, a defense fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, told The Media Line. "But I don't think it's too late yet. There is still some time here for outside or external intervention could have some good effect in terms of the rebel position."

The United States said last week that it was premature to arm the rebels. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met in Paris on Tuesday with Libyan rebel leadership. But with pressure back home deeply opposed to entangling the U.S. in a third war after Iraq and Afghanistan; Clinton has refused to make any promises of aid.

"If the rebels had some decent antitank weapons that would eliminate the [government forces'] ability to use these armored vehicles and tanks to break into the cities and shoot them up," White said. Officially, there is a UN Security Council ban on weapons sales to Libya, which ironically bars arming the rebels. Libyan government military tactics have been simple: bombardment, armored vehicle and infantry assaults, and indiscriminate fire. The blitzkrieg has helped Al-Qaddafi's forces win back large swaths of territory after initially falling back in the face of a rebel drive west towards his capital of Tripoli. But it would likely have to change when it came to trying to recapture Benghazi, a town of about a million inhabitants.

Al-Qaddafi's son Seif Al-Islam, told a French television station that the rebels would be crushed by the weekend.

According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), the "rag-tag" rebel Libyan army has a large supply of heavy machine guns, rocketpropelled grenades and mortars. They also have at their disposal BM21 Grad multi-launch rocket systems, but it was unclear whether they trained personnel who could operate them. They have obsolete T-55 tanks, facing modern T-72s that Al-Qaddafi loyalists have.

They also have antiquated antiaircraft guns and rocket launchers. Their transport of choice is pickup trucks with mounted guns in back called a "technical." Al-Qaddafi's forces include selfpropelled artillery and MiG23 and Mi-25 attack helicopters.

"The rebel strength and structure is

unclear. Most of the fighters we have seen seem to be untrained volunteers, with little evidence of effective command and control. Indeed there are media reports that they are almost comically disorganized without any visible evidence of planning," Brig.-Gen. Ben Barry, a senior fellow for Land Warfare at the IISS, told reporters in London.

Barry said non-lethal aid such as intelligence, fuel and communications could be given but he said its impact was questionable. Supplying sophisticated weapons, such as anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles, risk falling into unfriendly hands, eh said. Al-Qaddafi has repeatedly labeled the rebels as linked with Al-Qa'ida

But White of the Washington Institute of Near East Studies, downplayed the risk of supplying weapons to the rebels that end up in the hands of Islamists.

"There's a risk," White said. "But we have not seen any indication that Islamic elements are in charge or even influential within the rebellion. The rebellion is just not manifesting any anti-Western sentiments. The issue here is whether it is worthwhile to bring the Qaddafi regime down, to eliminate it as a factor in the region? I think that is a risk worth taking."

The window of opportunity may be closing to Al-Qaddafi's forces as their supply lines are stretched thin and equipment and soldiers begin to fati-

gue.

"Right now it look s like the regime forces are doing pretty well and the rebels are kind of on their back foot," White said. "But there are a couple of factors that work to the rebels' advantage."

He said these included the government's lack of force density, the prospect of urban warfare of fighting reach Benghazi, lengthy mop-up actions and long supply lines.

"Finally, the regime has got to be able to actually take Benghazi. That isn't going to be an easy thing to do as long as the morale and will power of the rebels holds up.

If the will power of the rebels break then it's game over," he said.

In Benghazi, the public reportedly hasn't shown serious signs of cracking. This could be due to the North African fears that they cannot lose since that would mean a bloodbath.

The city of Ajdabiya is likely to be decisive. Should Qaddafi's forces take control they would have access to the desert highway and could cut off and surround Benghazi. The Libyan Navy, while small, has deadly 76mm guns capable of delivering 90 rounds a minute to a distance of 16 kilometers, thus providing a heavy, if inaccurate, shelling of the coastal city into submission.

Ibrahim Dabbashi, Libya's ambassador to the UN who defected from the Qaddafi regime, warned the situation could escalate quickly.

"We will see a real genocide if the international community does not act quickly," he was quoted as saying on the BBC.

His fears were echoed by Mohamed Kadry Said, a retired Egyptian general and currently the director of security studies at Al-Ahram Center for political and strategic studies.

"There could be a lot of massacres," Said told The Media Line.

Qaddafi by many despised by many Arab leaders, but Said believed that Arab countries have been hesitant to offer overt military assistance to the rebels out of fear of the "day after."

"Egypt and Sudan and others sent a lot of people to Libya to work and imagine if our Egyptian workers were to return to Libya later and Egypt had been on the side of the rebels. This would be very dangerous for them," Said said.

He didn't, however, rule out clandestine military aid, particularly materiel. He also speculated that a diplomatic solution had not yet played out its hand and that under certain circumstances the world could force Al-Qaddafi to a cease fire at least.

"I am not yet convinced that there is only one solution of sending in troops or military aid. There are other options and perhaps Al-Qaddafi should be approached differently," Said said.

Aftershocks from Japan

By: Stephen S. Roach

he devastation – both human and physical – from the earthquake and tsunami in Japan is unfathomable. It is impossible at this point to gauge the full extent of the damage with any degree of precision. But we can nonetheless begin to assess its potential spillover effects on the rest of Asia and other major economies around the world.

The narrow view of the catastrophe's economic impact is that Japan doesn't really matter anymore. After all, more than 20 years of unusually sluggish trend growth in Japanese output has sharply reduced its incremental impact on the broader global economy. The disaster may produce some disproportionate supply-chain effects in autos and information-technology product lines such as flash drives, but any such disruptions would tend to be transitory.

On the surface, the world's two largest economies have little to fear. Japan accounts for only 5% of America's exports and 8% of China's. Under the worst-case outcome of a complete disruption to the Japanese economy, the direct repercussions on the United States and Chinese economies would be small – shaving no more than a few tenths of about 19% of its total exports. The eurozone is at the opposite end of the spectrum, with Japan accounting for less than 2% of its exports. veries tend to be anemic. Economies grow at something much closer to their stall speeds, thus lacking the cyclical "escape velocity" required for a self-

Among emerging-markets, the Philippines and Indonesia are the most exposed to Japan, which absorbs about 16% of their total exports. South Korea, the third-largest economy in East Asia, is at the other end of the scale, relying on Japanese demand for only about 6% of its exports.

But the narrow view misses the most critical consideration: this "Japan shock" has not occurred at a time of great economic strength. That is true not only of Japan itself, where two lost decades have left a once-vigorous economy on a less-than-1% growth trajectory since the early 1990's. But it is also true of the broader global economy, which was only just beginning to recover from the worst financial crisis and recession since the 1930's.

Moreover, the Japan shock is not the only negative factor at work today. The impacts of sharply rising oil prices and ongoing sovereign debt problems in Europe are also very worrisome. While each of these shocks may not qualify as the proverbial tipping point, the combination and the context are disconcerting, to say the least.

Context is vital. Notwithstanding the

veries tend to be anemic. Economies grow at something much closer to their stall speeds, thus lacking the cyclical "escape velocity" required for a selfsustaining recovery. As a result, postcrisis economies are far more vulnerable to shocks and prone to relapses than might otherwise be the case.

Alas, there is an added complication that makes today's shocks all the more vexing: governments and central banks have exhausted the traditional ammunition upon which they have long relied during times of economic duress. That is true of both monetary and fiscal policy – the two mainstays of modern countercyclical stabilization. Policy interest rates are close to zero in the major economies in the developed world, and outsize budget deficits are the norm. As a result, unconventional - and untested - policies, such as so-called "quantitative easing," have become the rage among central bankers.

All along, such unconventional policies were viewed as a temporary fix. The hope was that policy settings soon would return to pre-crisis norms. But, with one shock following another, the "exit strategy" keeps being deferred.

Just as it is next to impossible to take a critically ill patient off life-support treatment, it is equally difficult to wean post-bubble economies from their now blesome concern of all: with a postcrisis world getting hit by one shock after another, and with central banks having no latitude to cut interest rates, it is not hard to envision a scenario of open-ended monetary expansion that ends in tears. The dreaded inflationary endgame suddenly looms as a very real possibility.

None of this detracts from the resilience factor. Yes, Japan will rebuild, which will undoubtedly spur some type of recovery in its disaster-battered economy. That happened in the aftermath of the Hanshin (Kobe) earthquake in 1995,

and it will happen this time as well.

But, just as the post-Kobe rebuilding did little to end the first of Japan's lost decades, a similar outcome can be expected this time. The upside of rebuilding – beyond the urgent restoration of normal life for thousands of people – is only a temporary palliative for an impaired economy.

That's only one of the lessons that Japan offers the rest of us. The Japanese economy has, in fact, been on the leading edge of many of the more serious problems that have afflicted the global economy in recent years. From asset bubbles and a dysfunctional financial system to currency suppression and monetary-policy blunders, Japan has been in many respects the laboratory of our future.

Unfortunately, the world has failed to learn the lessons of Japan. And now it risks missing another important clue. The significance of the earthquake and tsunami of 2011 is not the relatively low magnitude of Japan's direct impact on the broader global economy. The more meaningful message is how these shocks box the rest of us into an even tighter corner.



Algeria Street 38 Building No. 2 P.O. Box 12093 Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

of a percentage point off their annual growth rates.

Within the so-called G-10 developed economies, Australia has the largest direct exposure to Japan – the destination euphoric resurgence of global equity markets over the past two years, the world economy remains fragile. What markets seem to have forgotten is that post-bubble, post-financial-crisis reco-

steady dose of liquidity injections and deficit spending. In an era of extraordinarily high unemployment, political pressures only compound the problem. This raises perhaps the most trou-

INVITATION TO BID (ITB) (ITB/HCR/BO/11/SPU/02)

9 million laid-off Americans lost health insurance in last two years: study

By: Laura Basset For Huffington Post

uring the last two years, 57 percent of Americans who lost a job that provided them health insurance --nearly 9 million people --cording to a new study published by the Commonwealth Fund, a longtime advocate of health care reform.

In addition, 19 million Americans who tried to buy a health plan in the individual insurance market between 2007 and 2010 were either rejected due to a prior health condition or unable to find affordable coverage that fit their needs, according to the Commonwealth Fund report.

"This means that already stretched family budgets are vulnerable to catastrophic losses and bankruptcy in the event of a serious accident or illness, and that families face significant financial barriers when trying to obtain needed medical care and timely preventive services," the report's authors wrote.

The authors found that some 52 million Americans had no health coverage in 2010, compared to roughly 38 million in 2001. And nearly 49 million adults spent 10 percent or more of their income

on out-of-pocket costs and premiums in 2010, they found, up from roughly 31 million in 2001.

High health care costs mean less money to spend on basic necessities. About 22 million working adults couldn't afford food, heat and rent due to medical bills in 2010, the research found, and health costs forced 4 million people into bankruptcy.

The government allows laid-off workers to remain on their former employers' health insurance via the COBRA program, but workers must pay the full cost of the insurance -- their share plus their former employer's share -- which is often unaffordable. The stimulus bill of 2009 provided a 65 percent subsidy for COBRA plans, but Congress dropped the subsidy last May due to deficit concerns.

About 50.7 million Americans had no health insurance in 2009, according to the latest government data, and 16.7 percent of the U.S. population was uninsured, the highest proportion since the government began tracking such figures in 1987.

Commonwealth Fund President Karen Davis said on Tuesday, however, that last year's health care overhaul legislation will help ensure that nearly everyone, including the jobless, has access to affordable and comprehensive health insurance by 2014.

"The silver lining is that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has already begun to bring relief to families," she said. "Once the new law is fully implemented, we can be confident that no future recession will have the power to strip so many Americans of their health security."

But the health care law doesn't prohibit health insurers from discriminating against Americans with preexisting conditions until 2014, meaning those who lose their employer-sponsored health insurance have few options in the meantime.

The law did create a program called the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan designed to cover those excluded from the individual market until 2014, but enrollment has been low, with only about 12,000 participants to date. Once the law's provisions are more fully implemented, uninsured Americans are supposed to have access to affordable health insurance through Medicaid or private health plans available on staterun exchanges, while low-income families will receive tax credits to help them afford coverage. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), based in Sana'a, Republic of Yemen, has an international mandate to protect refugees and to seek durable solutions to their problems. UNHCR plays a major role in coordinating aid to refugees, returnees and displaced persons of concern.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Branch Office, Sana's invites qualified suppliers and manufacturers to submit a firm offer for the establishment of one year renewable frame agreement contract for the supply and delivery of construction tools, for its office in Sana's, Yemen as per follows:

Hand- held saw (600-700mm blade) - 15.000 pieces
 Hammer (daw type) - 15,000 pieces
 Plastering Trowel (spade shape, size 20) - 15,000 pieces
 Shovel with handle - 15,000 pieces
 Rubber Construction Buckets (10-12 k) - 15,000 pieces
 Digger / Pick - 15.000 pieces
 Rope (Sisal - natural fiber) - 15,000 rolls
 Rope (Nykon) -15,000 rolls

Bidding documents are available at UNHCR Supply Unit, Sana'a, at the above-mentioned address. Tel: 01 469 771; 01469 772

Sealed bids must be received by UNHCR Branch Office Sana'a at the above-mentioned address on or before 00* April 2011, latest at 16:00 hours.

Bids received after the deadline or sent to another address will be rejected.

Business



Yemeni women face education and employment challenges

Compared to around two thirds of men, only half of Yemeni women believe they have the freedom to choose education or career paths. Gallup's surveys of 15- to 29-year-old Yemenis for the Silatech Index in 2009 and 2010 reveal the following details in this issue.

By: Nicole Naurath and Julie Ray

ising poverty and high unemployment limit the choices young men and women in Yemen can make about their vocations. Although majorities are still satisfied with their personal freedom to decide what they do with their lives the differences between men and women in Yemen are clearly visible.

Gallup's surveys of 15- to 29-year-old Yemenis for the Silatech Index in 2009 and 2010 found 71 percent of young men and 54 percent of young women were satisfied with their freedom to choose their own destiny. The gender gap, however, underscores different challenges young Yemeni women face.

"Given the recent unrest in Yemen, it's important to note that these data pre-date the still unfolding situation and that this question assesses people's feelings about their freedom to explore their own paths in life, more so than how they feel about the level of freedom in their country as a

four-year college degree

whole," explained the research. Lubna is today a married Yemeni woman from Sana'a and a mother of five children. She barely completed her high school before she was married off to a relative.

"I was the top student of my class. My teachers anticipated a great future for me. I too dared to dream of becoming a doctor or an engineer but all came to an end when I graduated from school sixteen years ago," she said bitterly. "It did not make a difference to my father that I was the top student of my class. In our family university education was not acceptable during my time. Now things have changed."

Some of Lubna's younger sisters are in university, and she vows that all her daughters will have the careers of their choices.

Ramzya Al-Eryani director of the Yemeni Women's Union says that the situation of Yemeni women has changed today, although there are some challenges that affect both men and women's ability to make choices about their lives.

Asked of Yemeni nationals aged 15 to 29				
Young men Young women				
Satisfied	71%	54%		
Dissatisfied 28% 40%				
Read on aggregated data from gumung in 2000 and 2010				

In this country, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your

Based on aggregated data from surveys in 2009 and 2010 GALLUP

freedom to choose what you do with your life?

Yemen has made positive steps toward the Millennium Development Goal of promoting gender equality and empowering women. However, a great deal of work remains before the country bridges the still-wide chasms in young women's access to education, their participation in the workforce, and political participation.

The United Nations' Development Programme reported in 2010 that female school enrollment rates have steadily improved, as has the awareness of how important education is for girls, but education remains elusive for many young Yemeni women.

Seventeen percent of young women, for example, said they have a secondary education; this is in sharp contrast to nearly half of young Yemeni men (47 percent) with the same level of education. The vast majority of young Yemeni women (81 percent) Gallup surveyed said they have elementary educations or less schooling, compared with nearly half of young Yemeni men (48percent) in the same situation.

Studies conducted in Yemen by the Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa Project (SWMENA) in 2010 suggest many young women and young men desire more education than they are getting.

Three in 10 young men (30 percent) between the ages of 18 and 24 and less than one-quarter of young women (23 percent) said they have all the education they want. More than one-third of young women (36 percent) and more than half of young men (55 percent) said they would like to complete a college or graduate degree.

The SWMENA survey also suggests that young women's career aspirations are related to their education. Nearly one-quarter of women younger than age 25 without any formal schooling intend to pursue a career, considerably lower than the 41 percent who have completed primary school who plan to do the same. Nearly three in four (74 percent) of those who have finished secondary school would like to seek a career.

Tawfeek Ahmed had to let go of his dream in travelling abroad to perfect his English in order to run the family auto maintenance workshop.

"It was good money, and there was no one in the family who can do it. My father needed me and I had to either let my family down or postpone my dream indefinitely," said Tawfeek. "Naturally I chose the later."

Perhaps hampered by their relative lack of education in addition to other economic and cultural barriers, Gallup found young Yemeni women's participation in the workforce was low in 2010. Eightytwo percent of young women were out of the workforce -- meaning they were not employed in the last seven days, neither for an employer nor for themselves and were not looking for work, and/or were not available to start work. In contrast, 27percent of young men were out of the workforce.

It's possible that many young Yemeni women who were not in the workforce were full-time students, disabled, or homemakers, but the latter is more likely because 48 percent of the 15- to 29-yearold women surveyed were married.

Further, these young women already had an average of four children younger than age 15 living in their households.

Implications

Despite gains on the education front, as of 2010, Yemen is still not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goal of eliminating gender disparities in primary, secondary, and higher education by 2015. These disparities, so evident in Gallup's data, may be keeping young Yemeni women from getting the education they desire and is potentially limiting their career opportunities. This, in turn, may be fueling young Yemeni women's frustrations with the freedom they have to choose what they do with their lives.

Economic and social obstacles line young Yemeni women's paths to education, but investing in young women's education is also an investment in Yemen's future generations. Half of young men (50 percent) and 57 percent of young women believe children in their country do not get the chance to learn and grow every day. If women, as the primary caregivers, are educated, they can model this for their children and siblings and improve their chances.

مناقصة رقم (۲۰۱۱ /۰۱ ۲۷) لإدارة وتشغيل



أسبم المشروع	رقم المناقصة

What is your highest completed Asked of Yemeni nationals aged 15 to 2		tion?
	Young men	Young women
Completed elementary education or less	48%	81%
Secondary education and some education beyond secondary education	47%	17%
Completed four years of education beyond high school and/or received a	5%	2%

Based on aggregated data from surveys in 2009 and 2010 GALLUP

Young Yemenis' Employment Status in 2010 Asked of Yemeni nationals aged 15 to 20

Asked of Temeni nationals aged 15 to 29				
	Young men	Young women		
Employed full time for an employer	14%	1%		
Employed full time for self	27%	2%		
Employed part time do not want full time	3%	5%		
Unemployed	15%	3%		
Employed part time, want full time	14%	7%		
Out of workforce	27%	82%		

Yemeni women especially in the urban areas have become more empowered and are increasingly able to make the career choices they want. YT Photo by Amira Al-Sharif

Based on aggregated data from surveys in 2010 GALLUP

Economists call on peaceful transfer of power

By: Ali Saeed

rominent Yemeni economists this week have called on all political powers in the country to work in "an urgent peaceful transition of power to preserve the national economy from any potential disasters."

Following the ouster of Tunisian President Bin Ali and Egyptian President Mubarak, anti-government demonstrations have taken place throughout major cities across Yemen for more than a month.

These nationwide anti-government protesters have refused all political concessions from Saleh, demanding nothing less than the end of his 33 year stranglehold on power in the country. Anti-government protests have recently witness a horrifying level of violence against them from pro-government thugs and plainclothes soldiers.

Adel Al-Ashtal, a prominent economist at the General Investment Authority told the Yemen Times that, "The length of political and social unrest can have dire consequences in the country's economic sector."

"The continuation of these demonstrations is not healthy for the economy," he explained. "Presently, all business in the country has been suspended and no new investments will begin as all businessmen and members of the parliament are busy with the current unrest and its potential consequences," said Al-Ashtal.

He highlighted that businessmen and people in general at this time in Yemen are living in a period of uncertainty and it is difficult to predict what is going to happen economically.

He insisted that a peaceful transfer of power must be negotiated between political blocs and protesters to avoid economic collapse.

"We want to preserve the nation's economic stability. We must seek an end to this crisis," he said.

He added that Yemen has several economic challenges and any transfer of power should be done within the framework of maintaining recent economic gains accomplished with the aid of the GPC government.

"Yemeni wisdom must win out against irrationality in order to bring an end to bloodshed. This must be done by adopting measures for a peaceful transition of power," said Al-Ashtal

Dr. Mohamed Jubran, professor of economics at Sana'a University spoke to the Yemen Times from the academics tent at "Change Square" in Sana'a where thousands of Yemenis have been protesting for more than a month demanding the removal of the regime.

"Many expected that Yemen's antiregime protests would have been violent, but in reality protesters showed good sense and until now all the antigovernment protests nationwide have been very peaceful," said Jubran.

He indicated that these protests until now, "Have not caused any kind of looting or damage to public or private property. Nothing will harm the Yemeni economy more than the regime refusing to relinquish power."

He explained that protests can only affect the production and manufacturing sectors of the economy considering that many people have left their jobs and joined the protests. Others have gone on strike.

"The longer this regime refuses to step down, the more I worry about the condition of our national economy," he said.

"All international donors who want to see a safe and economically stable Yemen should pressure Saleh to resign immediately. He has no chance left for dialogue with leaders of this revolution now that he has used excessive violence against the people," said Jubran. مشروع إدارة وتشغيل شركة تيليمن

والتي سيتم تمويلها ذاتياً من قبل الشركة اليمنية للاتصالات الدولية – تيليمن. – آخر موعد لاستلام العطاءات(الفنية والمالية) وفتح المظاريف الفنية هو الساعة الحادية عشر ص من يوم الثلاثاء الموافقه / إبريل / ٢٠١١م. – سيتم فتح المظاريف الفنية بمقر الجهة بحسب العنوان التالي: الشركة اليمنية للإتصالات الدولية (تيليمن) لإدارة العامة، الدور الرابع، صالة الاجتماعات شارع ٢٦ سبتمبر صنعاء ، الجمهورية اليمنية – يمكن للراغبين في المشاركة في هذه المناقصة الإطلاع على وثائق المناقصة قبل شرائها خلال أوقات الدوام للفترة المسموح بها لبيع وثائق حتى تاريخ ٢١ مارس ٢٠١١م. مع الالتزام بنفس الشروط السابقة والواردة في الاعلان.

Bid Extension Announcement

Republic of Yemen Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology Yemen International Telecommunications Company Limited (TeleYemen)

The Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology- Yemen International Telecommunications Company Limited (TeleYemen) announces the extension of the following International Bid

Bid No.	Project Name		
Bid No (TY01/2011) for the Management and Operating of Yemen International Telecommunication Company Limited (TeleYemen)	Management and Operating of TeleYemen Project		

The project is self-financed by Yemen International Telecommunications Company Limited (TeleYemen). Deadline for submission: -

The deadline for bids submission (Technical and Financial) and opening of technical bids will be on Tuesday 5th April, 2011 at $011:00 \text{ a}\cdot\text{m}\cdot$

I Technical proposals will be opened at the following address:

Yemen International Telecommunications Company Limited (TeleYemen)

Headquarter

4th Floor's, Conference Room 26 of September St

Sana'a-Republic of Yemen

I Interested bidders can review the bid documents before purchasing during official working hours within the selling period of the bid documents until 31st March 2011.

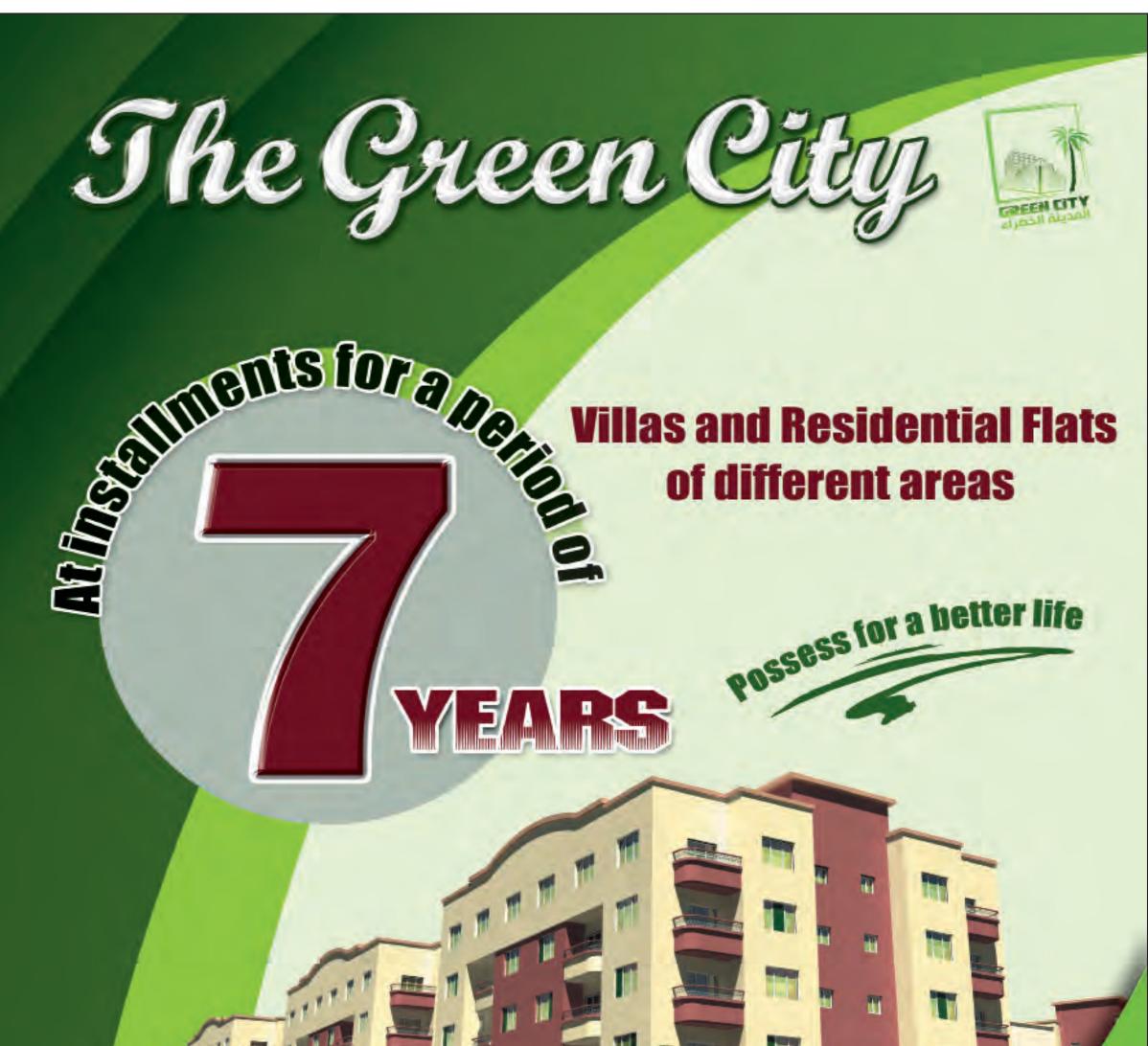
Bidders shall be committed to the same conditions of the previous announcement-

www.teleyemen.com.ye

الشركة اليمنية للاتصالات الدولية الحدودة (تيليمن)



Advertisement



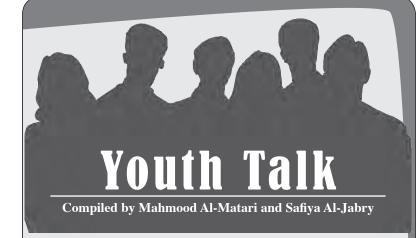
Al-Hamdani for Trade and Realestate Investment Co. HD

Republic of Yemen - aden - Residential Green City - Tel.: 00967 2 355111 - Fax: 00967 2 355115 Mobail: 777355111 Sana'a West of the Presidential Palace - Tel.: 00967 1 424321 - Fax: 00967 1 424323 Mobail: 777355000

0 21 March, 2011

Readers View





In this 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:

As a member of the youth, what is your opinion of the ongoing protests in Yemen?

Taha Muthana

I think that all Yemenis play a part in these protests, whether directly or indirectly. For me, as a youth, I think I should first know and understand what the recent situation is then know what the community needs before taking any steps. I believe that I am responsible for making my own decisions because Allah has given all of us the will and power to speak for ourselves. Sitting around and discussing the recent situation is not doing me any good, so I'm taking a stand to think about the future of my country and to do something about it.

Wala'a Almaktari

My awareness towards the current crisis in Yemen is increasing by the day as our president keeps on dragging us toward a tragedy of endless civil war instead of attempting to compromise. I think the president has to vow not to run in the next presidential election in 2013. Saleh's reign, which seems like a horrible nightmare, has to end soon in order to get rid of oppression, corruption, inequality, poverty and savageness. Yemen is at risk of civil war; therefore, I think we all have to look before we leap.

Najeeb Othman, Student

I believe we do need change in our country but not through violence and protests. Violence will only lead to civil war and bigger problems. I think demonstrating will only destroy the country we all love so much without solving any problems.

Najat Ahmed

I do not want to simply be a spectator when my country is in the process of making history. I want to have a deep understanding of what is going on, make up my own mind on what I think is right for the future of my country and follow that.

Saddam Al-Samadi

First of all, I admire your great effort making Yemeni society more open-minded about what is happening around and I wish you the best.

I'm looking on the bright side of the world rather than the dark side. Yemenis are dreaming of a better country in which there will be equality of power among all parties rather than having power specified to one party. Soon, power will be in the hands of those who have devoted their lives so that Yemen can raise its flag high in the sky of liberty. I believe that the invisible is not impossible.



A Yemeni female doctor at the field hospital at Change-Square at the anti-president protest area. Women have been an integral part of the protests for and against the president, not only as protestors but also as supporters one way or the other.

Photo by AbdulRahman H. Jaber

President Saleh's speech through a Yemeni emigrant's eyes

By: Mofeed Al-Gaad mofeed336@yahoo.com

omeland is dear to the heart, and it is dearest to the emigrant's heart who has been deprived of his homeland for long years. It is said that Yemeni land is the mother who delivered the original Arabs. And one whose roots do not lead him to Yemen is not an original Arab, who is well-known for his generosity, kindness, loyalty, and true promises. However, Yemeni emigrants no longer hold a position of honor among his Arabic brothers, and have become overwhelmed by a sense of sorrow and sadness because of the bad news coming out from his homeland.

a speech in front of his security and military forces. For the first time President Saleh delivered a speech on the current situation. His speech revealed that the situation in Yemen is not stable and that Yemeni society is living in a state of chaos nowadays. Speeches delivered by opposition leaders also revealed that Yemen isn't in good health and that the situation in Yemen is going from bad to worse. Therefore we emigrants feel a sense of sorrow and disappointment towards our homeland. In addition to the problems of life in another country and the deprivation of not seeing relatives and friends, the Yemeni emigrant has to carry on his shoulders the bad news and disappointed expectations of his home-

A while ago President Saleh delivered

land

Actually, the president's speech was very valuable and appreciated by all when he declared that "We are against succession. We are in favor of change." We felt a sense of relief and happiness because of those happy promises, but later we became afraid of this happiness because the majority of Arab leaders do not transfer their words into action. They say something and do something else as if they believe in an idiom that says "Words speak louder than actions." Despite this, we still have a firm confidence in our Arab leaders in general, and in our President Ali Abdullah Saleh in particular, who has really attained for us many glorious achievements. At least we should love him for his frank speech, in which he admitted that there is corruption and unfaithful leaders in the ruling party. But we as Yemeni people should deter them from exploiting their official positions to fulfill their personal interests. Dear Yemeni reader, Yemen is our kindest mother. She can dispense with us when she is healthy, but know that when she is sick she is in need of our help. So we should put out our hands to help her to stand as a huge fruitful tree, and provide us with its blessed fruits. I hope my voice has reached through Yemen to those Yemenis out of the country. The last word I can say here is thank you President Saleh for your speech, that gave us a glimpse of hope among the gloom. I pray to Allah to keep Yemen both stable and peaceful.

Dreams and the demon

By: Afeef Al-Hazzami Translated by: **Mohammad Al-Hakimi**

to evade the issue and revealed his

had done his best to get close to her. the house. Zahra's health deteriorated, mind to her. He told her that that he did However, she treated him with discre- and she suffered bouts of depression not approve of the idea of her going to tion as with any other colleague in her and convulsions on and off. work. He would prefer that she stayed college, irrespective of the fact that she fell something strong was pulling her to his side Nabil was prevailed upon to take her to her father's house. She told her father the story. Then her father tried to work on Nabil to be reasonable and human in his judgment, however her husband persisted in his stand. After some time Zahra was sent to her husband's house at her fathers behest. Thus came to an end the cherished dream of Zahra, and the future she had all along nursed was shattered into pieces. With it lay dead everything she had thought of achieving as a woman with her significant other in society and life as a whole. Zahra returned back home with her husband. In the course of time, they had a baby girl who they named Nada. But the treatment she received at the house of her husband worsened day by day. He used to spend a long time away from

One day her father came to see her.

Fahd Ahmed

I think the ongoing protests in Yemen are a part of Arab revolution and a result of suffering from citizens. Protesters in freedom squares of many Arab cities are expressing their thirst for freedom and change. Yemenis want to get back their dignity that they believe they have lacked for the past 33 years. As a youth, I believe in revolution which has proven that oppression cannot stop the winds of freedom and the light of justice.

Abdulmajeed Zobilah, Student

Some people are afraid of the revolution and change, thinking it will cause more problems in the country. In my opinion, the time for change is now and not any time in the future if we want to have a better country.

Nabil Ahmed Saeed

In my opinion ongoing protests are a result of poverty and unemployment in Yemen. Fresh university graduates find themselves in a huge vacuum of idleness after years of studying. I am one of those people demonstrating in hopes of having our demands met in order to have decent lives in the future.

Next Week's Question:

What are your hopes and dreams for the future of 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!

ahra was a beautiful and highbrow lady who had just been married toDr. Nabil. She was brought to live with him in his village. Zahra was beside herself with joy. She had just finished her college years and looked forward to a rewarding career side-by-side with her husband who worked for a hospital there. Thus she had envisaged her future and had actively aspired for this all of her life.

Nabil began to work in the city after he finished his obligatory service in the village, leaving his wife behind. He was in the habit of returning back to his village on weekends. Zahra asked him to rent a house for them both in the city so that she might have the opportunity to change her place and work in the city, but Nabil ignored her proposal. This made her more insistent in her demand. The fall out was that Nabil was unable

at home as a housewife.

Zahra felt as if she had skipped a heartbeat due to this inglorious decision, and felt extremely upset. She felt as though her wings were being clipped. This was followed by an argument that heated up, little by little, and ended with Nabil belittling his wife and Zahra walking out of the room crying. She couldn't sleep all night long. She began to think with regret of her past life. She remembered the day of her betrothal to Nabil whom she now realized she didn't know well. She had learnt that he was a doctor who had just come from abroad where he was studying medicine, and that was all she knew. She accepted him with little consideration, believing that she would never face problems, ike this one, frustrating their domestic life.

Memories of another ex-colleague came back to her mind. That young man had fallen in love with her and He felt very disturbed to find how much his daughter had changed. She narrated her plight to him and she was brought back to her father's place of residence.

Her father went to the hospital to find Nabil and he was told that Nabil was celebrating his honeymoon. The father was extremely put off by this piece of information, particularly when he learnt that Nabil had been married a second time to the hospital manager's daughter. He took his address and went there. When he arrived he knocked on the door violently and Nabil came out, furious. What followed crossed all the fundamental decencies and culminated in a very depressive outcome for the former wife. Zahra lay desolate and rejected, begging for an explanation. Her father collected many people and revealed to them the betraying and treacherous man Nabil, who was dead to all sense of pity and loyalty.

The new hope

By: Kais Al-Iriani kaliriani@gmail.com

uddenly, the flowers are blooming, the birds are singing, and women are trilling "Yeli li li". In the middle of the winter, the sun shines like no other time, and the stagnant waters have started to move, announcing the start of new life.

2011 comes with new hopes, new hopes for all of us. It started in Tunis,

moving to Egypt, but we all feel it around the Arab World. To those of us who felt, for a long time, that our life is losing its beauty. To those who were struggling through life because we are fed up with corruption and injustice. To those who felt hopeless, in a world that is going the wrong way. This is a new dawn!

The sun decided to rise, to kill the darkness inside us. The voices of young men and women are filling our life with joy and excitement. Now we

say: we have a future, and we will work for it. The "facebook" generation that was accused of being careless, that we felt will ruin the future, has proved us wrong. History is made here. In less than a month two revolutions are shaping our future and it is not over yet.

The legitimacy of the revolutionary regimes that have been ruling our world for decades is falling apart. The regimes that do not bother to know about their own people are falling. A

new world of freedom is forming in front of our eyes. A world where Arabs can be proud of themselves and their nation.

There is no revolutionary council, no leader, except for the people. There isn't even a single gun needed.

Now is the time to believe in ourselves. Never give up! Injustice has no room in our world, but we must take a position. We must say no and resist. We must seize the moment.

It all starts here, with you and me...

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A golden cage for those who dare...

By: Hanan Zakarya

n Yemen, weddings consist of two parties: one for the groom and one for the bride. As such, Yemenis experience twice as much happiness during the wedding celebration, but they also spend about twice as much to make it happen..

Guests only see the beautiful hall, the charming lamps in the streets, the roses, and the smiles of the groom and the bride. Yet there is a great deal of difficulty and preparation involved in creating such a perfect moment.

A wealthy family may spend up to YR 10 million on a single wedding. These expenses include YR 3 million to rent and decorate





Extravagant wedding hall decorations are some of the most costly wedding expenses

the hall, YR 1 million to print the invitation cards, YR 30,000 to decorate the wedding vehicle, YR 300,000 to 500,000 for the bride's dress... The list is endless.

On the other hand, middle income families will typically spend up to YR 1.5 million on a wedding. This figure covers the bride's jewelry (YR 500,000), the bride's dress (YR 150,000 to YR 330,000), the wedding cake (YR 80,000), the printing of invitations (YR 50,000), food and drink (YR 200,000), the hired band (YR 70,000 to 150,000), etc.

But don't panic, guys and girls! You can still organize a fabulous wedding for a far lower price. For example, some low-income Yemeni families do not spend more than YR 500,000 to 600,000 on a marital event. In such cases, a bride's dress may cost no more than YR 40,000. The printing of invitations can cost as little as YR 10,000 and adequate halls can be rented for between YR 40,000 and 50,000. In fact, some families choose to host weddings in their own home. These ceremonies tend to be very simply, but also very intimate and beautiful. Weddings held in the home have their own particular appeal, as they allow for greater participation on the part of neighbors and family friends.

Ashgan's wedding will be held in two months. She was asked by the Yemen Times whether she considered it important to spend a lot of money on a wedding and why. She responded by saying, "Yes, it is very important for the bride to have an expensive, charming, beautiful wedding, because it only happens once in a lifetime. It must be special and unforgettable."

Ibrahim Al-Sha'arani, a young man from Ibb who has just married, said, "I paid YR 600,000 for my wedding. I had a simple party at my house. I spent YR 10,000 alone on qat. The wedding didn't cost me a lot and weddings don't have to be expensive."

e some of the most ily has money, why not spend it? A groom

may pay up to YR 5 million on qat alone!" Mrs. Lool, a Yemeni woman of nearly 70

years, told the Yemen Times what weddings used to be like in the past: "A bride's accoutrements included a scarf and a dress, silken trousers, fresh basil and jewelry made of coral. Brides never wore shoes, however. Shoes were a luxury. If a bride's parents had money, only then would they buy her shoes. The bride would most often walk to her husband's house in her bare feet or on the back of a camel. She would celebrate her wedding at home or on the roof of her home, if there were enough space. Likewise, the groom would celebrate his wedding at home, in the family diwan [i.e. salon]."

Indeed, Yemeni weddings used to be very simply. All of the more expensive habits that we see at Yemeni weddings today are new to Yemeni culture. They are cultural imitations of both Egypt and other Gulf countries. For example, Yemeni bridal dresses used to be dark green, but now they tend to be white.

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Is it important to spend so much money celebrating one single wedding day? Wed-

dings are important, but is it necessary that they be so luxurious and expensive? It is possible for a bride and a groom to have a simple but beautiful wedding at a reasonable expense. Indeed, perhaps it would be better that the couple save their money so as to buy a future house.

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Nevertheless, I do wish all future brides and grooms every bit of happiness in the marriage.









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