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Al-Zayani to seek Gulf initiative revival

By: **Mohammad Bin Sallam**

SANA'A, May 15 — Since his arrival in Sana'a on Saturday, Dr. Abdullah Al-Zayani, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), has been making fresh efforts to resolve the crisis between the government and the opposition in Yemen.

His efforts have come in spite of the opposition Joint Meeting Parties' (JMP) having declared that the initiative had failed and that Qatar's withdrawal from the process was its final death knell.

Al-Zayani aims to develop a final version of the Gulf proposal that will break Yemen's political deadlock once and for all. Well-informed sources have said that he has brought a brand new package of suggestions that could very well persuade both the government and the opposition to accept and sign the initiative.

Al-Zayani met with President Ali Abdullah Saleh Sunday morning and was expected to meet with the opposition later that afternoon, so as to solicit each party's views and interpretation of the Gulf plan. He is particularly keen to persuade the president, who has to this point refused to sign the initiative in its

three initial versions. The opposition, in turn, refused to sign the fourth version on 21 April 2011.

The same aforementioned sources said that they expect Al-Zayani's visit to end with the announcement of a concrete deadline for signing the initiative.

Saba news agency quoted Al-Zayani as saying on his arrival that the objective of his visit was to continue talks with all parties, in the hope that they would all go back to the Gulf plan that aims to preserve Yemen's security, stability and unity, while at the same time preventing bloodshed.

"We wish to stop all bloodshed," said Al-Zayani, "and preserve the security, safety and stability of Yemen. These are the principal goals of their majesties and highnesses [of the member GCC countries], as well as of the foreign ministers of the GCC."

In his communication with the leaders of the GCC, President Saleh described the initiative as "good" but vague. He also told Okaz, a Saudi newspaper, that the plan needed more concrete guidelines and a more robust mechanism for implementation.

According to well-placed sources, in its fifth version, the Gulf proposal bears

a practical implementation procedure.

The new initiative will focus on security and political tension, and will propose means of encouraging protesters to lift their sit-ins at the country's various Change Squares – so as to push Yemen towards a post-revolutionary state, such as that being experienced in Tunisia.

"If both the initiative and its new mechanism are implemented verbatim," said one of the sources, "Saleh will consider signing it. Otherwise, the JMP will have to take responsibility for its reluctance to sign."

The source added, "The president does have another option, which is to resort to military action. This is perhaps is next best choice, considering how Hosni Mubarak will stand trial in Egypt and Bin Ali's extradition has been requested. [If he feels he must], Saleh will fight until the very last drop of blood."

The Gulf initiative has already undergone several revisions, additions and deletions. According to the Yemeni opposition, these changes have been orchestrated by the GCC at the behest of President Saleh. At the same time, the opposition claims that the GCC has refused any of their proposed modifications.

Al-Yaum, a Saudi newspaper, said in its Sunday editorial that President Saleh was desperately holding on to power and that he had begun accusing his opponents of conspiracy and treason, dubbing them "highwaymen and saboteurs".

Both the opposition and the demonstrating youth have said that such statements were tantamount to a declaration of war, as they incited citizens to fight one another. They have also said that



GCC Secretary-General Abdullah bin Rashid Al-Zayani speaks at the news briefing during the Gulf Cooperation Council summit (GCC) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The secretary has returned to Sana'a for the third time in hopes of resuming negotiations on the initiative.

such violent discourse would make parties cling to their positions even more strongly and that it might encourage some to start recruiting militiamen in the street. This would be of grave concern in a country like Yemen, whose citizens have massive personal arsenals. Any

miscalculation by any party could lead to massacres and chaos that would not be easily stopped in the short term.

Al-Yaum also warned against the mobilization of the masses and said that the flexing of muscles would only lead to the complete collapse of public institutions and daily life.

The newspaper continued by saying that the Gulf initiative was the best opportunity for Yemeni political groups to end their conflict and save face, without incurring heavy losses.

At the same time, the ruling Yemeni regime has initiated security measures to counteract a "scheme" allegedly concocted by the JMP to create chaos across the country. In truth, this was the government's first response to the escalation of the pro-democracy revolution, spearheaded by Yemeni youth.

One part of the protesters' plan for es-

calation has been to force the closure of all government offices.

On Saturday evening, President Saleh held an extended meeting with his government, the ruling General People's Congress (GPC). As stated by official media, the meeting was dedicated to the "discussion of developments in the country, in view of the JMP's intransigent position on escalation and sabotage."

President Saleh accused the opposition of carrying out attacks on public and private property, of blocking roads, of preventing access to gas and fuel, of destroying electrical towers, and of attacking and killing soldiers.

He said, "There are some leaders within the JMP who are thirsty for blood and for the killing of innocent people, which they hope to blame on the government, so as to incite and mislead people."

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Medical drugs market affected by Yemeni political crisis

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

Just as many other industries have been affected by Yemen's ongoing political and economic turmoil, the market for medicines has also taken a hit.

The Yemen Times has learnt that the smuggling of medicines into the country is more active than ever, as some drugs are no longer being imported. Some drug companies have stopped selling their products because they can't be sure Yemeni pharmacy owners will be able to pay them back. Others have raised the prices of their drugs by up to 10 percent, or have shut down their Yemen offices completely, resulting in a loss of jobs and income.

According to one pharmacy employee, "[Pharmacies] nowadays can't cover the expense of drugs coming into Yemen. We need to pay upfront or make bank guarantees first."

Maher Hadi, a pharmacist, said that the whole country is facing a crisis – of which the shortage of medicines is only a part – and that things will soon reach their worst if the situation doesn't improve quickly.

"Some drugs are no longer imported, but we always have alternatives," explained Hadi. "The real problem that will affect citizens is the raising of drug prices."

The halting of certain pharmaceutical

imports strengthens the black market trade in poor-quality medicines.

According to pharmacist Mohammed Shaman, "Important drugs are no longer on the market, like medicines for heart disease. They can, however, be smuggled, which is extremely dangerous because these medicines must be transported under very precise environmental conditions. They should be saved at a certain temperature. But when they're smuggled, they're often exposed to the sun. Moreover, when the drug takes two weeks to arrive via the desert, it may have lost its effect – or indeed, its lifesaving effect may have been reversed."

Shaman also said that some smuggled drugs are in fact fake, with one medicine being passed off as another.

"Someone might sell a citrine drug when its content is actually something else," he explained. "I can recognize when this is the case if I normally sell a drug for YR 15,000 and someone else sells it for YR 4,000."

Shaman also said that rising pharmaceutical prices will be the biggest problem for Yemenis during this crisis. Indeed, some injections are already too expensive for the average Yemeni to buy.

"The Ministry of Health should force the companies not to raise their drugs' prices," concluded Shaman.

Republican Guards, tribesmen battle in Al-Haima

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, May 15 — For the fourth day in a row, Republican Guard soldiers under the command of Ahmed Saleh have been engaged in ongoing attacks against villages surrounding the Al-Manar military base in the Al-Haima area, 60 KM outside of the capital Sana'a, local sources told the Yemen Times.

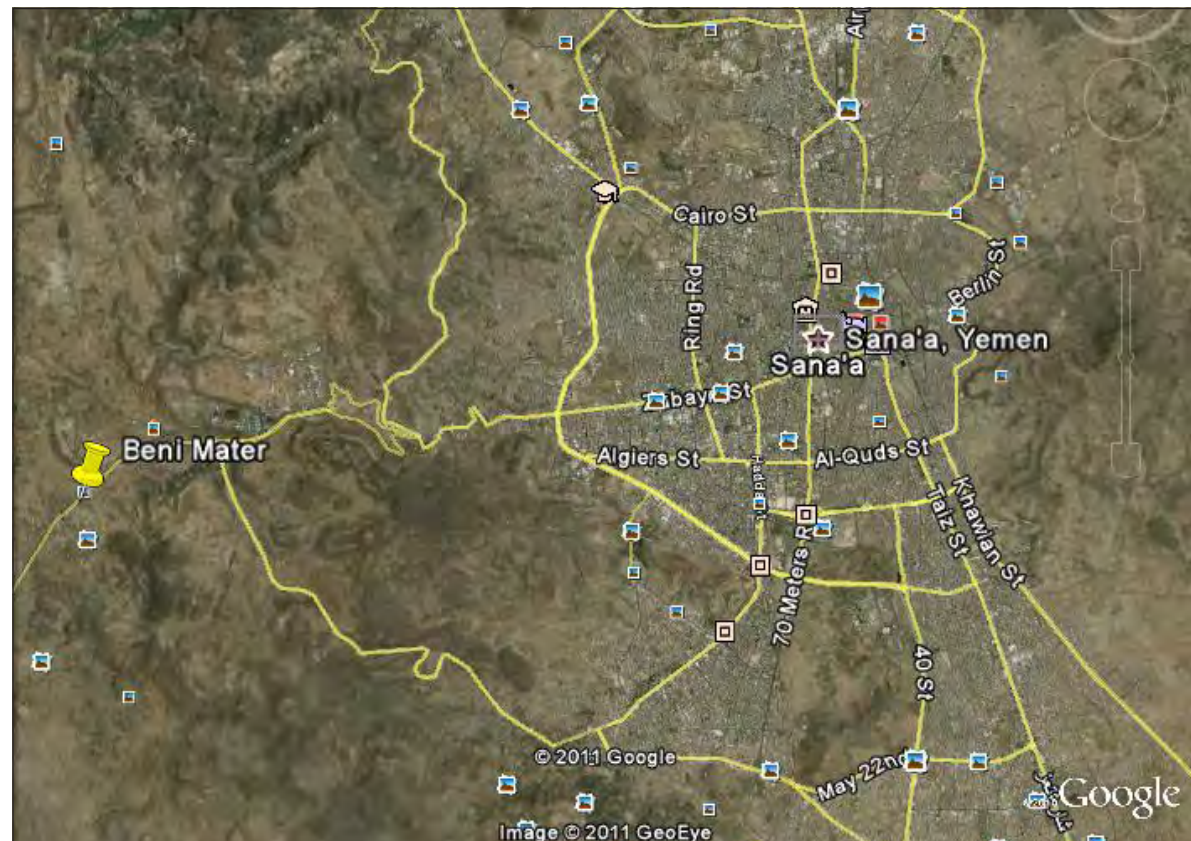
Dozens of families in Al-Mafahaq area were displaced after their houses were destroyed by shelling, said local human rights activist Hussein Al-Sabri to the Yemen Times. The site used to belong to the first armored brigade under the command of defected Maj. Gen. Ali Mushsin. Maj. Gen. Muhsin defected from the Saleh regime last March following the killing of 52 pro-democracy protesters leaving Friday prayers on March 18th.

"They [the families] have left their homes and gone to live with their relatives in a neighboring village. Some of them have taken residence inside a local school building being used as a temporary shelter," he said.

Until now three people have been wounded, among them one child from the Al-Mafahaq area. Numbers of casualties among soldiers is unknown, according to Al-Sabri.

The confrontation between armed tribesmen and Saleh's army broke out four days ago when Republican Guard soldiers replaced the 100 policemen on duty in the area with 200 soldiers from their own brigade armed with heavier weapons.

"This action from the republican guards



has provoked citizens in the area. They sent a local mediator to area where the forces began setting up camp and asked them to withdraw and allow the normal police presence back in. They refused and then shot at the group of mediators," the activist explained.

At the moment armed tribesmen are blockading the military base amidst while local leaders continue to send in mediators

to negotiate a stop to the violence, allowing the soldiers peacefully, according to Al-Sabri.

"Saleh has superior military force and tries to exploit this against the defected army to force them into a civil war," said political analysts Abdul Ghani Al-Eryani to the Yemen Times.

"They [Saleh's regime] do not want to

start the war because the one starts the war will be condemned domestically and internationally," he said

"These sporadic clashes are merely acts of tactical positioning for the final showdown. The society is not divided enough to launch a civil war but Saleh is trying to create the social divisions that will enable it to begin."

Saleh defiant as protesters call for march on palace

SANAA, May 13 (Xinhua) -- Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh openly defied on Friday his opponents to march forward the presidential palaces to force him out of power, warning that armed forces will be forced to defend the state from saboteurs of the opposition.

"We will confront challenges of the opposition with challenges," Saleh told tens of thousands of his supporters gathering near Saleh's presidential palace in the capital Sanaa.

"We warn the opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) to stop playing with fire, and to stop storming and destroying the government buildings and facilities, otherwise our people and the military forces will be forced to defend the country's interests," Saleh said.

The president also called on the op-

position coalition to join "a constructive national dialogue," saying that "if they want to change the regime, they should achieve it through ballot box, not through riot acts."

The opposition spokesman Mohamed Qahtan refused to comment on Saleh's speech, but an opposition leader told Xinhua that "this man (Saleh) was not calling for any conciliation dialogue, but rather publicly announced the war against us."

"We will continue our peaceful actions, not through engaging in war with Saleh's forces, but through holding comprehensive civil demonstrations across the country to press Saleh to leave office," the leader said on condition of anonymity, adding that "we don't expect that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative would achieve any reconciliation, es-

pecially after Qatar's withdrawal."

Tensions soared after Saleh in his Friday speech accused the opposition of storming a number of government buildings in southern provinces of Taiz, Ibb and Al-Bayda on Wednesday.

Following Friday's midday Muslim prayer in Ibb, government forces fired live bullets and tear gas on tens of thousands of protesters demanding Saleh's ouster, killing at least two protesters and injuring another dozen, witnesses said.

"Central Security Forces and Republican Guards opened fire and hurled tear gas to the protesters gathering in al-Dairy Street in downtown Ibb while the latter responded with throwing stones," a witness named Mohamed Kasim told Xinhua.

Kasim said the clashes, in which

the protesters set three of security vehicles on fire, forced both protesters and the security forces to scatter.

Protesters in provinces of Sanaa, Dhamar, Al-Hodayda, Al-Bayda, Taiz, Aden, Amran, Shabwa, Marib, Hajja, Sada, Lahj, Abyan, Al-Mahweet and Hadramout were reportedly marched on Friday.

The security and economic situations in the impoverished Arab country have been aggravated by the three-month-long ongoing street protests across the country, calling for an immediate end to Saleh's 33-year rule.

Yemeni Minister of Oil and Minerals Amir Salim Al-Aydarus was quoted by official Saba news agency late on Thursday as saying that the country is facing an imminent economic collapse due to attacks on oil pipelines and ongoing unrest.



Growing concerns over unrest in Yemen

ICRC report

Over three months have passed since the outbreak of civil unrest in Yemen. As violence has spread, the casualty toll has increased steadily. The ICRC and the Yemen Red Crescent Society are determined to do whatever it takes to alleviate the suffering of the people.

"Dozens of people have been injured in a number of clashes in Sana'a and elsewhere," said Jean-Nicolas Marti, the ICRC's head of delegation in Yemen. "Yemen Red Crescent volunteers and medical personnel have been caught up in the violence on several occasions, which has made it difficult for them to provide life-saving first aid where protests have occurred."

ICRC is renewing its appeal to both the authorities and the demonstrators to respect and protect the injured and all medical personnel, facilities and means of transport, and to grant safe passage to anyone in need of medical care. In addition, it is reiterating that all medical personnel and first-aid workers must exercise strict impartiality in treating the injured.

"Since February, we have been administering first aid and taking people with life-threatening injuries to various medical facilities," said Elias Manna, the head of the Yemen Red Crescent branch in Sana'a. "We have 60 first-aiders in Sana'a ready to be dispatched 24 hours a day. Nevertheless, any obstruction of our work could cost someone his life – that is why we are in constant contact with all those involved. We re-

mind them of our neutral and impartial role so that they may let us get through to the injured."

The ICRC stepped in immediately at the beginning of the unrest to provide support for the Yemen Red Crescent in Sana'a and Aden, and has now widened the scope of its assistance to include at least two other major cities, Seyoun and Taiz, east and south of Sana'a, respectively.

While the unrest is widespread, some areas have remained calmer although the difficulties, from a humanitarian point of view, are far from over. It was only two weeks ago that some 80,000 residents of Sa'ada, in the north of the country, were without water for more than a week because of damage caused to the network. The ICRC had to take quick action to ensure that people had enough clean water while its water engineers repaired and replaced equipment.

Also in the north, in the governorate of Amran, the needs in terms of water, food and medical care of more than 11,700 residents and displaced people remain sizable. Although some ICRC activities intended to remedy the situation were delayed over the past month owing to tensions in the governorate and throughout the country, the organization continues to do its utmost to help.

ICRC emergency response

In April, the ICRC continued to support the efforts of the Yemen Red Crescent and medical facilities to provide

life-saving humanitarian assistance in the capital Sana'a and elsewhere. In particular, the ICRC:

- supplied 10 stretchers, over 50 first-aid kits and six tents to the Yemen Red Crescent in Sana'a and Aden for use at first-aid posts; it also supplied 40 stretchers, 20 first-aid kits and 80 aprons with the "star of life" logo to emergency ambulance services and medical committees in Aden governorate;
- donated dressing materials and intravenous fluids to help treat victims of an explosion in the south-eastern governorate of Abyan who were taken to the "22nd of May Hospital" and al-Jumhuriya Hospital in Aden;
- financed the running costs for April and May of 10 Ministry of Health ambulances in Aden city and provided them with dressing materials, first-aid bags and stretchers;
- provided training in first aid, humanitarian principles, and safer access procedures in the field for nearly 500 Yemen Red Crescent trainers and volunteers in Sana'a, Aden, Taiz and Seyoun; it also provided training in first aid for 20 Ministry of Health ambulance service providers and 40 medical committees in Aden governorate.

Clean water

In a country known for its severe water shortages, supplying clean water to conflict victims remains one of the ICRC's top priorities. Over the past month, the ICRC has:

- urgently replaced a dysfunctional

generator with a new one at Tulumus water-pumping station to restore the availability of clean water to Sa'ada city's 80,000-strong population (including displaced people). The ICRC is in the process of repairing an additional backup generator damaged in recent fighting. During the weeks when the network was down, the ICRC transported 450,000 litres of water per day to ensure that the population survived;

- continued to supply the 8,500 inhabitants of the six camps for displaced people in Sa'ada governorate with clean water on a daily basis;
- continued to supply over 11,700 residents and displaced people in Amran governorate with 68,000 litres of clean water each day;
- continued to make water available to some 21,000 local residents in the governorates of Aden, Lahj, Shabwa and Abyan, in the south and south-west of the country, by repairing water-supply networks;
- upgraded 28 wells in mosques and public spaces in the city of Aden to ensure that clean water is available to the general population in case of shortage;
- built four latrines and upgraded the water network in the Sana'a deportation centre for the 80 people detained there.

Health care

Over the past three weeks, the ICRC has:

- provided medicines and other medical items to ensure that the three

Ministry of Health centres in Sa'ada governorate, the Yemen Red Crescent health centre and 12 other health-care facilities in the governorate, including in the six camps for displaced people, could continue to function. Together, these primary health-care facilities carried out some 12,500 consultations during the first three weeks of April alone;

- provided medicines and other medical items for the ICRC-supported health-care centres of Khaiwan al-Medina and Al-Harf in the north of Amran governorate. The centres carried out some 2,400 consultations during the first three weeks of April alone.

Food and other essential items

During the month of April, the ICRC and the Yemen Red Crescent:

- distributed two one-month food rations – wheat grain, rice, beans, oil, sugar and salt – to more than 10,000 displaced people in the camps of Aal Thabet, Mandaba and in Sa'ada city, in Sa'ada governorate, and provided nearly 6,200 displaced people with hygiene kits;
- continued to support the Department of Animal Health in its efforts to control the spread of a screw-worm outbreak in Amran governorate by treating over 10,000 animals in April alone;
- provided training for 14 technicians from the Department of Animal Health involved in the screw-worm treatment campaign.

Detainee-welfare and tracing activities

Over the past month, the ICRC:

- carried out four visits to people in the custody of the Political Security Prison, the Central Prison and the immigration detention facilities in Sana'a. After each visit, findings and recommendations were conveyed confidentially to the detaining authorities;
- organized nine video-teleconference calls and 22 telephone calls between families and their relatives held at the US detention facilities in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and Bagram, Afghanistan;
- helped forward around 70 Red Cross messages (containing brief family news) between families in Yemen and relatives detained at Guantanamo Bay, and some 30 Red Cross messages between families in Yemen and relatives detained in Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon;
- helped exchange over 180 Red Cross messages between refugees from the Horn of Africa and their families;
- succeeded in determining the whereabouts of four missing individuals and restored contact between them and their families;
- continued to provide food, hygiene items and basic health-care items in cooperation with the Yemen Red Crescent for 200 people awaiting deportation;
- visited six women held in prison, and continued working with the Yemen Red Crescent to enhance their literacy, sewing, embroidery, weaving, handicraft, and computer skills.

UK think tank discusses Yemen

By: Jan Raudszus

Recent events across the broader Middle East have crowded out news about events in Yemen. Most major western news networks and print media concentrate on other issues. While NATO is intervening in Libya to support the pro-democracy rebellion there, the death of Osama bin Laden has overshadowed everything else.

Only a small number of journalists and analysts remain in Sana'a itself. There has been a lack of reporting on Yemen in the West. One long standing institution, the Yemen Forum at Chatman House London, one of Britain's leading think tanks, is attempting to bring more information about Yemen to the West.

On 12 May the institute launched its new briefing on the current situation in Yemen. Taking the ongoing revolution into account, research fellow Ginny Hill of Chatman House and Prof. Gerd Nonneman discussed the country's socio-economic problems and Gulf politics during an accompanying event.

The briefing analyzed the domestic politics of Yemen and how those relate to international efforts to solve the country's political crisis. It describes the role of the GCC states with regards to Yemen and the reaction of political actors in Yemen. It also emphasizes the dominance of the elite in politics and informal networks on both sides.

Before the crisis, many hopes were put in the coordination group "Friends of Yemen" that in reaction to attempted terrorist attacks in 2009 and 2010 set out to coordinate and strengthen international support for Yemen. The "Friends of Yemen" idea is considered dead. The March 2011 meeting in Riyadh was postponed and the group is reportedly seen as ineffective and a other more informal and smaller group has emerged to support Gulf-led mediation efforts.

Especially problematic is the traditional informality of Yemen's international contacts and domestic politics that evade institutions within the state. While those structures are typical for the Arabian Peninsula it put Western diplomats in a tough spot.

The efforts of GCC countries become even more important and here especially the interests and politics of Yemen's biggest neighbor Saudi Arabia. Nonneman and Gill note that the long standing Yemeni conviction that the Kingdom considers a weak Yemen as favorable to its own interests does no longer hold. Today Saudi security interests prevail. The fear of AQAP moving freely in a failing or failed state situated on Saudi Arabia's vulnerable southern border champions everything else. But after the border settlement in 2000 the Kingdom has apparently withdrawn from Yemen. And many personal relationships have diminished. AQAP will remain of large interest for Saudi Arabia, the country so far most effected, and the international community over-

all. Domestically, the paper observes the importance of the al-Ahmar family and alleges that the family has provided pro-democracy protestors in Sana'a with money that is thought to come in part from regional sponsors. General Ali-Muhsin is looked on favorably in certain circles in Riyadh. And the street protestors support the creation of a civic government and a new constitution that boosts the role of parliament and a federal system of government. But the independent youth movement so far lacks a leadership that makes it is hard for them to participate in any negotiations.

The paper concludes that a successful transition in Yemen requires the coordinated help of GCC and the wider international community. The current stalemate proves the limited leverage of the GCC countries as shown by Saleh's last minute withdraw from signing the agreement for transition. During the event accompanying the lunch Nonneman elaborated on this. Saudi elites are unsure how to deal with the new actors that emerged in Yemen and if it is necessarily in their interest to push over Saleh when they do not know what to expect from a new government.

The disconnect of traditional opposition and street protestors will stir up problems in the future when some kind of transition agreement needs to be implemented.

In regards to president Saleh Ginny Hill pointed out that one can not be sure who really is calling the shots in

the regime today. The fighting between the 1st Armored division and Republican Guard does not necessarily have the presidents blessing. His son and Ali Muhsin have a past and there have been reports that during the campaign against the Houthis fighting between the two factions had occurred. Gill notes that in her opinion Saleh is concerned with three issues: His personal and financial security (he sure has his predecessors' fates in mind) and his freedom of movement: right now he is limited to very scarce parts of the country and his own capital. Over everything looms the Damocles sword of the International Criminal Court should he be indicted.

Gill is not alone with her thought. The deterioration of the presidents position has been noted by other analysts as well: On his twitter account Yemen researcher Gregory Johnsen recently asked himself if Saleh should now best be compared to a warlord with an army.

Even though the event in London brought publicity to the revolution in Yemen, the country mainly flies under the international media radar. For the street protestors to take a bigger role and the international community to realize that the elites in Yemen do not represent all crucial groups in the country the people on the streets will have to strengthen their media work and overall organization. An important part is to reach out to the world. To overthrow a regime without international help is possible, but it is much damn harder.

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A regional vision for a region in transition

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Over one hundred twenty participants from across the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region and the world came together for two days in Amman between 9 and 10 May to discuss and understand the various transitions taking place in the region today.

The 2011 Annual Meeting will mark the third year of the WANA Forum. Building upon the progress of the previous years, the 2011 Meeting will centre on policy advocacy and the creation of policy recommendations.

With over four consultations held since the previous year, ranging

from Water Scarcity to Reconstruction in Basra, the Meeting will provide a platform for the presentation of the practical achievements of the year, and an opportunity for policy-makers, NGOs and representatives from the private sector to establish a dialogue and build cooperative partnerships.

The West Asia North Africa Forum, which stretches from Morocco to Pakistan, is a non-governmental, non-partisan volunteer driven civil society initiative consisting of individuals from across WANA and partners from other parts of the world. It involves regional stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and disciplines in addressing social, environmental and economic challenges facing the people of WANA.

In pursuing supranational solutions people across the region are beginning to address the limits of carrying capacity at the national level. This was the theme of the last WANA Forum in 2010.

This year's forum "region in transition" aimed at understanding and dealing with the region's most pressing issue today: Transition.

The form maintains that while a few would have predicted the nature and extent of transformation, the underlying driving forces behind the various protests have been present or some time. As hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets in protest of political and economic conditions in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen, Jordan, Syria and elsewhere, the implications and consequences of change

remain unclear.

A regional vision

Seventy percent of the world's population is unable to improve their livelihoods regardless of how hard they work due to multiple forms of exclusion. Poverty is not merely the lack of material resources. It extends to lack of power and choice. Without addressing policies and institutions that exclude the poor.

It has long been the belief of the Forum members that through cooperation and the participation of what HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal calls the 'Third Domain' of partnership can all sectors of society - civil, public and private - develop responsible stewardship for a more sustainable, prosperous and equitable future.

The forum concluded with a message on how economic interests of nation-states can align with holistic regional aspiration that ensure human dignity and foster social cohesion.

Building on the forum's objective in advancing social cohesion, improving the region's ability to recover and reconstruct in the aftermath of conflict, advocating sustainable environmental and green economy solutions, as well as its desire to mitigate against a history of imported political and economic ideologies, the forum explored potential outcomes for the region once the 'sands of revolution' have settled. For instance, what constitutes sustainable

The West Asia-North Africa (WANA) Forum was initiated in response to the fact that nature abhors a vacuum. In our region, this vacuum represents the gradual loss of the noble art of conversation and the increased marginalization of human beings who are the most important asset to stability and the most dangerous contributors to instability and violence. - HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal, WANA Forum Chairman.

that have undergone similar transitions? In discussion transition, the key question becomes transition to what? What would be considered a positive outcome for the region?

WANA Vision: Diverse humanity, United in dignity

The forum came up with an eight point vision which was signed by the participants to document their commitment to the forum and its work in the region. Those points are:

- Achieve equal opportunity as a means to help people realize their basic needs
- Foster citizenship and good governance
- Create opportunities for prosperity and sustainable development
- Commit to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom in the education of future generations and investment in the region's human capital
- Promote processes of inclusion that harness our diversity more effectively
- Secure and build community resilience
- Provide refuge and relief to the uprooted, strive to safeguard their rights and undertake measures to resolve the root causes of displacement
- Respect our human and natural environments as stewards of the earth

American organization calls on GCC to revoke immunity promise to Saleh

By: Ali Saeed

The American Human Rights Watch (HRW) called upon GCC countries to revoke an immunity promise made in a political power transition deal on Thursday. The deal was struck between Saleh and the opposition coalition known as the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP). It was proposed by the six nations of Gulf Cooperation Council on April 3.

"Negotiators should immediately remove a promise of immunity from any resignation deal for President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen in light of repeated, lethal attacks by his security forces on peaceful protesters," read the statement.

"These attacks suggest that President Saleh views his promise of immunity as a 'Get Out of Jail Free' card for political murder," said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. "The GCC member states and other governments involved in negotiations for President Saleh's exit should immediately pull immunity from the table," said Stork.

"Yemeni courts and foreign governments will still be obligated to

hold Saleh to account for the attacks even if an immunity deal is signed," the organization noted.

Security forces, along with pro-government gunmen in civilian clothing, have shot dead at least 21 people since May 7, 2011 -- at least 15 of them on May 11 and 12 -- and have wounded hundreds, according to HRW.

Khaled Al-Ansi, an independent Yemeni human rights activist told the Yemen Times on Saturday that since the GCC initiative was introduced, more than 50 people of nationwide peaceful protesters were killed by Saleh's security forces and pro-regime assailants.

On April 12, 15 peaceful demonstrators were killed on a march to the Yemen's national television, according to the activist.

"The USA and the European Countries who backed the GCC immunity promise to Saleh will be account for Saleh's serious crimes against humanity," said Al-Ansi.

"International law rejects impunity for serious crimes, such as crimes against humanity and torture," Human Rights Watch said. "International treaties, including the Convention against Torture, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, require

states parties to ensure that alleged perpetrators of serious crimes are prosecuted, including those who give the orders for these crimes. Systematic or widespread unlawful killings, carried out as a state policy, are likely to be crimes against humanity."

Al-Ansi explained that one month and half has lapsed since the GCC power transition plan was presented and that means "Saleh was not looking for an initiative, but just investing time to reorganize himself to be able to contain the popular uprisings demanding an end to his 33-year rule."

"The initiative has granted him more time," he added.

According to the activist, Saleh is attempting to drive the country into "civil war; to Somalize Yemen, but the country can not endure more wars."

He doubted the GCC nations' desire to resolve the political crisis in Yemen saying that "they have no interests in toppling Saleh through a revolution and they are worried about winds of change."

"They stand with Saleh to defend themselves as they recently called on Morocco and Jordan to join their council and we know that Morocco and Jordan are both monarchies," he concluded.

political and economic structures that can foster long-term stability and ensure human dignity across the region? What lessons can be learned from the experience of other regions



Embassy of India, Sana'a

The "Know India Programme" (KIP) for diaspora youth is conducted by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA). This programme is open only for the diaspora youth in the age group of 18-25 years. It is open to PIOs (Persons of Indian origin). NRIs are not eligible to apply for this programme.

The 18th & 19th KIPs to be conducted by MOIA during 2011-12 are as follows.

	Tentative dates	Partner State	Last date for receipt of nominations in Embassy
18th KIP	20th August to 19th Sept., 2011	Goa	25th May, 2011
19th KIP	21st Dec. 2011 to 10th Jan., 2012	Rajasthan	30th September, 2011

(Exact dates for these programmes will be conveyed a month before their commencement)

Minimum qualification required: Holding Graduate degree or studying for graduation. (Applicants must be able to converse in English)

Details of these programmes are available on MOIA's website <http://moia.gov.in>.



Yemenia Airway: Always ahead of international standards



Upon receiving their first Airbus A320, Yemenia Airlines held a ceremony at Sana'a International Airport to celebrate the occasion. The party was attended by Dr. Mohamed Ali Mujawar, prime minister of the caretaker government as well as a number of ministers, businessmen and investors. In a speech delivered during the celebration, Mr. Mujawar commended Yemenia's keenness to modernize and extend its air fleet, staying current with developments in this vital economic sector. He added that this type of aircraft comes as a qualitative and distinguished addition to the company's services. He stated that he appreciated the company's commitment to renewing and maintaining its fleet as well as improving its services.

The caretaker prime minister expressed his happiness for Yemenia's reception of the Airbus A320, adding that it was only the first of 10 aircraft that will be added to the company's fleet.

He also said that Yemenia's obligation was not restricted only to acquiring new planes, but also expanding its regional routes.

Capt. Abdul Khaliq al-Kadi, Yemenia board of director's chairman, said in the press conference held at Sana'a International Airport that the Airbus A320 will contribute to extending the company's regional routes and increase the number of its flights to several destinations, as well as help the company over services to new destinations. He explained that acquiring this model came as a part of the company's

continuous achievements and as part of its development programs to provide its customers with the best possible services.

According to Capt. Al-Kadi, Yemenia will receive the second Airbus A320 later this month, one next year, four in 2013 and two in 2014. He added that this model is one of the best aircraft produced by Airbus and, seating 138 passengers in economy class and 12 passengers in business class. Al-Kadi further said that a 297-seater Airbus A320 was added to Yemenia last November to ease the pressure on the fleet of Yemenia working in various European, Asian and African lines, ensuring provision of the highest standards of comfort and services for passengers.

Delivery ceremony

Airbus had organized a grand celebration in its headquarters in Toulouse, France on the occasion of delivering the first of 10 A320 aircraft contracted by Yemenia in January 2010 for USD750 million. During the ceremony, Capt. Al-Kadi said that Yemenia fleet development plans to include the newest and best planes in the region into their fleet to help in operations and during maintenance.

Mr. Tom Enders, Airbus CEO said that Yemenia's commitment to develop its air fleet reflected its ambitious plans as well as the strength and vitality of the aviation sector in Yemen. "We feel proud to be Yemenia's partners in its programs and long-term development plans," he stated. Mr. Enders also explained

that when the company has an all-Airbus fleet, Yemenia will be able to reinforce its competitiveness in the market.

Mr. Muneer Gahoush, Yemenia deputy director for commercial affairs, said that Yemenia ticket sales increased by 12% in the first quarter of this year compared to 6% in the same period last year. He added that special offers were presented on the occasion of receiving the new aircraft and they would continue until the end of the month.

Mr. Abdullah Al-Kibsi, marketing director-general said that this particular type of aircraft was chosen for its fuel and operation efficiency.

Director of Yemenia region in Paris, Mr. Faisal Amran said that the company's purchase of 10 Airbus A320 aircraft is a step that would promote relations between the company and Airbus. He also stated that Yemenia is one of the first companies in the area to have Airbus planes.

About Airbus A320

The A320 entered airline service in

April 1988 and rapidly established itself as the industry standard for passenger comfort and economy on short and medium-haul routes. Typically seating 150 passengers in two classes or up to 180 for low-cost operations, the A320 has a range of up to 5,700 km/3,000 nm. The A320 is in widespread service on five continents, flying routes that range from short European commuter sectors, through European charter operations to coast-to-coast US flights.

The founding member of the best-selling Airbus single-aisle Family, the A320 is the only all-new aircraft in its category. Airbus innovation means better performance and reliability with reduced fuel burn and easier maintenance. The A320's 3.96-metre-wide (13 ft.) fuselage provides wider seats and more room for carry-on baggage in the cabin, and the ability to load containerized cargo in the lower hold. The A320 set a new generation of comfort standards, accommodating 12 first class and 138 economy passengers in the widest cabin available for single-aisle jetliners.



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'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood'.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 1

YT vision statement



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

**"To make Yemen
a good world
citizen."**

OUR
OPINIONIdentity
revolutions

When Bu Azizi of Tunisia set himself on fire over four months ago, all he was demanding a dignified life. That is the very thing protestors in Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen demand - self-worth and to be recognized as citizens, even if the banners they raise are about freedoms from oppressive regimes or demanding a better democracy.

The revolutions of the Arab world are characterized by being headless, i.e. no clear leadership, so it is coming from a wider popular platform. They are also beyond politics, political parties or even ideological identities whether Islamists, socialists or liberals although many political parties have ridden the wave to give shape and dimension to the popular protests.

One of the more interesting characteristic of these revolutions - they are carried out by a diverse group of people including minorities who have been excluded from society for a very long time.

Yet, perhaps the single most important characteristic of the transitions taking place in the region is that they are based on the self-worth of citizens or rather the lack of it.

Citizens want to know how they fit-in in the greater picture. This is the very sense of loss that has driven many young Arabs to migrate to other countries even if it means risking their lives. Yes, they are looking for more financial prosperity but it is always coupled with a desire to become something of themselves.

Now with these revolutions all the lost souls in the region feel that they are part of something bigger, something that defines them in a way that they accept and are proud of.

This very point is also a dangerous one because if the young Arabs define themselves through their revolution what will come of them once their revolution is done?

What our youth really need is to be empowered citizens to live within a structured stable country not just mobilizers of change and creators of unrest.

Yemenis need to find themselves in the process of rebuilding the nation, this is why it is important right from this moment to understand what roles each one can play in that process from today.

Yemenis need to live democracy as the relation between citizen and state. To be responsible to what is happening in their surroundings and being able to say no or yes when required. Taking ownership in their own issues and more than that, being responsible committed citizens in a nation they understand and are proud of.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Gender liberation and the Arab Spring

By: Andrew for Kabobfest

Iremember when Amnesty International accused Egyptian soldiers of arbitrarily detaining women protesters in Tahrir Square and subjecting them to "virginity tests." The cruelty and degradation to which these women were subjected is indicative of the broader misogyny and patriarchy that exists within Arab societies - phenomenon that have often been exploited by Arab despots.

Now, don't get me wrong. I am not saying that Arab men have some sort of inherent proclivity towards misogyny. To be sure, patriarchy and misogyny are universal phenomenon that affect communities across religious, ethnic, and geographic lines. However, in the context of the "Arab Spring," ending discrimination against women must be a part of the broader revolutionary agenda. If not, protests sweeping the region will have been rendered useless, and the problems that continue to afflict our respective Arab communities - namely political despotism, civil repression, foreign occupation, and poverty - will only worsen.

The Arab world has known its fair share of women revolutionaries. For decades, Arab women have been the cornerstone of popular movements, organizing their communities within a politically progressive framework. And while many of these women have not been recognized as revolutionaries in the traditional sense of the word, their day-to-day activities - like the management of underground schools during the first Palestinian intifada in the process of maintaining a functional civil society - were integral to long-term movement building and sustaining Arab communities' social fabric in the face of neo-colonial western hegemonic forces. From Um Khalil to Soha Bechara, every single one of these courageous women has had to overcome

significant social barriers in their pursuit of national liberation and broader social justice. Considering that traditional gender roles make it difficult for Arab women to work within the public sphere, it is important to highlight the kinds of sacrifices Arab women are often forced to make in order to become effective political activists, organizers, and leaders.

Soha Bechara published her memoirs in a book titled, My Life for Lebanon. She spent ten years inside of the Khiam torture prison after she attempted to assassinate Antoine Lahad, the general of Israel's proxy South Lebanese Army (SLA). During that time, Bechara never once betrayed her loyalty to her fellow Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) members, and refused to give up any additional information on resistance activities taking place against the Israeli occupation and the SLA. Her willingness to sacrifice, dedication to the Resistance, and steadfastness in the face of such brutality is representative of the strength, poise, and bravery Arab women have brought - and continue to bring - to national liberation and social justice movements throughout the Arab world.

As Arab leaders continue to greet popular protests against their undemocratic, despotic regimes with wanton violence, protesters should turn to Soha Bechara's story for inspiration. In the years leading up to her assassination attempt on Antoine Lahad, Bechara underwent a personal revolution that reflected her nuanced understanding of the systemic consequences of Israel's occupation of South Lebanon. At the age of 15, she swore off love and relationships for the sake of her commitment to the Resistance. According to Bechara, "Like all the other girls of my generation, I wanted to have a boyfriend, and I dreamt of having a married life and having a family and children. But all that was impossible because of the pressing circumstances we were

living through; I thought then that if people could sacrifice themselves for personal ends, why should they not do so for national reasons?"

The point here isn't to discourage rebels and protesters in Libya, Bahrain, Yemen, and Syria from enjoying romantic relationships. Rather, the fact that Bechara felt pressure to choose between being in a romantic relationship and fighting on behalf of her nation is significant, as men do not generally feel pressure to choose between their nation and having a family. Additionally, Bechara's decision to sacrifice her comfort and independence for the sake of national liberation is more about her repudiation of traditional gender roles than it is about swearing off interpersonal relationships altogether. In fact, Bechara took inspiration from other women around her that had already embraced a life of resistance: "I'm a peaceful person by nature, but when Sanaa Al-Mehidly, an 18-year-old Lebanese girl, blew herself up as an Israeli patrol was passing in 1985, that shocked me and made me ready for the struggle."

For Bechara, the Resistance wasn't an abstract idea; it was a way of life that defined her very existence. Rather than rejecting the reality of Israel's occupation and ignoring the circumstances that made a "normal" life impossible, Bechara opened herself up to the possibility that a life of struggle was better than a life of fear and intimidation under occupation. To an extent, this is the same realization hundreds of thousands of Arabs make each day as they take to the streets in protest against their respective despots. Although not physically occupied by a foreign power, the same sense of despair Egyptians felt under Mubarak compelled them to interrupt their daily routine, demand Mubarak's resignation, and continue calls for a new, democratic Egypt.

While imprisoned inside the Khiam, Bechara's captors subjected her to various forms of sexualized violence, in-

cluding harsh "interrogation" sessions laden with oppressive sexual innuendo and rape threats. Although Bechara never discloses whether or not she was actually sexually assaulted, she makes it perfectly clear that the Khiam's SLA forces used sex as a means of intimidating her, framing her routine physical beatings within a genderized context.

Given that patriarchy and misogyny are tools that Arab despots - like Ali Abdallah Saleh and Hosni Mubarak - use and have used to manipulate and oppress Arab countries, gender liberation is not simply a part of national liberation; it is essential to realizing freedom, justice, and equality throughout the Arab world. The consequences of war, political strife, and economic instability in Arab countries disproportionately impact women, thus highlighting the need for Arab women to take a more prominent role in decision-making processes. Although women have been at the forefront of the "Arab Spring" - in Bahrain, women are taking the lead on promoting national unity in order to avoid the same divisive sectarian tensions that plague countries like Iraq and Lebanon - it is unclear as to whether or not their prominent role in popular protests will translate to radical structural change that will facilitate gender equity, economic justice, and political power.

Although My Life for Lebanon wasn't an explicitly feminist narrative, Bechara's memoirs represent one woman's struggle to overcome patriarchy and sexual violence in the course of achieving national liberation. Bechara's experiences further undermine the preposterous idea that gender liberation is subordinate to national liberation. The same way in which Soha's personal revolution impacted all facets of her life, our people's liberation struggle is incomplete unless it demands freedom, equality, and liberation for all regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, and other social identities.

Yemen: When a "CARE Package" brings education and hope

By: William Lambers

Many of us have received "CARE packages" at one time or another. College students, service members, or just those with birthdays have all appreciated these special deliveries. It's like a box of presents with a smile.

These kinds of parcels have even played a significant role in world affairs. General Lucius Clay praised the use of CARE packages in Germany after World War II saying, "the physical and psychological effects of this aid were immense."

For a second-grade girl in Yemen named Arwa, a "CARE package" of food rations means something else: an education. When the UN World Food Programme (WFP) provided rations at school, this was an incentive for her parents to send her to class. She would become a breadwinner of sorts.

Living in rural Yemen, Arwa's family is poor and getting basic foods is a struggle. When food prices are high, which they often are in Yemen, it becomes even harder to put bread on the table. In Yemen, over seven million people, one third of the population, are in this food insecurity trap, and many others just barely stay out of the pit.

Arwa and her family are not asking for much. They just want things many of us take for granted. With just one relatively inexpensive plan, WFP was feeding families and providing children like Arwa a chance to learn and become almost anything they set their mind to.

But then the funding cuts came, and this food for education program went by the wayside. How many people know that the WFP food for education program in Yemen has only had one limited distribution since June 2009? WFP relies on voluntary funding from the international community.

Tragically, donors have shown little interest in funding projects that feed and educate children in Yemen. It is disastrous policymaking at its worst. For food and education are what will change Yemen in the long run. A country cannot stand, with malnourished and uneducated children.

Yemen has been in the news a lot lately because of ongoing political unrest. From Yemen we hear the defiant words of President Saleh who won't step down. We hear from protesters and others calling for change in the poorest country in the Middle East.

But let's take a moment to hear from those whose voices often struggle to be heard. Let's hear from Arwa and other children who need basics but cannot get

them. April/May 2010 was the last time WFP Food for Education rations were distributed in Yemen.

At that time Maria Santamarina of WFP compiled the words of Arwa and other children in the hopes of getting their message out to the world and saving the program. It's still possible to restart Food for Education, it's just waiting for the international community to act.

Arwa said, "The most important part of my going to school is to receive the support provided by WFP; we need this food for our home." Another of the Yemeni children, Hyat, said, "our families need food. It not only helps us have enough to eat, but allows us the opportunity to study." Hyat wants to become a teacher.

But many students don't get to realize their dreams in Yemen. And look at the country now; there is instability, Al Qaeda - and who knows what lies around the corner?

What is tragic though is that there is so little discussion on doing things that can save Yemen, like food for education for all children. It would be the most inexpensive and the most useful thing we can do for Yemen and its youth.

Build up the schools in Yemen, provide the rations, and give the people the tools they need to solve their own problems. The primary tool is education. Give the children in Yemen the "CARE packages" that feed their stomachs and minds, and watch a country develop.

Renewed pressure on
Yemeni president

By: Brian Whitaker
For al-bab.com

President Saleh came under renewed pressure on Friday to accept the Yemen "transition" plan proposed by the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The US and several EU countries have now declared their backing for the plan. State Department spokesman Mark Toner said on Friday:

"We call on the parties to sign and implement the terms of the agreement now to ensure an orderly, peaceful transition of power.

"This transition must begin immediately in order for the Yemeni people to realise their aspirations for a brighter and more prosperous future."

Saleh had been expected to sign the agreement - which requires his resign-

ation - at the end of April but he prevaricated at the last minute. Given the additional western pressure now, the withdrawal of Qatar from the mediation process (whose involvement Saleh had been objecting to) and reports of a rapidly worsening economic situation inside Yemen, he may be finally induced to sign.

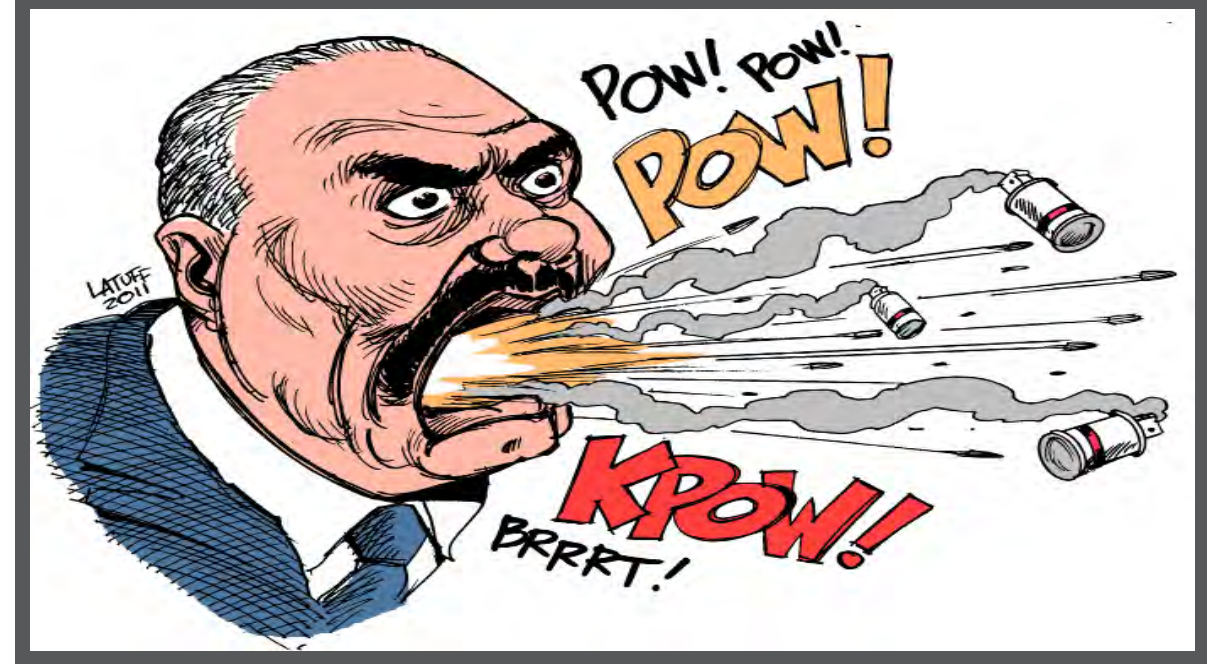
The "transition" plan itself leaves a lot to be desired (see previous blog post) and provides considerable scope for Saleh to further delay his departure.

Controversially, the plan also includes granting Saleh immunity from prosecution. On Thursday, Human Rights Watch issued

another statement objecting to immunity "in light of repeated, lethal attacks by his security forces on peaceful protesters".

SKETCHED OPINION

By: Carlos Latuff



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2011 college grads moving home in record numbers, saddled with historic levels of student loan debt

By: Amanda M. Fairbanks
for the Huffington Post

While one's college graduation is normally a time of jubilation, Megan Muller can more than relate to the sense of defeat that now hangs over the class of 2011.

Muller, 26, graduated from Kean University in Union, N.J., yesterday with a bachelor's degree in communication. She is the first person in her family to graduate from college.

Like many graduates, she's now faced with the larger worry of living back at home while also paying down vast amounts of debt.

All along, money's been a chronic source of anxiety. In order to finish, Muller took out more than \$70,000 in student loans and has another \$10,000 in credit card debt.

Midway through college, after transferring and taking a few semesters off, Muller moved back in with her parents

in order to save money.

And until she can move out and find her own place, it's the credit cards she must first pay down -- in addition to beginning repayments on her student loans.

"Trust me, you don't want to be 26 and still living at home with your parents," explains Muller, who, daunted by the expense of college, struggled with whether to finish at all. She currently makes about \$25,000 as an assistant editor at Federal Practitioner, a peer-reviewed medical journal.

Advertisement

Muller is hardly alone in her ongoing struggle to establish an independent life.

In addition to the normal job worries, the class of 2011 is saddled with a dual set of other obligations: moving home and paying back debt.

A study conducted by Twentysomething Inc., a consultant firm specializing in young adults, reports that 85 percent of this year's graduating class will be forced to move back home.

Meanwhile, 2011 graduates also face historic amounts of student loan debt -- or an average of \$27,200 for graduates that borrowed money in order to finish school.

"We tell people they need to get a college education in order to succeed, but then we put all of these roadblocks in their way by then making it practically impossible to repay what you owe," says Michael D. Hais, who, along with Morley Winograd, coauthored the forthcoming book "Millennial Momentum: How a New Generation Is Remaking America." The two men describe the number of 20-somethings moving home as "historically unprecedented."

Andrew Sum, a professor of economics at Northeastern University, couldn't agree more. "This is our country and this is our future and we're failing them," says Sum, who reports a record number of 2011 graduates returning home to their parents' nest. As a consequence, Sum sees young graduates not only delaying the formation of their own households, but consequently

unable to achieve a desirable standard of living.

Apart from the longer-term consequences associated with moving home, Sum's data reveals another concern altogether. Namely, that young people face high amounts of debt and a lack of decent jobs.

Using data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Sum reports that as many as 50 percent of college graduates under the age of 25 are underutilized, meaning they're either working no job at all, working a part-time job or working a job outside of the college labor market -- say, as a barista or a bartender.

Mark Kantrowitz, who came up with the \$27,200 figure based on the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study and publishes the financial aid sites Fastweb.com and FinAid.org, is concerned that debt at graduation is outpacing starting salaries.

It's a worry that Muller and many of her classmates also share.

Going to school while working full-



time required that Muller learn to survive on fewer and fewer hours of sleep. Coffee became her fuel.

Name the job -- whether working as a nanny, as a waitress, behind the counter at a beauty supply store or at the front desk of her local gym -- and she's done it.

And while Muller realizes she's fortunate to have a job, her paycheck is hardly enough to repay her existing debt while she saves to get her own place.

Meanwhile, Muller is toying with whether to go into more debt in order to finance a graduate degree, hoping that more qualifications might lead to a bigger paycheck.

"But so what if I'm \$100,000 in debt and living in a smaller house and not able to afford the nicest clothes?" asks Muller, whose to-do list remains longer than her shopping list, despite yesterday's high of finally receiving her diploma. "One day, it's all going to pay off."

GCC throws economic lifeline to Jordan, Morocco

By: David Rosenberg
for the Media Line

The surprise invitations extended to Jordan and Morocco to join the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) hold out the promise of economic gains to its two candidate members and security benefits for the group's current members. But an expanded GCC also risks undermining reform and exacerbating tensions in the Middle East, analysts warned.

Relatively poor and facing high unemployment and yawning budget deficits, Jordan and Morocco could benefit from concessional prices for oil and gas, better access for their citizens to work in the Gulf and financial assistance. An expanded GCC would enhance the role of Saudi Arabia, by far the biggest GCC state, as it takes a more assertive political stance.

"Jordan needs the Gulf and the Gulf needs the Jordanians," Walid Alkhatib, who works at the University of Jordan's Center for Strategic Studies, told

The Media Line. "We need them because we are in a critical economic situation. ... The only way we can sustain our economy is through the Gulf."

The Arab Spring has so far posed no immediate threat to the region's monarchies, but Saudi Arabia fears the turmoil has emboldened Iran in its long-standing bid to achieve dominance in the Gulf and has forced the region's monarchies to boost subsidies, create jobs and makes some gestures towards democracy.

Like the six Gulf states that currently comprise the GCC, the two prospective members are both pro-Western, Sunni Muslim monarchies and are feeling the pressure of the Arab Spring to undertake reforms. But the similarities end there. Jordan, some 750 miles from the Gulf, has a per capita gross domestic product of \$5,300 while Morocco's, some 3,100 miles distant, is \$4,900. By comparison, Saudi Arabia GDP per capita was \$24,200 in 2010.

Enriched by climbing oil prices, the Gulf monarchies have been able to respond with generous aid programs

for their already wealthy populations -- Saudi Arabia alone has committed to spending \$125 billion -- but in Jordan and Morocco, kings have had to increase deficit spending to cover the cost of handouts and include political reforms to sweeten the pot. Meantime, their economies are suffering under the weight of slow growth and higher global prices for food and energy.

In Morocco, the Institute for International Finance (IIF) estimates the government's budget deficit will widen to 5.3% of GDP this year as economic growth slows. King Mohammed VI has promised constitutional changes by June and Morocco promised to inject \$2 billion in subsidies to soften price hikes for staple goods.

In Jordan, economic growth will slump to 2.8% as its budget deficit swells to 6.77% of GDP. King Abdullah has Jordan's woes have been compounded by repeated interruptions in the pipeline delivering Egyptian natural gas, which has forced it to ration electricity and increase its import bill. Faced with unrest in two of its mem-

ber states, the GCC in March agreed to provide Oman and Bahrain \$10 billion each over a decade to help meet protesters' demands for higher living standards. Morocco and Jordan may be looking for similar assistance. But they would also benefit from discounted energy prices from GCC members and, in Jordan's case easier access for its citizens to work in the Gulf, who can now only stay in GCC countries if they have an employer sponsoring them.

"If they give us oil and gas cheaper prices than the market price then that would help our economy," Alkhatib of the Center for Strategic Studies said. The IIF predicts that Jordan's current account deficits will more than double to 9% of GDP this year.

For the GCC countries, Jordan and Morocco add to the clout of Saudi Arabia, which has been taking a more assertive role in the Middle East amid concerns that the U.S. is unprepared or unwilling to act as a regional power and Egypt has become preoccupied with domestic instability. Saudi troops

were called into fellow GCC member Bahrain in March to put down unrest that threatened the local monarch and the GCC has played the leading role in mediating between Yemen's leader and rebels.

But analysts warned of a downside to the agreement as well.

Subsidies and more jobs in the Gulf might alleviate pressure on Jordan and Morocco's government to undertake reforms. Indeed, Marc Lynch, writing in on-line journal Foreign Policy on Wednesday, said, reversing the reform drive might be a condition for GCC membership as Gulf monarchs try to solidify the region's royal institutions.

"The real point here would seem to be a promise of GCC, or more specifically Saudi, assistance to those non-Gulf monarchies in order to prevent them from going too far in meeting popular demands for reform. Such a Sunni King's Club would be a counter-revolutionary institution," he wrote.

Lynch warned that the GCC alliance threatens to exacerbate tensions not only with Iran but with Egypt, which

is being excluded from a growing pro-Western alliance just as it is still casting about for a new foreign policy stance in the post-Mubarak era.

Economically, too, the expanded GCC has drawbacks as well, both for the veteran GCC members as well as the prospective new ones, analysts said.

An influx of Jordanians and Moroccans could flood the GCC labor markets at the expense of locals at a time when the governments of the region are trying to encourage domestic employment. Jordanians tend to fill the kind of skilled jobs, as engineers, business executives, teachers and nurses, that GCC government want their nationals to take.

"I don't see a lot of economic benefits for the GCC especially as Jordan and Morocco have plenty of cheap labor, which will freely move around. What will happen to Saudization and Omanization and Bahrainization?" asked John Sfakianakis, chief economist at Banque Saudi Fransi, in an interview with Arab News on Thursday.

Tycoon finds himself as center of Syrian storm

By: David Rosenberg
for the Media Line

Rami Makhlof -- a man with no official position in the government of President Bashar Al-Assad -- has emerged as a central figure in the turmoil besetting Syria as an unofficial spokesman for the regime, a target for protestor rage and a symbol of much of what is wrong with the country.

Syria's most prominent businessman as well as a cousin of President Bashar Al-Assad, Makhlof positioned himself as a defender of the regime in a New York Times interview on Tuesday, warning that the region risked devolving into chaos if the president is toppled. The same day, the European Union put him on a list of 13 key Syrian figures whose assets have been frozen and their right to travel is restricted.

"Nobody can guarantee what will happen after, God forbid, anything happens to this regime," Makhlof told the newspaper. "What I'm saying is don't let us suffer, don't put a lot of pressure on the president, don't push Syria to do anything it is not happy to do."

The two developments on Tuesday have pulled Makhlof out from behind the scenes, where he has preferred to work in his two closely intertwined roles -- as the country's top tycoon and as a reputed member of its small circle of decision-makers. In fact, he was already singled out by protesters early on in the unrest when the local offices of Syriatel, the mobile phone company he controls, were set afire in the southern city of Dara'a amid chants of "Rami Makhlof is robbing us."

While opposition demands have focused on demands for more political freedom and regime change, Makhlof's rise to prominence underscores the extent to which Syria's economic malaise is a fac-

tor in the unrest that erupted in mid-March and has cost close to 800 lives. Syria is not only stagnant politically but economically as well, failing to deliver jobs, economic opportunities or prosperity to its 21 million people.

Syria cannot easily reform its bloated public sector, obsolete industries and social safety nets," said Marcus Marktanner, associate professor of economics at the American University of Beirut. "It can only introduce easy reforms, such as the privatization of telecommunication and other modern services. These sectors, however, are cash cows with very little trickle down effects on the labor market."

"Since the political regime did not change, it is little surprising that such cash cows end up in the hands of cronies like Rami Makhlof," Marktanner told The Media Line in an e-mail.

Efforts at privatization and deregulation in places like Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt failed to create a thriving private sector and enough jobs to prevent unemployment from rising. In Syria, the reform process barely got under way even after Bashar Al-Assad took over from his father Hafez in 2000 amid hopes of fundamental change.

To the extent, there was movement toward free market it was people like Rami Makhlof who enjoyed the benefits. Born in 1969, his father was the brother to Syria's first lady, Hafez Al-Assad's wife, whose family is deeply embedded in the country's power elite. Makhlof's brother, Hafez Makhlof, is head of the Damascus branch of the General Security Directorate.

As Syria began tepid efforts at privatization in the 1990s, Makhlof, whose father was an important figure in the Syrian's government corporations apparatus, began acquiring and starting up companies. Critics say he used his family's influence to win no-bid contracts and licenses.

His biggest catch was one of two licenses the government tendered in 2001 to operate cellular-telephone networks.

To help him and his partners to build and begin operating the network, Makhlof brought on an experienced partner in the form of Egypt's Orascom Telecom. But once Syriatel was in business, the two sides quickly had a falling out and went to court. Orascom and critics say Syrian courts obliged Makhlof with favorable rulings that froze Orascom assets and eventually forced it to divest its 25% stake on terms favorable to the Syrian partners.

Syriatel today controls more than half the mobile market and has in at least one case acted as a wing of the Baath party. When the United Nations in 2005 announced it was launching a probe into Syrian complicity in the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, Syriatel subscribers received text messages asking them to attend rallies showing "love of country and the rejection of external pressures," according to a New York Times report of the time.

In 2008, the U.S. issued a directive ordering Makhlof's assets inside any U.S. jurisdiction frozen and barred Americans from engaging in business or transactions with Makhlof.

"Rami Makhlof has used intimidation and his close ties to the Al-Assad regime to obtain improper business advantages at the expense of ordinary Syrians," Stuart Levey, undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, said in a statement at the time. "The Assad regime's cronyism and corruption has a corrosive effect, dis-advantaging innocent Syrian businessmen and entrenching a regime that pursues oppressive and destabilizing policies."

Makhlof denies he enjoys any special privileges or engages in corrupt activities. His supporters say he has created jobs and brought a modern business dynamic to

Syria.

Whatever Makhlof's personal contributions might be, Syria's economy as a whole is in bad shape. The Institute for International Finance (IIF) forecast in a report last week that gross domestic product will contract 3% and rebound by a just 2% in 2010. Like much of the Arab world, Syria suffers from double digit unemployment. The IIF estimated it was 11% in 2009 and for young people the rate is more than double that.

While in places like Tunisia and Egypt, economists say reform efforts failed to create jobs and raise standards of living for most, in Syria they were barely given a try. Economists say Syria faces real obstacles to privatization and liberalization, among them the bureaucracy's lack of skills and experience in managing a free-market economy. The country's political isolation has hindered reform as well. Countries in eastern Europe received considerable foreign aid to ease the transition from communism to capitalism, a crutch Syria lacks, they say.

But Lahcen Achy, a scholar at the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut, adds that top officials don't have much interest in reform to begin with.

"It's not easy for a regime that is against market reform to move to a market economy easily," Achy told The Media Line. "The other issue is the old guard who wants to keep the socialist economy ... They benefit from the situation. Public enterprises employ lots of people. A market economy implies you would have to lay people off from the public sector."

As a result, the public sector remains the key player in Syria's economy both in terms of production and employment, accounting for close to a third of employment -- a relatively high figure for the region, Achy said.

When the dam finally burst two months ago, protestors chanted slogans calling for

more freedom and eventually for regime change. But Marktanner said joblessness, stagnant standards of living, the crony capitalism symbolized by Makhlof and the absence of economic opportunity factored in as well.

"Economic malaise played an important role," said Marktanner. "Syria's social safety nets have eroded while widespread economic opportunities have not emerged. At this point, the government lost its legitimacy."

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if interested, biography along with a passport-sized photo and a cover letter should be submitted by e-mail address at yemen@mofat.go.kr no later than 22 May, 2011.

Solving the problem of tribes and investment

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Yemen's largest power plant in Marib suffered seven blows in less than one week between end of April and the beginning of May this year. The attacks cost the country around YR 2 billion.

The plant was attacked by local armed tribes who decided they are not happy that the plant was based in their area, using the oil coming from their own land to generate electricity for the rest of the country while their own villages are not connected to the power grid.

Oil companies in the Belhaf district of Shabwa surround their operation grounds with hundreds of guards and spend millions on security in order to fend off the angry locals who feel their land is exploited without them sharing in the revenues.

There are only two examples of many other investments around the country that either stopped or pay a heavy price to continue operating.

"They pour the waste from their oil production into the sea where we earn our living as fishermen. How are we supposed to like them or make their lives easy if they are making ours harder," said a local fisherman from Aden, where a refinery is set-up.

Until recently, India used to suffer from the same problem.

In fact, India as a subcontinent has a larger challenge to deal with considering that it is divided into 640 districts and includes very different religions, languages and communities. In fact, it is said that this country alone contains one third of the world's poor.

A 2005 World Bank report indicates that India had around 41 percent of its population living under 2 dollars a day. However, today the situation is much better.

According to Dr. J. S. Samra chief executive officer of the National Rainfed Area Authority in India; multi tiered participatory macro and micro level planning became the backbone of growth and development of Indian economy with human face.

India's growth rate in 2009 was at 7.4 percent in spite of severe drought and high inflation in food which hit the population especially the poor.

In 2006, India created two new legislations that dealt directly with the conflict between local communities whether tribes or villagers and the investors. The solution was to first give the land deeds to the tribals and forest dwellers who lived in the area for 70 years or more. This empowered the locals and made them land owners which means they can invest in their land and protect it.

Moreover, another law dictated that the 26 percent of the revenues of any local in-land investments should go back to the local community so as to attain protection from the community backlash against mining and acquiring the locals land.

In terms of the Islands, the law says that 10 percent of sale proceeds are to be shared with the locals to avoid their hostile attitudes towards private investors.

So the locals felt that they are partners in any investment project instead of being exploited. Now their attitude is to welcome and facilitate investments and tourists and do anything in their power to support the investment project.

There is a dedicated Ministry of Tribal Affairs with committed budget to promote harmonious development of the tribes. Moreover, tribes have been given the authority to sell minor forest products and transit permit through their forests. The permits are issued at the village level organizations instead of the Forest Departments which was the way done in the past.

Value addition and minimum support price for the forest products legislations are also under consideration to insulate the gathers against price volatilities.

"It simply an issue of social justice," said Dr. Samra. "The locals become partners, they are empowered and so they contribute to the welfare of the whole country because they feel they are integrated in the development system."

The percent of revenues coming back to those communities goes through a decentralized system where three tiers of rural and urban institutions utilize the revenues in the development of the local communities through a participatory planning process.

The investment in and inclusiveness of local communities is also quite present in India's educational policies. The Right to Education Act has become affective from this year and the expenditure on education



Tribal unrest has caused much of Yemen's oil, gas and electricity industries to come to a grinding halt.

is going to double soon. And this could be done through revenues coming to the local communities whether from the central government or local investments laws.

Dr. Samra explains that new and upgrading of the education missions, traditional educational institutions, opening of new schools and colleges, providing mid-day meal in schools and several other incentives are being deployed to enhance the enrolment rate and drastically bring down the drop-out rate in the schools.

"Gifting bicycles, uniforms, books, scholarships and a range of other attractions have been designed especially for the girls, children of economically and socially disadvantaged sections of the society," he said.

Recently a 15 point program has been charted by the Prime Minister of India to monitor progress of the delivery of social justice which includes the various points empowering the tribes and forest dwellers.

Moreover, there is a system also put in place to ensure that the corporations are committed and adhere to their obligations to local communities.

One of this system's mechanisms is what is called the National Advisory Council of Social Activists with a working group on "transparency, accountability and governance" which is quite effective. There is also a National Human Rights Commission, national commissions for women and children. In fact every government department includes a cell for women to investigate in complaints by women in that area.

There is a special plan to bridge the gap between rural and urban sector, such as the Mahatma Gandhi scheme of employment which is exclusively for the rural area.

These various acts and legislations helped create an ownership among the locals especially the rural ones whether tribes or forest dwellers in the welfare of the projects in their own community even if the projects are not entirely theirs.

"In the past, the forest dwellers had a stake only in the grass not the trees so sometimes they would burn the trees in order to make more room for the grass. Today because of this new acts, the locals have a stake in the timber also and so they are protecting the trees and putting off any fires when they occur," said Dr. Samra.

"Making the locals a partner in the national and regional investment is a win situation for all," he concluded.

HEALTH WATCH

By: Dr. Siva



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

Salt: good or bad?

It is observed that children are consuming far too much salt increasing their risk of serious health problems later in life.

A study by Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) found few parents realized how seriously a high-salt diet could affect their children. Only a quarter knew it was linked with stomach cancer and less than 1 in 5 realized it could aggravate the symptoms of asthma.

CASH found a typical child's daily diet, which included cereal, sandwiches, sausages and chips could include as much as eight grams of salt, more than twice the 3g maximum amount recommended for 4-6 year-olds. Children actually need less than one gram of salt a day to stay healthy.

Children should eat less salt than adults. However, in reality, most children are probably consuming as much as, or even more than adults.

Salt:

You might think of "salt" as a dirty word – the stuff that spikes your blood pressure and increases your risk of heart disease.

But your heart, adrenals, liver and kidneys need salt to function, and you can't digest food without it. What's more, salt:

- Carries nutrients across cell membranes into your cell;
- Keeps calcium and other minerals soluble in your blood;
- Maintains your body's balance of fluids;
- Regulates blood pressure.

Some of my friends who practice alternative-health, argue that most of their patients don't need less salt. What they need is the right kind of salt, and more potassium. That's because potassium helps to keep sodium levels in check and optimize blood pressure.

A study published in Kidney International found that potassium deficiencies increase blood pressure and induce salt sensitivity.

Another study published in the Journal of Hypertension examined 150 Chinese men and women who ate diets high in salt and low in potassium. Half took a placebo (inactive substance of no medicinal value), and the other half took a potassium supplement. After 12 weeks, the systolic blood pressure of the potassium group significantly decreased.

But most Americans (especially black Americans) eat too much of processed salt and don't get nearly enough potassium. In fact, the FDA estimates that about 75 percent of our salt intake comes from processed foods and from table salt added to food.

How does salt affect you?

Table salt is processed at temperatures over 1,000 degrees. This processing changes its chemical structure and strips it of its natural nutrients. In addition, salt producers add anti-caking ingredients and bleach it.

By the time it gets to your dinner table, it's mostly sodium and additives – no nutrients whatsoever.

A healthier kind of salt is sea salt. It's formed by the evaporation of sea water in sunlight. As a result, it retains up to 82 vital trace minerals, including potassium, magnesium and calcium.

You can lower your blood pressure and improve your health by consuming the right kind of salt and boosting your potassium. Here's a three-step plan you can use to help you get healthy salts and more potassium:

- 1. Know how much salt is in your food.** Each teaspoon of salt is equal to 2,325 mg of sodium. Does that sound like a lot? Well the truth is, most processed foods have many times that amount. One packet of dry onion soup mix contains over 3,000 mg of sodium. Even sweet foods which may seem like they would have no salt are packed with it. A homemade pie crust can have over 1,300 milligrams. Two small restaurant pancakes have more than 1,100 milligrams. When you're at the store buying food, you can go beyond reading the sodium content on the label. Processors have dozens of names they use instead of salt. Luckily, most of them do have sodium in the name so you'll know what to avoid. But also look for ingredients like metabisulfite, erythorbate, propionate and guanylate.
- 2. Replace table salt with sea salt.** A lot of the sea salt you find at grocery stores is really just processed table salt. Generally, if salt is white and pours easily, it's probably processed. Natural sea salt is darker in color – because it's dried in white and brown layers (and the brown layer has most of the nutrients). This is available at Aden and is cheap. Your safest bet is to buy sea salt from a health-food store. There are many kinds such as Mediterranean, Himalayan and Pacific and they all have slightly different tastes. My Romanian friend who practices alternative medicine vouches for Himalayan Salt (it's very expensive in Europe) is the best salt as it has lots of nutritional benefits. This is available in India and not very expensive.
- 3. Boost your levels of potassium.** The best food sources are orange-colored fruits and vegetables like apricots (have lots of nutritional benefits), cantaloupe, oranges, nectarines, peaches, sweet potatoes, and butternut and acorn squash. Other good sources are black and kidney beans, spinach, Swiss chard, artichokes, bananas, kiwi, fish, meat, poultry and milk. These are just some of the excellent and unconventional high-blood-pressure remedies mentioned in a new report by Craig Anderson, The High Blood Pressure *Remedy Report*. It reveals the truth behind high blood pressure. It also shows you how to stop high blood pressure and cut your risk of heart attack and stroke – without worry, drugs, pain or wasted money. We'll see about it in a later issue of Yemen Times.

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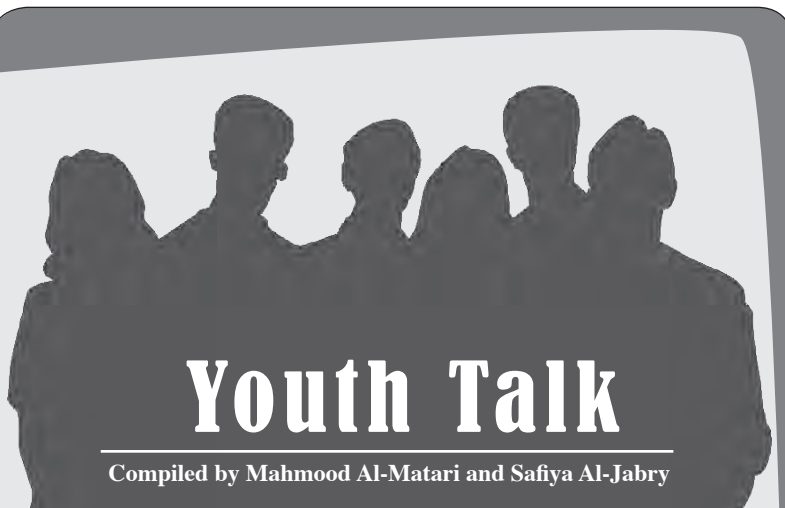
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Youth Talk

Compiled by Mahmood Al-Matari and Safiya Al-Jabry

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:

What do you think about what local or national channels show about Yemen?

Ohail Ali Al-Rubaidi

Yemeni local channels, especially well-known television stations, are now dedicating all of their coverage to evaluating our political system and the president. Other important events are not covered. However, in spite of all this, they don't make their allegiance to the youth revolution public. They don't cover the other events

On the other hand, private channels follow their own agenda and policies. Al-Saeeda sometimes appears to be neutral. Suhail works tirelessly against the Gulf initiative. CNN only focuses on the participation of women in Yemen's revolution and if democracy has come to the country yet.

Jadwa Al-Shahari

Most Yemenis realize that local channels mock their viewers' intelligence mentality by reporting falsities. At the first I have a question - Do the Yemen and Saba channels belong to the Yemenis people or to president? The answer comes every Friday when those channels show pro-government rallies and ignore the pro-democracy ones. By this deceit, they force us to turn to international channels and we have to believe them because the local media has lost the trust of the people. The local media must be neutral and rid itself of political bias.

Nabil Taha Al-Ahmadi

Local channels are divided into two sections.

First, the official channels are pro-regime. These channels are not professional and only serve the president and the regime. They don't report facts.

Second, we have opposition media, such as Shuil. They report on the crimes of the regime, reveal Saleh's tricks for staying in power, and support the peaceful youth revolution.

Khalid Al-Karimi

News presented on Yemeni TV Stations are full of lies. Exaggeration is the sole mission of these news outlets and professionalism is sacrificed because of it. They almost always distort the truth.

Yemen has come to the forefront of international news and the agendas of many of these channels have been revealed. Indeed, what is broadcast about Yemen is not always authentic. Media in Yemen has always functioned based on partisan agendas.

Muammar Al-Ghubari

What we are currently seeing with local channels in Yemen is very embarrassing. To those people stand behind these channels, you will not escape from history's curse. Locally, we have two official and private channels. I myself do not watch such channels at all, because they are not professional and nowhere near independent. Private channels do not have enough experience in journalism, they are not qualified to report the news. All of these two kinds of media have their own agendas, so they will not be independent anymore.

Official channels target mostly illiterate people, especially in rural areas. These channels have represented one person during those three decades; they do not belong to Yemeni people at all. By escaping from the reality and truth, they do not respect people's independence of mind. At this moment there is nothing special coming from our local channels. Unlike local channels, national channels are very active and independent. My message to local media, especially official channels, is to wake up, you have to update your mentality.

Next Week's Question:

Are protest marches beneficial or do they only serve to force a violent response from security forces?

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 yt youth@gmail.com

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



Emergency medical technicians prepare to treat wounded moments before security forces opened fire on protesters last Wednesday.

Photo by Jeb Boone

The end of injustice

By: Salah Farhan

Since 1978, Ali Saleh has ruled Yemen. However, he has achieved nothing. All he has done is build a gang to protect himself. This gang of his has spread corruption and wrongdoing wherever it goes. He and his retinue interfere and put their nose in every issue. The continue without shame, deceiving people and convincing them that they are patriots.

They have always promised people prosperity. Yemenis have been kind and patient during these past long years, hoping that tomorrow would be a better day. Yet they still do not see prosperity - only conspiracy.

Ali Saleh promised the Yemeni people nuclear power, the reduction of prices, the elimination of unemployment and an entirely new Yemen. But the people have grown bored of his lies. The people started to demand their rights. They began to organize sit-ins to express their dissatisfaction and the regime has ignored them. The people wish to change their government, but Ali Saleh overrides them.

When the president noticed an increase in the protesters' numbers, he demanded intervention on the part of tribal sheikhs and religious clerics. When [the Gulf Cooperation Council] offered its initiative - a proposal that represented a golden opportunity for Saleh to end the country's unrest - he carelessly rejected it. When the protests' fervor became even stronger and accelerated events even further, he appeared willing to leave power within six months, after a parliamentary election.

But the opposition parties and the youth know a plot when they see one, and they refused.

On the Friday of Dignity, when 57 people were killed and many others injured by snipers, Ali Saleh thought he could change the minds of the protesters and make them reduce their demands. Yet this simply made them more willing to offer more martyrs to fulfill their purpose.

After the massacre, many generals, tribal sheikhs, soldiers and dozens of government functionaries joined the revolution. The president, it seemed, was losing his knack for manipulating his political opponents.

In the people's council, he and members of the General People's Congress party declared a state of emergency and amended the start date to before the massacre, so as to justify their crime. They know full well that the constitution doesn't allow for that.

Ali Saleh then started hiring people to support him, so as to show that he has been strengthened. In his speeches, he began threatening civil war, the division of the country and terrorism - all tricks used to protect his throne.

He cultivated discrimination within Yemeni society. He laughed at the good people who had for so long stood beside him, offering their souls to protect the country.

He has not been honest to his own people. He has deceived the US, Europe, the Gulf states and most especially Saudi Arabia. He claims that Yemen suffers from terrorism, a southern separatist movement

and the Houthis in Sa'ada. The rest of the world supports Ali Saleh so that he can fight these groups, but he uses the aid for himself.

But the revolution has confused the regime and scattered its papers. Now everything has been made clear: Yemen is not a ticking time bomb. Ali Saleh, it seems, has forgotten the proverb, "The rope of lies is short."

As he felt his popularity decreasing, he started welcoming any and all initiatives from the US, the European Union and the Gulf states. But confusingly, the president then rejected them, accusing the Yemeni people who supported the initiatives of disloyalty.

Ali Saleh defamed women, deprived Yemeni citizens of essential items (especially gas) and incited thugs to kidnap doctors and kill protesters.

Negotiations in Saudi Arabia between the opposition parties and the ruling party eventually concluded an agreement and they agreed to sign it on a Wednesday, "Democracy Day". But in typical fashion, the president postponed the signing until Monday, and used the added time to savagely massacre 11 martyrs and wound many more.

Now he has revealed his true face and has thrust himself into a place of isolation.

Why do the rest of the world's countries keep silent? Do they want more blood?

Their silence simply encourages Ali Saleh to commit more massacres. They must take strict action against him.

Today, Ali Saleh and his gang enjoy killing. Bullies who support the regime must realize that this man thinks of no one but himself. He will abandon them when he risks facing punishment. He will always seek guarantees in order to save himself.

The blood of the youth, however, will defeat the arrogance of the heavy-handed. Soon, the Yemeni people will get rid of the president and his gang. Soon, they will put an end to terrorism and massacres. Then, every Yemeni will enjoy a better life and will finally witness prosperity in their country.

Vacancy Announcement

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▶ Mahmood bachelor degree in English, computer and marketing courses one year experience in the United Insurance company in Taiz as a promoter.
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▶ RadFan Haza'a. Police officer. Excellent English. work as police supervisor, participated in peacekeeping forces of U.N as international supervisor. Desire for working as bodyguard or security officer in any embassy.
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▶ Marketing officer institute of development impact CV please send to fax number 454077

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المهندس/ أحمد سعيد الأشعري وإخوانه
لوفاة المغفور له بإذن الله تعالى والدهم/
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Urwa Wautqa Int. Auth. Trans. Arabic-English-French
-German-Russian-Italian- Spanish-Polish-Dutch- Iranian-
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Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoglu talks to the Yemen Times "People want more transparency, more democracy and more justice"

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

During a meeting in Istanbul with seven journalists from different countries last Thursday, Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoglu, spoke to the Yemen Times about the demonstrations in Yemen, and the close relations between Yemen and his country. The interview was in the shadows of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Istanbul.

Speaking about the Turkey's policy towards the revolution in Yemen, he said: "Our policy is clear towards what's happening in Yemen and other countries that face demands for

change."

"Change is necessary and reforms are needed in these countries. The demands of people in these countries are right," said Davutoglu. "People want more transparency, more democracy and more justice and we are defending these values."

Davutoglu said that Turkey supports the GCC's initiative, indicating that President Saleh had agreed to step down, but changed his position later.

"People can change the leadership. Nobody can stay in power for three or four decades without being questioned," said Davutoglu. "If you have such a long period of power you cannot blame anyone else for poverty."

"People will ask you about what you did for three decades," he said. "In



Ahmet Davutoglu



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and aspirations of the people in Yemen."

Asked about the reasons for not implementing some of the agreements signed this year between Yemen and Turkey, he said: "It's difficult to implement these economic agreements in a few months... We have close relations with Yemen and these relations are special."

Buying basil in Yemen



By: Alice Hackman

"My name is Enas and I am a spinster," she says,

re-adjusting her black scarf around her head. "Do you have a mirror?" I do, actually. A small multicolored spotty one I was given for Christmas. Should I whip it out in the middle of this dark garden?

"Oh, it doesn't matter," she says, waving her sickle towards the dimly-lit houses at the edge of the large green patch. "It's dark, no one can see me anyway."

"What about you? What is your name?" she asks. "Are you married or are you a spinster?" I consider this. I am 27. In my book that is not old, but then again I am not married. "I am a spinster," I announce. She likes this. We become friends instantly.

She asks why I want basil. I explain it is to cook with, not for a bride or a dead man's shroud as is usual in Yemen. She takes this in her stride. She knows this because she has American neighbors who do the same.

With her sickle, she gathers two large bunches of mint and one of wild basil. We step back over the damp earth mounds separating the lettuce, marjoram and radishes to the edge of the garden. Her elder sister, wrapped in the same red and blue cloth with nothing but her eyes and hands showing, is waiting.

She introduces me. The same question again. "I am a spinster, but God willing there is still hope," I say. She laughs. "Not in Yemen!"

Turkey, everyone knows that if you are not successful then others will come."

Davutoglu stressed the importance of peaceful change and transformation. He strongly advised Yemenis not to use violence or confront the security forces, and advised at the same time not to attack civilians.

"Yemen should not be divided again," he said. "Change is good, but the direction of the change is important."

"Yemenis have to be very careful about the future of Yemen. They should avoid dragging Yemen into civil, tribal or sectarian war," he advised Yemenis.

"Yemenis should not allow some forces to hijack the legitimate rights

