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Arrant gunfire during pro-Saleh celebrations kills six

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, June 12 — Last Wednesday, thousands of supports of President Saleh fired ammunition into the air in celebration of Saleh's successful surgery, accidently killing six according to medical personnel at the Al-Thawra hospital.

The random firing by different sorts of weapons in the capital Sana'a left 59 wounded. Many of those people were admitted to the Al-Thawra hospital. Six of them died later due to injures to the head. There were also dozens of cases who were reported in other public and private hospitals.

The bullets coming down from the air hit people on the streets or on the roofs of building leading to several death and injuries, according to Dr. Mohamed Isa, a surgeon at the Al-Thawra hospital.

The sudden firing which took place on Wednesday night have scared the people because they had no idea of the reason for the firing and when they heard the sound of the bullets, they thought the war has broken everywhere in Sana'a since the northern area of the capital is already on war between Al-Ahmar family and Saleh's forces.

Celebrating with firing bullets in the air is legally a combination of crimes against the life, properties and tranquility, according to the Lawyer Abdul Rahman Barman, a human rights activist at the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms known as



A boy in his family's destroyed house in Al-Hasaba area where fierce clashes took place between Saleh's forces and armed supporters of Al-Ahmar family.

from the air.

"It is murder and as long as the person who fires is aware of the possible consequences, he is accountable for all the legal recourse," he said.

The action of firing bullets in the air is also a crime of exhausting public money which is supposed to be maintained for the goodness of the Yemeni people, according to the lawyer.

people especially the children who are vulnerable to diseases caused by panic such as enuresis. "My cousin has now an enuresis be-

He highlighted that firing the air also

includes the crime against properties as

some cars, windows of houses and wa-

ter tanks in many areas were damaged

by bullets and ricochets coming down

The Wednesday night terrified all

cause he was terrified on Wednesday night," said Al-Barman.

Dr. Salah Al-Din Al-Jumaee, professor of psychology at the University of Sana'a said that "high sounds negatively effect on children, so what do you think of bullets' and machineguns' sounds.

"The child feels anxious due to these sounds," he said.

Continued on page 2

Protesters condemn US stance

By: Shatha AL-Harazi

SANA'A, June 11 — Hundreds of independent youth have split their sit-in apart from the political parties. They are also planning to continue with their escalation plan announced last May. They have planned more marches demanding forming a civil transitional council to take power and condemn the lack of action by the international community to support the Yemeni revolution so far.

In a statement denouncing the US stance, protesters claimed they realized that the entire Saleh regime has not yet fallen and the US should change it position to aid with the remaining goals of the revolution.

On Saturday, a march started from the old university area towered the main stage in front of Sana'a University. The protesters held banners that shows president Saleh and former US president George Bush saying "Saleh=Terrorism, No Saleh= no Terrorism".

"It is the main idea the American people need to hear, to stop their huge fear that Yemen won't be a civil state if Saleh is not ruling it, which is not true at all" said one of the protesters.

The organizers distributed written explanations on how the US took different position towards the revolution in Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen. Concerning Egypt it read, "The US called on ousted president Hosni Mubarak to step down only after two weeks of the Egyptian revolution"

Concerning Libya it read, "The US imposed a no-fly zone on 17 March and also started American air strikes on 19 March although that the Libyan revolution started on 15 February.'

Concerning Syria, it read, "The US president Barak Obama signed an order to impose direct penalties on President Bashar Al-Assad and six officials for their role in what Washington called 'suppression of protest movement that has started in 18 March.'

Concerning Yemen, the statement read, "Even after the regime used the





weapons that were provided by the US to counter-terrorism against the peaceful protesters to suppress and kill the revolution youth, the US seek to guarantee honored ouster and protection of prosecution for Ali Abdullah Saleh through the GCC initiative," it read, "on the US position against the regimes massacres and crimes the US did nothing but commanding the inhumane crimes, currently the US still seeking to implement the GCC initiative, this was the US position although the Yemeni revolution started in 11 February.'

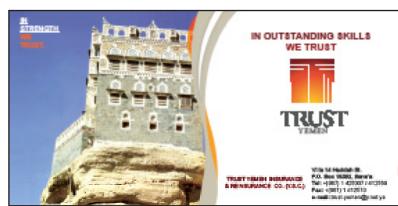
"The American ambassador's rule in Yemen has ended" shouted the youth. Many called on Obama to take a firm position toward Yemen and to urge forming the transition council soon in Yemen.

Atiaf Al-Wazeer an active youth in the protest said that they youth have been neglected by the US administration although they were the one who made the revolution." There is a political gap, if the youth didn't escalate now all what they achieved in the last four months will be wasted," said Al-Wazeer," The US position is so negative they are talking about peaceful transition of power without including the youth, the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative doesn't include the youth as well, all the dialogues on the change mechanism doesn't include the change makers themselves who are the youth, they are talking to the same figures who couldn't change anything throughout the past years"

The youth noted out that the war agnist the armed groups in Abyan governorate using US air strike is not acceptable as it makes Yemen lose dominion on its air and lands. "the US declaration still confusing for us, one day it's positive and the next day it goes back to the same point, they can put pressure to start forming the transition council"

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FBI arrives in Yemen for investigation of palace bombing

By: Jeb Boone

SANA'A, June 12 — The United States has sent an FBI forensics team to Yemen to investigate the attack on the compound of President Ali Abdullah Saleh that seriously injured the president, forcing him to leave the country last week.

"The FBI is aiding Yemeni law enforcement in their investigation in the attack on the presidential compound. The FBI team arrived in Sanaa last Wednesday," said a senior Yemeni government official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the press.

The arrival of the FBI team, which came at the request of the Yemeni government, underscores the close relationship the United States and the Saleh administration continue to maintain, despite a months long uprising and subsequent violent crackdown by government security forces that have killed hundreds of peaceful protesters.

Yemen, the home of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, an Al Qaeda offshoot that is responsible for a number of attempted attacks against the United States, has for years been an important ally of the United States in the fight against religious extremism.

Although it was originally assumed that the attack on Saleh's compound was carried out by a rival tribe that had been fighting government forces for several weeks, the Yemeni official said the FBI has determined a number of other possible suspects, including Al Qaeda and members of Saleh's inner circle.

"They are concerned about how the attack was carried out. Everyone is a suspect," the Yemeni official said, adding that the FBI team is expected to complete its investigation by the end of next week

Wounded in the rocket attack, which took place on the afternoon of June 3, Saleh fled to Saudi Arabia for medical



Prime Minister Ali Mujawar was also injured in the attack on the presidential palace

treatment. Although rumors of his return persist, many analysts believe that the president is gone for good.

The ensuing chaos has provided an opening for both tribal fighters and Al Qaeda to assert themselves in some parts of the country.

The FBI's arrival in the Yemeni capital comes as the United States steps up its covert military campaign against Al Qaeda cells in the southern Yemeni governorate of Abyan. The United States has been using airstrikes and unmanned drone attacks in its attempt to kill the American cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, the leader of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and other top Al Qaeda members based in Yemen.

Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula is now engaged in a guerrilla war against the Yemeni government in Abyan. Militants have begun flocking to Abyan in support of Al Qaeda, which last week captured Zinjubar, the provincial capital, and announced the establishment of

an "Islamic Emirate."

The official denied that the Yemeni government believed Al Qaeda had infiltrated the Yemeni government or security apparatus, emphasizing that the government simply wanted the aid of the FBI's expertise and resources in the investigation.

But according to some analysts, the U.S. interest in the attack implies that there is some possibility that Al Qaeda was behind it.

"The Americans will come to the aid of Yemen if they are asked. However, it is important to note that if there was even the slightest possibility that Al Qaeda was involved in the attack, the U.S. would take an extreme interest and, if they could, become involved in the investigation," said Abdul Ghani Al-Iryani, a Yemeni political analyst.

"They Yemeni government has said that it believes Al Qaeda was behind the attack," he added. "And it is quite possible."



يرغب برنامج الأغذية العالمي التابع للأم المتحدة — اليمن في استئجار مخازن/مستودعات في صنعاء, وذلك لتخزين المعونات والمنح الغذائية الماصلة الله

وهنا يود البرنامج دعوة مَّلاك المستودعات أو الشركات, بما في ذلك مكاتب العقارات الراغبة في تأجير تلك المستودعات/الخازن. إرسال نبذات تعريفية عنهم مع خديد عناوين ومواقع ومساحات مستودعاتهم/مخازنهم القابلة للإيجار. وإرفاق جميع وثائق إثبات الملكية. شريطة أن تكون هذه المستودعات ملائمة لتخزين المواد الغذائية. وذلك إلى عنوان البرنامج المذكور أدناه خلال فترة أقصاها الساعة الرابعة عصراً من يوم الأربعاء الموافق 15 يونيو 2011.

وسيقوم برنامج الأغذية العالمي بتقييم ومراجعة الوثائق المستلمة. والتواصل لاحقاً مع كل اللَّالك أو الشركات — مكاتب العقارات المتقدمين بطلبات التأجير إلى البرنامج. حيث سيتم الفرز بحسب معايير البرنامج ملائمة المستودعات/الخازن تلك لتخزين المواد الغذائية .

ولن تأخذ أي طلبات بعين الأعتبار مالم تكون مستوفية الشروط بما في ذلك إرفاق إثبات ملكية العقار. على أن تقدم الطلبات إلى عنوان مكتب البرنامج في صنعاء وكما هو مبين أدناه. مع ذكر الموضوع التالي في الطلب "مستودعات / مخازن للإيجار".

> يتم إرسال الطلبات المستوفية إلى عنوان البرنامج التالي: برنامج الأغذية العالم— وحدة النقل والإمداد فيلا رقم 22. شارع نواكشوط تلفون رقم: 01 — 214100 المكتب الرئيسي - صنعاء

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WFP will evaluate the documentation received and eventually contact the Landlords or Companies of those locations which may be considered in the interest of the organization.

 $NB: Requests\ coming\ from\ others\ than\ Landlords\ of\ Companies\ owning\ storage\ places\ will\ not\ be\ taken\ into\ account\ for\ the\ above\ request.$

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The World Food Programme
Villa no. 22 Nouakchott Street ,
Tel . 01 214100/1
Sana'a office

The US uses power vacuum in Yemen to target al-Qaeda

By: Michelle Lavan

SANA'A, June 12 — While Yemen is left reeling from the latest armed confrontation which opposed al-Ahmar's tribesmen and the government Security Forces; the US is using this opportunity to intensify its airstrikes on al-Qaeda targets.

According to a US official, the Obama administration would be conducting drones and fighter jets attacks against terrorist militants within Yemen.

With President Saleh desperately attempting to retain his presidential position amidst the popular uprising which is sweeping through Yemen; the US had grown concerned that al-Qaeda would use the situation to assert its position in the region. Too preoccupied with the revolutionary movement, President Saleh has abandoned over the past few months his counter terrorism campaign efforts.

A few weeks ago, al Qaeda fighters attacked the southern town of Zinjibar in the Abyan directorate, creating panic within the civilian population. And if at first President Saleh sent his troops to push back the terrorist group, he soon lost interest and recalled his men back

to the capital where he felt they would serve a better purpose.

US officials felt they had little other choice but to conduct air strikes against al-Qaeda in order to prevent the organization from spreading across Yemen.

Only recently, a US jet would have killed Abu Ali al-Harithi a middle rank al-Qaeda operative as well as other militants in south Yemen. A few weeks before that, the US carried out a mission against Anwar al-Awlaki, the American-born cleric but failed.

It seems evident now, that the US is determined to resume its anti-terror campaign following a year long pause which was brought about by the increasing numbers of civilian casualties as a result of the attacks. US officials are justifying the move by saying that they have received new data on terrorist locations and movements.

However, a senior Pentagon official admitted under cover of anonymity that the fact that al-Qaeda fighters were now mingling with anti-government militants and tribesmen made any attack on Yemen much more complicated.

For now, the US main concern is that if Saleh was to indeed fall, the next government in place might not give it the same type of leeway in its operations

against al-Qaeda. News of unilateral US operations did create popular outcry in the past, and put President Saleh under much political pressure as he was accused of treason by his countrymen. President Obama has been since very privy over the extent of his covert war in Yemen.

The US Ambassador to Yemen met with the Opposition leaders to ensure that they will continue to support his country's policies in the region in regards to al-Qaeda and terrorism.

With President Saleh now in Saudi Arabia following an attack on his presidential compound, the US is pushing hard for a constitutional transition of power. "This isn't a time for inaction," said Mark Toner, a State Department spokesman.

With the government still claiming that Saleh will return, and the pro-democracy activists saying that they will form their own presidential council if nothing was done soon by Vice President Hadi, Yemen still could revert to the use of violence.

If Yemen was to become another Ethiopia, it would make the US war on terror that much more difficult and it could mean instability for the entire Arabic Peninsula.

WHO responds to Yemen crisis

WHO report

As violence in Yemen escalated last week with fighting in the capital Sana'a leaving 29 dead and 113 injured, WHO is assisting health providers to cope with the increased demand for health services, particularly emergency health care.

Since February, this brings the combined total number of casualties in Yemen, from both demonstration related violence and fighting, to 262 deaths and 3287 injured.

Crisis affecting health situation

The limited number of trained health workers and the shortage of trauma management equipment and supplies are affecting the treatment of victims.

The security situation prevents health workers from reporting for work. An estimated 30% of the population, mostly elderly women and children, face difficulties in accessing health services.

The crisis has also interrupted regular health programs for primary health care, especially for children, reproductive health and vaccination.

In addition, the acute shortage of fuel and electricity threaten the cold chain for vaccination storage.

WHO response

The WHO office is maintaining close contact with all parties and supporting the Ministry of Public Health and volunteer groups in delivering the life saving health services.

In order to treat the victims of violence in different demonstration areas, advance medical post and field hospitals have been established and referral facilities strengthened.

Since the beginning of the crisis in February, WHO delivered close to 46 tons of life saving emergency medicines and supplies across the country. An additional 20 tons of medicines and supplies from Dubai reached Sana'a



Medics working at the Change Square Field Hospital have been undersupplied for months.

last Friday.

Essential life saving equipment was also provided to several hospitals, strengthening the capacity of Operation Theaters (OT) and Intensive Care Units (ICU).

WHO has supported MoPH to keep 33 ambulances functional 24/7 by providing incentives for staff and ensuring vehicle maintenance and fuel. As they are located close to the demonstration sites, ambulances have been able to provide services to more than 2500 injured people. They proved crucial last week when over 100 injured people were reached quickly and transported

to the nearest health facility.

In addition, the WHO mobile team comprising of one male doctor and one female nurse has delivered PHC services in Aden to some 10 000 displaced persons from Abyan region since 30 May

Additional funding needed

The initial funding needs for the Health

Cluster for Yemen for 2011 are covered at 21%, with US\$ 2.9 million received of the US\$ 13.7 million requested. The ongoing crisis significantly increased financial requirements.

WHO technical support needs to be continued. The large quantity of emergency medicines and supplies need appropriate management, distribution and monitoring. The ongoing technical support for training health workers in mass causality management must be continued and strengthened.

Additional funding is needed to strengthen advance health posts and field hospitals in terms of equipment, trauma care management and ensuring the appropriate number and gender representation within the health workforce.

The capacity of the emergency department, OTs and ICUs of the referral hospital should also be further developed. Additional funding would also allow for the expansion of the ambulance services.

Continuation from page 1

Arrant gunfire during pro-Saleh celebrations kills six

Rashad Al-Sulihi, a local in Sana'a who lives in Khawaln St said that his 9-month child was very shocked by the firing and Wednesday and was just

"My baby did not let me to touch him during the firing and just was sticking himself to his mum and crying," said Al-Sulihi.

The professor explained that hazards of firing on the air are dangerous on adults and children. But more on children as they grow with anxiety and fear due to the high sounds.

He also blamed the ministry of information for not notifying the people

before the incident to have an idea in order not to be terrified.

"Anyone has the right to express his opinion, but he is not allowed to scare others," he said "The north of Sana'a lives on clashes, and when people just hear a high sound of explosion, they think that the war area has been extended."

Protesters condemn US stance

"Today is one event that will make more event's until the youth establish the civil state they are seeking t, the US is playing an important role to make the GCC initiative happen, they should first start listening to the Youth, the initiative might be useful on political level but we "the youth" are no politicians, we revolt for many different reasons and our demands must be heard "said Amani Zaid, one of the protesters.

The Youth became more aware on what role the US should play in this stage, the reject of its strong role that it played during the past is one way to show that Yemenis are able to rule themselves the best way without any foreign interfere in the Yemeni affairs.

"We don't direct our demands to the US, we are totally able to achieve these demands by our own, all what we are asking the US for is to stop interfering negatively "she added.

Al-Hasaba – the aftermath

The Yemen Time's Ali Saeed and Sadeq Al-Wesabi trudge into the war torn Al-Hasaba district to bring you a firsthand look at the aftermath of almost two weeks of carnage.



Story and pictures by Ali Saeed & Sadeq Al-Wesabi

ANA>A, June 12- We finally found out way into Al-Hasaba Despite of being very interested to see the war-torn area, we were also anxious in case the clashes broke out again, how we could manage to avoid the risk of being targeted. However we took the adventure and went to the area by a mini-bus watching every single detail surrounding us.

Through our way to Al-Hasaba, we did not noticed anything unusual except for some armed men in civilian clothes around their houses or a group of armed men in cars without license plates.

The first effect of the war we have seen was the burned tower of the Yemenia Airways Company which is very close to the home of Sadeq Al-Ahmars attacked. The fire has blackened the tower and the windows were completely

bombed out.

When we jumped out of the minibus and walked some meters adjacent to the Al-Sayyla water passage, we suddenly saw a pile of soil which has been set up on the middle of the road to prevent cars from moving forward.

There was no security checkpoint manned by any of the warring parties next to the pile of dirt, but cars were coming to the point and turning back.

We continued walking until we approached the old house of the president Saleh in a small neighborhood called Al-Dajaj

village (the chicken village) overlooking the Sayyla road from the right side.

A soldier in the compound of Saleh's house holding a Kalashnikov signaled with his hand for us to keep out distance

We did not reveal our identity as journalists and shouted, "We are going to the Al-Hasaba public market of."

and asked, "Where are you going?"

He instructed us to go from the left side of the Al-Sayyla road in order not to cross onto the grounds of Saleh's house which has turned into a security forces barracks to fight the opposition tribal leader who stood with nationwide protests demanding an end to Saleh's 33-year rule.

We crossed the Al-Sayyla road and kept walking but from the left side. After that, several houses and governmental buildings appeared with hundreds of bullet holes and other weapons.

Some shabby houses for locals were completely destroyed and the Yemeni moon-like glasses of others have been demolished due to the two weeks of continuous fighting between Saleh's forces and Al-Ahmar's backers.

A few minutes later we moved toward the Yemen's ministry of tourism building which has been severely damaged during the clashes in which Al-Ahman's supporters took control of it. However, later on Saleh's forces retook the building with intensive shelling that caused serious damage.

In front of the building, we found only one solider with his Kalashnikov. The solider said that he is from the military college. They took over the governmental buildings according to instructions from the acting president Abd Raboo Mansour Hadi to evacuate Saleh's forces and Al-Ahman's armed backers from government departments and replace them with independent forces of the military college.

Pieces of the fallen cement-bricks were scattered around the door of the ministry and the military college solider explained that most of the severe damage to the building was caused by Saleh's forces who were using heavy arms.

Just a few meters opposite the tourism ministry, the building of the state- owned Saba news agency stands injured with hundred of scratches and holes from all directions.

And the same damage was seen inflicted upon ministry of industry and trade which is opposite the news agency.

We tried to move on, but a sound of fire exchanged interrupted us and armed men in civilian clothes came out.

We attempted to get into an informal public market for vegetables and other food staff, but they did not allow us. "It is prohibited" they said.

They were Al-Hmar>s supporters and

just close to them from the back of the market we found other men of the same group who eventually allowed us to get into the market and take photos of the destructed market.

The very large vegetable market was attacked and owners and retailers in the market seemed to flee the scene to save their lives and left the commodities as they were.

Huge quantities of the vegetable have been rotted and some other contents of the market were burned.

All the shops in the area were closed and you could rarely find someone walking on the street. Houses also were closed very tightly and the area was quite from everything except the sound of bullets.

Thousands of citizens were displaced from the area to their villages in the countryside and others shifted to their relatives in the south of the capital Sana>a where the clashes started moving there as if they were being pursued.

And we tried to get inside the area where Al-Ahmar's house is, but the sound of bullets stopped us.

Then we found a boy on the street urging us to come to see his family's de-

stroyed house. A 12-year-old Osama Al-Mahaqri was describing his family's devastated house as we were walking to it.

When we reached the burned house Osama shouted: "My mom, there are journalists who want to see the house,"

Amat Al-Rahman Hadi, Osama's mother, desperately showed us the damages in her house that

located in the center of the clashes. The second floor of the house was completely burned and the smell of the place was ac-

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rid. There is nothing in the place except the charred remains of furniture.

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As the clashes broke out in Hasaba district Amat Al-Rahman was forced to evacuate the house but she came back to her house after two weeks to make sure that it's in a good condition.

"I was shocked when I saw my house in ruins. I'm going crazy - I cannot believe that my only place to call home is burned and damaged," Amat Al-Rahman wailed. "My house was fully furnished and now it's totally destroyed."

"I built this house brick by brick from my own modest salary to guarantee adequate shelter for my daughters after my death," she said with a deep sigh.

Now, Amat Al-Rahman lives tempo-

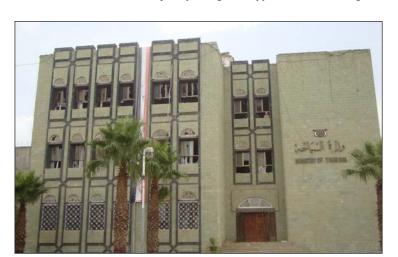
rarily in her son-in-law's small house with her five daughters. "I'm embarrassed of the current situation. I cannot even rent a house because of my financial situation,"

Amat Al-Rahman used to take advantage of rental shops in her house but now she barely live with her salary.

"Regardless who destroyed my house, I need a new house urgently otherwise I'll lose my mind," she said angrily and burst into tears.

After our meeting with Amat Al-Rahman and her lovely boy Osama we left Hasaba district carefully and hastily.

We left the place that was vital and full of the people before the recent clashes that turned this place into a ghost town.





In the wake of misleading information alleging that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was involved in the transportation of armed combatants from the northern region of Haradh to the capital Sana'a, IOM wishes to issue the following statement:

IOM deplores the misrepresentation of its humanitarian evacuation programme for stranded Ethiopian migrants from the Haradh region. This crucial humanitarian operation is a collaborative effort among the Governments of Yemen, Ethiopia and IOM.

Prior to their departure from Yemen, undocumented Ethiopian migrants are interviewed by Ethiopian consular officials in the presence of Yemeni immigration officials.

They are then issued with a laissez-passer from the Ethiopian Embassy in Yemen and a personal exit visa from the Yemeni immigration authorities.

Based on those documents, IOM establishes a passenger manifest to transport the migrants from Haradh to Sana'a and then onto Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

On the eve of departure, the authorities in Haradh issue a ground movement pass and provide two police escorts for the seven hour bus journey to Sana'a.

IOM staff members also accompany the migrants to Sana'a, where they board Yemenia Airlines and Ethiopian Airlines flights to Addis Ababa.

The operation has received funding from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the Government of Switzerland, the Rapid Response Transportation Fund and the UN's Humanitarian Response Fund in Ethiopia. Since January 2011, IOM has assisted more than 2,300 stranded migrants to return to their homes in Ethiopia.



On behalf of the Management and Employees of Credit Agricole Corporate & Investment Bank in Yemen, we would like to express our sincere sadness and sympathies for

Alain Javelle

The General Manager

For the death of his mother

Our sincere and heartfelt condolences on the sudden death of his mother, may he and his family find the strength and courage to get through these difficult days



YEMEN BRANCH

YT vision statement



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

"To make Yemen a good world citizen."



OUR OPINION

We don't all have to die

arid Alshiblee is a Yemeni living in USA. This is a letter he wrote in response to an article I had written about Yemen and the world: "For your information there are millions of Yemenis residing abroad in Indonesia, Kenya, Tanza-

nia, Saudi Arabia, Britain, America and the Gulf States. Majority of the educated Yemenis abroad wanted to go back to Yemen to build freedom and democracy to our beloved country Yemen. Unfortunately the THUGS of Ali Abdullah Saleh and Al-Ah-

mar brothers who have ruled Yemen for more than three decades are bent on destroying Yemen. 25 million Yemenis are being held hostage by the Hashid tribe, made up of less than a million

WAKE UP YEMEN - get rid of the tribal system and get rid of the Hashed tribe too by taking away their guns from them. It's time the Wise Peoples of Yemen to say Enough Is Enough..."

This letter is one of many written by hundreds of thousands of Yemenis abroad. Estimates say there are around two million Yemenis abroad many of whom have double nationalities, i.e. are settled in the other country and yet maintain their Yemeni links.

Many Yemenis who are living abroad have managed a good amount of education and are actually in fact respectable productive people in their communities. I know many excelling doctors, engineers, businessmen and even politicians. Their only regret is that they can't be as productive in their original country: Ye-

One of the revolution's activists named Khaled told me the other day when I expressed my fear for him taking risks and challenging the regime, said "It is a path we have chosen, we know what we are doing." When I said that we all should be there in Change Square and in the forefront of the protests he said, "We don't all have to die! Some of us must stay safe and make sure to carry the torch to the next level."

We don't all have to die... that is what he said... it is as if he has surrendered to the fact that his role demands him risking his life and wants me and other likeminded people to avoid danger zones in order to be able to tell their story and continue their journey.

One of my reporters and friends Sadeq Al-Wesabi had to move overnight with his wife and baby son from Al-Hasaba area where armed clashes are taking place right now as I am writing these words. He said suddenly they heard gunshots and bombing, the earth was shaking beneath their feet as the house of the tribal leader sheikh Al-Ahmar in their neighborhood was being bom-

Reflecting on the experience he said it was hard and frightening. He and his wife just gathered the essential stuff and fled in the night escaping death. "My son was laughing because of the sound of the bombs and gunfire - he must have thought it was amusing. Little did he know that this is not a laughing matter," said my friend Sadeq.

We don't all have to die...

I keep thinking of those words and how although sometimes it feels cowardly and even betrayal to want to stay alive and flee the danger while others are fighting the injustice and risking their

We don't all have to die...

The hundreds of thousands of Yemenis abroad must be going through the same feelings.. Wanting to be part of the change journey we are living in Yemen but in the same time they can't just come back just like that. They can't abandon their lives and responsibilities and come to the unknown even if they want to.

For many of them there is a role to play just like we each are playing an important role in making Yemen a better place. And a time will soon come when we need them to come home and contribute to building Yemen especially as they have been able to make something out of themselves out there.

Farid from USA and Sadeq from The Yemen Times are heroes in their own ways just like Khaled is playing his... and in the end we don't all have to die.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

A woman leading change in Yemen

By: Alice Hackman

fter two dethroned presidents in Tunisia and Egypt and now possibly a third in Libya, the recent protests in Yemen are catching the world's attention. Have opposition and activist-led protests turned into a more spontaneous youth uprising? The escalating violence is worrying, but will it lead to the overthrow of President Ali Abdullah Saleh? Or will change take much longer in Yemen?

Only time will tell, but one thing is certain: This February, the international face of the Yemeni pro-change movement was a woman.

Journalist and human rights activist Tawakkul Karman is a positive image of Yemeni women. Long before she was photographed leading February's protests against the government, she was called a brave defender of freedom of expression and human rights in Yemen.

In a January 2010 interview with Al-Jazeera, she spoke of detained journalists, a sheikh's tyranny against villagers in Ibb, a governorate south of the capi-

tal, the lack of justice for the family of a murdered doctor, and — long before January's WikiLeaks revelations — even went as far as accusing the government of being "in alliance" with al-Qaida. Today, she continues to protest, demanding peaceful change.

Finally! A refreshing image away from the "over-sized post box" and other objectifying descriptions of the full Islamic garb worn by most Yemeni women. A more positive image than the photos of child bride Nujood Ali that have fuelled Yemen's early marriage debate since April 2008.

Of course, all is not rosy for Yemen's women. Yemeni parliamentarians (one out of 301 is a woman) still have not agreed on a law to set a minimum age for marriage to prevent girls like Nujood, nine years old at the time of her divorce, from being married before they finish school. Illiteracy among women is still a whopping 67 percent, women are typically the first victims of food shortage (one in three Yemenis suffers from severe malnutrition, according to the United Nations), and many have difficult and limited access to health care.

Women's participation in politics is still minimal and, despite two female ministers, Yemen has consistently ranked bottom in the Global Gender Gap Index since it was first included in the ranking in 2006

But there is hope.

Karman and fellow female human rights activists, such as journalist Samia al-Aghbari, have taken to the frontline of protests in the Yemeni capital. They may not be representative of Yemeni women in general, but they are indeed inspiring. In fact, one Yemeni man was so impressed by al-Aghbari's courage during the protests of Feb. 13 when she was knocked onto the pavement by a member of security, that he wrote her a poem, "Revolution of the Green Hijab ... To Samia al-Aghbari and all the other revolutionaries," which was published the following day on the Nashwa News

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

There are dozens of brave women who have run against all odds and lost in local council and parliamentary elections.

Then there are the women who quietly start their own little revolutions. In May 2010, a literacy eradication course saw women in rural Dhamar, a governorate south of Sana'a, go home and ask their husbands and brothers for their rights to education, inheritance and political par-

When Karman was detained by security for organizing protests on Jan. 22, she made the most of a bad situation by chatting to her fellow female detainees about their rights. But perhaps the most inspiring thing about Karman is that she is not speaking up only for Yemeni women, but for Yemeni society as a whole, addressing national grievances such as unemployment and corruption.

Perhaps it is too early for a female president in Yemen, but Karman adds a new, welcome dimension to the media coverage of a country usually associated in the Western mind with al-Qaida, poverty and oppressed women.

Tempered Joy

here was much rejoicing in Yemen Sunday over the departure of Ali Abdallah Saleh, but the shelling and clashes that left more dead also signal that Saleh's exit marks the beginning of a new phase that presents as much danger as the battle to remove the president.

Yemeni regime sources tried to spin Saleh's trip to Saudi Arabia as a temporary visit, but all indications point to this dictator having served his last day in office. The Saudis, after months of trying to ease Saleh out through three failed deals to transfer power, will certainly exert more efforts to keep him from returning to Sanaa.

While the disgraced ruler might be out of the equation – and that is cause for joy – a broad consensus existed that he must go, so now a whole host of conflicting interests must be confronted. The questions is whether the people of Yemen, who demonstrated such admirable courage and restraint in demonstrating for months largely unarmed against a brutal and unscrupulous regime, can forge a new, democratic regime and will not let tribal animosities plunge the country into civil

The complexity of Yemen's political dynamic almost makes Lebanon seem straightforward. Saleh's sons remain behind in Yemen, as the official news agency ominously emphasized, and they control significant military forces - which evidently in Taiz Sunday opened fire on protesters who had stormed the presidential palace, as well as shelling the compounds of their main tribal opposition, the Ahmar clan.

Saleh's eldest son Ahmed was being groomed as the despot's successor, and with the Republican Guard under his control he will surely not cooperate warmly to hand over power to a new regime. Saleh's allies are still many, and they have enjoyed enough perks under his misrule to fight for the preservation of the old autocracy. Furthermore, a strong secessionist movement exists in the south of the country. In the north, Houthi tribesmen have long clashed with government forces. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula also seems to be taking advantage of the turmoil to gain a foothold in the city of Zanzibar.

Meanwhile, the youth of Yemen who

worked hardest for Saleh's ouster will also find themselves colliding with mostly conservative tribesmen. All of these agendas will compete, of course, in the region's poorest country and one of the world's most heavily armed.

Regional and world powers will be paying close attention to Yemen with so much of the world's oil supply passing through the Red Sea - but they must proceed carefully. There are many wise Yemenis who led the struggle to get rid of Saleh, and now that he is mercifully gone, the international community must support these groups to build the democracy that Yemen deserves - for this post-Saleh stage, as all must realize, could also easily deteriorate into civil war and the dissolution

An avoidable civil war has begun

By: Brian O'Neil

he scenes coming to us out of Yemen appear as raw and bloody chaos: running gun-battles through the streets, protesters screaming fiercely and the president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, apparently wounded in a mortar attack at the

But while it looks like madness, the falling apart of Yemen is deeply rooted in the inexorable logic of its own history, the personalities of the major players and a looming generational shift. While civil war is not inevitable, circumstances have made it likely, and it may be too late to prevent the country from violently tearing apart its own

Probably the biggest question swirling around the fighting is why? Not why is President Saleh clinging to power, but why has he established a series of feints and dodges that would appear to propel unrest rather than restore stability?

For instance, why did the president offer to sign a GCC-sponsored transfer of power, only to back away multiple times? If he had no intention of signing, why even bother with the pretence?

The answer to these questions is one of the keys to understanding why Yemen is where it is.

Mr Saleh has ruled parts or all of Yemen for over 30 years. But even the "all" in that sentence is mislead-

ing. Mr Saleh has never ruled all of Yemen, even if he has arguably the longest reach in his country's ancient history. Yemen is governed by negotiation and appearement, by the carrot and the stick, by squeezing one party while massaging the other.

Rule in Yemen is very personal; the president, like the Imam before him, is intimately involved in tribal politics a game of swirling alliances.

But keeping competing power centres straight is far from the only problem Yemen as is now well-known faces essentially every economic and social problem a country can face, from running out of water to a massive youth explosion with no jobs forthcoming. Throw in the political problems, and you can see how running the country is a constant game of spinning plates. Spin one and rush off to spin the other, never having time to balance anything.

Mr Saleh has been a master of this, constantly applying bandages without tending to the suppurating wounds underneath. In a way, this is understandable; there are enormous problems to deal with. But thinking in the longterm takes your eyes off immediate survival (Mr Saleh's two immediate predecessors were murdered). But it has caught up, and all the issues have come to a head.

Mr Saleh still thinks he can buy himself more time. He thinks if he offers to sign any GCC deal to step aside, it will give him some breathing room which he can use to game the system

yet again. Yet he doesn't seem to realise that the ecstasies and agonies of the Arab Spring have caused the game to change

There may be something deeper in Mr Saleh's calculation. For a time it appeared he believed he was the only one who could keep Yemen together, that he was the nation. And in a way he was right, though it is clear that he is now a singular source of instability.

Perhaps part of him was actually looking forward to stepping down, on his own terms. It is a very hard thing to realise that you are going to be remembered as the tyrant.

Mr Saleh's madness now - shooting protesters, and by some accounts allowing al Qa'eda in the Arabian Peninsula to take over a town - is just another way to buy himself time. Yet this time, Mr Saleh may not be able to control the demons he has unleashed.

Mr Saleh's biggest foes are the al Ahmar brothers, leaders of the Hashed tribal federation, Yemen's largest. (It's important to recognise that this is a federation, not a single tribe. The president's tribe is also in the Hashed federation, so there are civil wars within civil wars). The brothers are the sons of Abdullah al Ahmar, who until his death in 2007 was the second-most powerful figure in Yemen.

The elder al Ahmar was older than Mr Saleh, but they were both part of what could be called Yemen's heroic epoch, those who overthrew the Imam and forged a republic.

For years there has been speculation

about the next generation, particularly the rivalry between Mr Saleh's family and the al Ahmar boys. Sadeq al Ahmar is the leader of the Hashed. but Hamid al Ahmar is a link between tribal and business leaders, and is Mr Saleh's top critic.

The rivalry that has been playing behind the scenes has now exploded onto the streets. The al Ahmars sensed that Mr Saleh has been weakened fatally by the protests, and either fired first or goaded Mr Saleh into firing. War is propaganda: the truth doesn't matter

The al Ahmar boys also wanted to step in to take the initiative away from any other potential rivals. Hamid al Ahmar has suggested he'd want the presidency to go to a southerner, in the name of inclusion, but even if he is sincere there is little doubt where the power would lie.

Against this backdrop many are asking whether civil war is inevitable. Yet it seems to have already started. The media might use the terms "civil war" and "tribal war" interchangeably. In this case, they will be correct to do so, stumbling backwards into wisdom. Both sides are rallying support from family and tribes.

It isn't too late to pull back from the brink, if the parties agree that a chilly peace is less disastrous than an outright war. The Yemeni tradition of dealing with your enemy provides far more leverage than any outside power can. But if weakness is sensed, this could quickly escalate and spiral into the war we've feared for years.

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Hilary Clinton wars Africa of "new colonialism"

Bv: Matthew Lee For the Huffington Post

USAKA, Zambia -- U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Saturday warned Africa of a creeping "new colonialism" from foreign investors and governments interested only in extracting the continent's natural resources to enrich themselves and not the African people.

Clinton said that African leaders must ensure that foreign projects are sustainable and benefit all their citizens, not only elites. A day earlier, she cautioned that China>s massive investments and business interests in Africa need to be closely watched so that the African people are not taken advantage of.

"It is easy, and we saw that during colonial times, it is easy to come in, take out natural resources, pay off leaders and leave," Clinton said. "And when you leave, you don't leave much behind for the people who are there. We don>t want to see a new colonialism in Africa."

Clinton said the United States didn>t want foreign governments and investors to fail in Africa, but they should also give back to the local communities.

"We want them to do well, but also we want them to do good," she said.

"We don>t want them to undermine good governance, we don>t want them to basically deal with just the top elites, and frankly too often pay for their concessions or their opportunities to invest."

Clinton said that American development aid and infrastructure projects come with good governance conditions and that the Obama administration is interested in Africa and the African people. Their success, she said, is in the longterm interest of both the African people and the U.S.

She spoke in a pan-African television interview in the Zambian capital. Her interview followed the handover of a U.S. built pediatric hospital in Lusaka to the Zambian government.

Earlier, at the inaugural meeting of the U.S.-Zambia Chamber of Commerce, Clinton laid out the U.S. strategy for

helping Africa.

"We want a relationship of partnership not patronage, of sustainability, not quick fixes," she said. "We want to establish a strong foundation to attract new investment, open new businesses ... create more paychecks, and do so within the context of a positive ethic of corporate responsibility.'

"We think it's essential that we have an idea going in that doing well is not in any way a contradiction of doing good,"

Clinton is the first secretary of state to visit Zambia since Henry Kissinger came in 1976 to lay out the Ford administration>s policy for southern Africa as revolts against white minority rule in South Africa and what was then Rhodesia were intensifying.

Clinton, on the first leg of a threenation tour of Africa, arrived in Zambia from the United Arab Emirates, where she attended an international conference on Libva. After Zambia, she heads to Tanzania and Ethiopia before returning to Washington next week.



Egyptians back keeping clerics out of politics

By: David E. Miller For the Media Line

ut Gallup poll also shows they remain deeply committed Muslims As Egyptians debate the role of Islam in the post-Mubarak era and the West looks on nervously, a new poll shows that the vast majority of Egyptians supports a limited role for clerics and believe that their say in writing legislation should

Conducted by the Abu-Dhabi Gallup Center, a research hub of the U.S. polling organization based in the United Arab Emirates, the poll found that 69% of Egyptians favored an advisory role for religious leaders in writing national legislation. Only 14% said that clerics should have full authority to draft legislation while 9% of the said they should have no authority whatsoever is the legislative process.

"I>m certain that if you were to ask Egyptians if they would like to see clerics more involved in public life, such as the media and the education system, they would be much more favourable," Sobhy Essaila, a researcher at the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo, told The Media Line. But he stressed that Egyptians were suspicious of clerics> involvement in politics.

Husni Mubarak, who ruled Egypt for 30 years before he was ousted in the face of mass protests in February, suppressed Islamic political activity. But since then, the Muslim Brotherhood has emerged as the single most powerful political force in Egypt, stoking fears it may seek to change the face of Egyptian society and reorient the country's pro-West foreign policy.

On Tuesday, the Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party was officially

recognized as a party, clearing it to run candidates in the September elections for parliament. The group has said it plans to field candidates in about half of Egypt>s districts. Brotherhood candidates, running as independents, won 20% of the vote in a 2005 parliamentary election that was relatively free

In fact, the Gallup results also illustrate the depth to which religion plays a central role for Egyptians. Some 96% of the respondents said that religion was important for them and 92% said they had confidence in religious institutions. The survey was conducted face-to-face interviews with 1,000 Egyptians aged 15 and older during in late March and early April 2011.

Even in politics, other surveys have detected a more favorable stance for Islamic political figures among Egyptians. A Pew Research Center survey taken in April, for instance, found that 62% of Egyptians believed laws should "strictly follow the teachings of the Ouran"

Ishaq Ibrahim, a researcher at the Egyptian Initiative for Human Rights, a Cairo-based organization, said he doubted the Gallup data, saying that all indications show that religious parties with a clear agenda of "Islamizing" politics are growing stronger in Egypt.

"The success of these parties will greatly depend on the response and the level of fear of liberal Egyptian parties, and their ability to unite and form coalitions," Ibrahim told The Media Line.

While Egypt has seen economic growth evaporate and chaos and disorder explode in the streets since Mubarak's fall, the Gallup poll found that Egyptians are more optimistic about the future today than they were last year. When asked how they rated their lives on a scale of 0 to 10, Egyptians gave an average answer of 3.9 as opposed to 4.4

in the fall of 2010, when the survey was

But, when asked how their lives would look five years from now, they ranked it an average of 5.7, up from the

The most dramatic change, perhaps, occurred in Egyptians> confidence in their political system. Nine out of every 10 Egyptians said they believed the presidential elections to be held this autumn would be fair and honest. The same proportion of eligible voters said they intended to vote. In 2010, by comparison, only 30% said they had confidence in the fairness of their elections.

Egyptians were three times more optimistic about the future of their economy than they were in fall 2010; with 46% today versus only 15% in 2010.

Essaila, the Al-Ahram researcher, said the Egyptian's optimism isn't surprising, but he attributed it to their strong religious beliefs.

"Ordinary Egyptians are optimistic by nature," he said. "This stems from the Egyptian culture and religious reliance on God."

Intellectuals in the country, including academics and journalists, are generally more pessimistic than the uneducated public, he said

The Egyptian revolution was dubbed "the Facebook revolution," but the new poll found that only 8% of Egyptians followed the events on social network websites like Facebook and Twitter, as opposed to 81% who follow the events on Egyptian State television and 63% on Arab satellite channel Al-Jazeera.

Ibrahim said this isn't surprising given the high level of Egyptian illiteracy, which some estimate is as much as 30%. "There is also a high level of «cultural illiteracy,' which means that even Egyptians who know how to read and write don>t use technology like the Internet for their information," he said.

As Turks go to polls, voters and politicians have different agendas

By: David Rosenberg For the Media Lina

uling AKP party determined to amend constitution in third term As Turks ready to go to the poll on Sunday to elect a new parliament, the issues on the minds of voters are very different than the ones that concern politicians and

Voters are concerned about persistent high unemployment even as the economy booms and they place concerns about terrorism as their No. 2 priority. But when politicians and analysts count the tallies, foremost of their minds will be whether the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has captured a big enough parliamentary majority to ram through an overhaul of the country's constitution.

"Constitutional reform is the real issue for this election because it has the potential of improving quality of democracy in Turkey. It means altering balance of power," Birol Baskan, assistant professor of government at Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Doha, told The Media Line. "But it's more an inter-elite issue rather than an issue for ordinary people."

Presiding over a booming economy as well as encouraging Islamic practice in a country where secularism has been national policy for more than eight decades, the AKP is making a virtually guaranteed bid for a third term. More controversially, the party and its leader, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, have sought to shift Turkey's orientation away from the West and more towards its neighbors in the Middle East.

The final opinion polls before a preelection ban went into effect nearly all show the AKP winning close to 50% of the vote. That would put it more than 20 percentage points ahead of its chief rival, the secularist, left-of-center People's Republican Party (CHP). Behind them, are a host of small factions whose success could determine whether AKP can get an amendment-friendly parlia-

They include the Nationalist Movement Party, which is likely to exceed the 10% threshold required to win seats even though it was shaken by the release of videos showing some of its candidates engaged in extramarital sex. The Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party, running a slate of independent candidates to get around the 10% threshold imposed on parties, will also be represented in parliament.

the AKP will have a large majority in they haven't affected them personally. the 550 parliament. The question is whether it will be a majority in excess of 367 seats or 330 seats. The wider majority would enable the party to pass constitutional amendments solely by parliamentary vote, while the narrower one would force it to put them to the public as a referendum.

"Today they have 336 seats, and they want to repeat that performance," Sinan

director of the Center for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM) think tank, told The Media Line. "They have a fighting chance. It can't be ruled out. But they would need to reach a vote of 47 or 48% "

Outside of Turkey, the AKP is mostly associated with what is often called its mildly Islamic agenda aimed at paring away at the official secularism imposed by modern Turkey's founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in the 1920s.

But Ulgen, who is also a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Brussels, said the AKP is playing down Islamic politics in the current election. The CHP, which in previous elections played foil by campaigning on fears of creeping Islamization in Turkey, is also avoiding the subject this time around.

"In the past, they [the AKP] campaigned very heavily on this issue, but it didn>t help them to increase their share of the vote," said Ulgen. "They've rebranded the party. It doesn't mean the AKP doesn't care about the issue, but they have adjusted their electoral rheto-

For most Turks, the party's popular-

ity lies mainly in the country's economic success story. Turkey bypassed the last global recession, and gross domestic product jumped 8.9% in 2010. Per capita income grew from less than \$3,000 before the AKP came to power in 2002 to \$10,000 last year. That stellar performance hasn't been without blemishes – Turkey's current account deficit is ballooning and some economists are worried that the economy is overheat-That unusually high threshold to get ing – but analysts said voters aren't yet into parliament virtually ensures that concerned with those problems because

A poll taken Pew Global Attitude Project showed Turks are more satisfied with the general direction of their country than anytime in the past nine years, although the 48% reporting they are "satisfied" are slightly outnumbered by the 49% who are dissatisfied.

The one economic issue that has gained some traction is the country's high level of unemployment, which stood at 11.5% in the first quarter and is likely to rise higher.

"When you look at platforms of the arties, compared to previous elections

they>ve put a lot of emphasis on social programs," said Ulgen "It's not so much about growth but about the distribution of growth."

Analysts mostly agreed that a third AKP term is unlikely to produce any major changes in Turkish foreign or other policy. Rather, Erdogan will focus his efforts on what is likely to be a bruising battle over constitutional reform, said Wolfango Piccoli, a director with Eurasia Group in Europe.

"Politics in Turkey after the June election will almost instantly focus on the constitutional referendum and take the government's focus away from pressing economic issues and its efforts to boost the country's international profile," Piccoli wrote in Foreign Policy last month.

While probably most Turks agree that the 1982 document, written by the military after staging a coup, needs an overhaul to make it more democratic, amendments enhancing Kurdish and other minority rights and the introduction of a presidential system will likely raise opposition backles.



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The human cost of the conflict



A funeral held for protesters killed after the March 14th massacre

olitical violence has displaced thousands in Yemen, while a threefold increase in the cost of food and water, combined with fuel shortages, is straining the ability of families to cope, aid workers warn.

In the capital, Sana'a, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has reported that about 4,000 residents are seeking protection as a result of fighting late last month in the northern Al-Hasaba district of the city between security forces loyal to President Ali Saleh and the armed opposition.

The target for government loyalists was the Al-Hasaba home of Sheikh Sadeq Al-Ahmar, head of the politically key Al-Ahmar family, who has emerged as a champion of those de-

manding Saleh's resignation. Humanitarian agencies are also aware

uni-ball eye

of other smaller groups of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sana'a.

Joint International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Yemen Red Crescent teams working in and around Sana'a have retrieved some 20 dead bodies since 4 June. On 7 June, seven bodies were recovered from Al-Hassaba, ICRC said in a statement.

The southern city of Zinjibar has reportedly virtually emptied since its takeover by anti-government militia, but ongoing insecurity has prevented aid workers from accessing the area.

According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), there could be as many as 35,000-40,000 IDPs in need in the coastal city of Aden, and the southern governorate of Abyan.

"Nearly 10,000 IDPs from Abyan, southern Yemen, are living in relocation

centres in public schools in and around [Yemen's second city] Aden," said Pete Mansfield, OCHA deputy head in Yemen. A further 4,700 IDPs have been registered in Lahj.

movement, told IRIN. "If Saleh returns

we will see the situation turn more vio-

Families in Aden are taking in many of those who have fled the violence in the south, but several of these households are already close to the poverty line and will need support, aid workers

At least 15 humanitarian organizations are working in Aden to provide water, shelter, food, health services and other assistance. "Coordination is progressing well but the needs are large," Mansfield told IRIN.

NGOs are reporting that food and water prices have increased up to threefold in some urban towns, including Sana'a. A national fuel shortage is also continuing to disrupt markets, hamper the ability to pump and distribute water, and keep cars off the streets.

Celebratory gunfire

A tense ceasefire has held in Sana'a, but on the night of 8 June there were hours of celebratory gunfire by progovernment forces greeting the news that Saleh was out of intensive care after successful surgery in Saudi Arabia for wounds received in a rocket attack on the presidential compound.

"The intent was clear from government forces to remind everyone that they are still there," a diplomatic source told IRIN. "Although the ceasefire is just about holding, tensions are very high."

Yemen's opposition and pro-democracy protesters are demanding that Saleh step down after 33 years in power, accusing him of corruption, cronyism and mismanagement. He has responded with violence. Since the start of the civil unrest in February, an estimated 225 people have been killed and 3,125 injured. .

On 8 June protesters demanded that Vice-President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi agree to the formation of a transitional presidential council drawn from a broad base of Yemeni groups to run the country until elections. Both the protest movement and opposition parties want Hadi to renounce Saleh and block his return from Saudi Arabia.

"We ask Hadi to be wise to save the country," Adil Al-Aswar, a member of a committee coordinating the protest

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