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Al-Qaeda prisoners escape from jail in Al-Mukalla

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANA'A, June 22 — At least 65 prisoner's escaped on Tuesday from Al-Mukalla Central Prison. Some of the escaped prisoners have been confirmed as Al-Qaeda members who had been transferred from another prison in Al-Mukalla to the central prison.

Civilians claim that heavy gunfire broke out around 8am between security forces and escapees. The situation in the city has now returned to normal, with only one armored vehicle guarding the entrance of Jol Al-Saifa'a where the central prison is located.

The General-Secretary of Mukala's Local Council, Mohammad Bin Ziad, who has been following the incident, told the Yemen Times that the confirmed number of escapees is 65 so far. However, he also said more details will be released after investigations have been carried out and eyewitnesses questioned.

"There was an external attack on the prison," said Bin Ziad. "People broke into the prison from outside and slaughtered the guards. There are eyewitnesses and fatalities on both sides."

According to Bin Ziad, one of the attackers was shot dead in the gunfight, but due to security reasons no names as yet can be released.

The Yemen Times contacted the head of Al-Mukalla's security on the phone who angrily responded, "For information call the minister [of the interior]," before hanging up.

Al-Qaeda vowed earlier to escalate its operations to prove that the death of its founder, Osama Bin Laden who was recently killed in Pakistan, does

not effect its operations. AQAP has recently launched a number of successful attacks in Abyan governorate, taking advantage of a power vacuum that has existed since security forces have been removed to deal with the popular uprisings sweeping the country.

Al-Qaeda in Yemen has also vowed to escalate its activity against the state. Both the state and the opposition parties have promised to fight Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsular (AQAP) in order to gain the trust of the US, according to Rashad Abi Al-Feda, an AQAP spokesman.

Amed Al-Zurqa, a political analyst, said that the escape might have been planned by the regime to "mix the papers," and make Al-Qaeda more active. This would be to gain international attention and raise concerns about what would happen the current regime was overthrown.

"Most of those who escaped are from Hadramout and Shabwa, so they know the area very well. But the large number of them [who escaped] makes us suspect that it wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for neglect by the prison responsible," said Al-Zurqa.

Al-Zurqa said that this will likely lead to increasing chaos in the city, and more violence, especially the assassination of state officials and security members.

The last major breakout by Al Qaeda militants in Yemen took place in 2006 from a detention facility in Sana'a. At that time, 23 inmates escaped including several key Al-Qaeda operatives. One of those who escaped was Nasir Al-Wuhayshi, a former secretary to Osama bin Laden, who terrorist experts say had trained in Afghanistan.

Yemen's economy teeters on collapse

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, June 20 — Yemen's nationwide fuel shortage is threatening to force the country into total economic collapse. Along with fuel, other basic services have been suspended including water and electricity.

Citizens say that if immediate action is not taken to relieve these shortages, there is potential for disaster.

In the Hodeida coastal governorate, 200 km west of the capital Sana'a, more than 15 patients, most of them elderly people and children, were reported to have died in hospitals because of extended power cuts, lasting for hours.

Locals told the Yemen Times that their lives are at risk when without diesel to run generators to pump water from wells for drinking and irrigation.

"A farmer who used to have four to five water-wells in Hodeida is now looking for water to drink because there is no diesel to run generators," said Mahbob Hadi, an agricultural expert in Hodeida. "The farmer watches the water in the well, but can't drink it. The situation has become unbearable," he added.

Hadi, who works on a farm that relies on diesel for extracting well water for irrigation, explained that around 90 percent of farms in his region have stopped producing due to the diesel shortage.

"If the diesel problem continues, farms will be turned into playgrounds," he said.

"Farms support the national economy through exporting cash crops to some neighboring countries including Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria and consequently their stoppage will harm the economy," said agriculture expert Mahbob Hadi.

"If this fuel shortage continues, farmers will no longer be able to sell their crops which may cause a foot shortage as well," he added.



The acute fuel shortage has forced the daily life into a standstill.

Ali Heil, a farm owner, told the Yemen Times that most farm work has stopped for 20 days due to the shortage.

"We use the diesel for generators to extract water and if the crisis continues, farms will disappear," said Heil.

No alternatives

With the critical diesel shortage some farmers have resorted to using kerosene, mixing it with oil to run generators. But the increased demand on kerosene in place of diesel has also caused a kerosene shortage.

"We have been forced to use kerosene mixed with oil to run generators, but now it is also gone and we no longer able to find even kerosene," said

Heil.

Some Yemeni trucks that export cash crops to Saudi Arabia used to fill up extra diesel from Saudi petrol stations, but with the acute shortage in Yemen the Saudi authority banned any Yemeni truck from leaving the Kingdom with extra diesel, according to a Yemeni exporter who sends his trucks regularly to Saudi Arabia.

"We are out of options," he said

"It is an economic, social and even humanitarian disaster," said Dr. Mohamed Jubran, professor of economics at the University of Sana'a.

Between 75-80 percent of industrial plants have been shut down due to power cuts and fuel scarcity, according to the professor. "This is considered a catastrophe because around 150,000 people have lost their jobs," he said.

"Other factories will shut down soon if power and fuel is not provided within the coming weeks," Jubran said.

The professor warned that by the end of June, Yemen's industrial infrastructure will come to a complete halt, causing agriculture and other economic sectors to collapse as a result.

"The problem with farms is not only represented in difficulty of water extraction to irrigate crops, but there is also no fuel to transport agricultural products and that means the agricultural sector will fail following the industrial shut down," he explained.

The Yemen's economy has lost around USD five billion during only three months of the political crisis which started six months ago, according to Yemen's ministry of industry and trade in the care-taking government, Hisham Sharaf.

The professor said that this is only was confined to Yemen's economic

losses in the industry and services sector, but the agricultural damage is still unknown.

"The human cost is also worsening," said Jubran. "Just imagine a student who has final secondary school exams in the next week and can't find the light to study."

"In addition water supply in urban areas was cut off due the lack of power and fuel shortage and the water price has gone up ten folds in Yemen's cities. The price of one water truck has increased from YR 1,200 (USD 5) to 10,000 (USD 50) and the water is not drinkable," he said.

Most stations which run by diesel have been off either power or water stations, according to Jubran.

"The administrative and consultative industry has been also suspended due to power cuts and fuel shortage," he said.

Water disaster in rural areas

The professor indicated that there will be water disaster in Yemen's rural areas with the suspension of the state-water projects because no other water resources in the countryside.

"In Yemen's urban and rural areas there will be no glass of water to drink due to the power-off," he said. "There will be catastrophe because bakeries will stop since no diesel,"

The economist said that "this comes only as tactics by the regime to keep the Yemeni people busy with their grievances in order to guarantee the people's loyalty to the president even he is clinically dead."

At the beginning of June, Yemen's minister of oil said that Saudi Arabia promised to grant Yemen three million oil barrels as Yemen's oil production was stopped on March with the attack on the Mareb oil pipeline which connects crude oil to Aden oil refineries.

"Part of this grant has just arrived Aden two days ago to be refined and distributed to Yemen's areas and the crisis is hopefully to disappear after one week," Abdul Qawi Al-Udaini, the press officer at the ministry of oil told the Yemen Times on Tuesday.

He explained that the size of Yemen's tanks at refineries is not big to receive the entire Saudi grant at once and for that they receive it on parts.

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Who could be in the transitional council?

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, June 22 — Thousands of Yemenis have been marching in over 15 governorates demanding the establishment of a transitional council. Protesters want such a council to fill the power vacuum since Saleh's departure to Saudi Arabia for treatment of injuries sustained during an attack on his presidential palace on June 3.

Yemen's constitution stipulates that if the president has become unable to perform his tasks, the vice president must take over the post for 60 days, in which time new presidential elections are being held.

Yet, the Vice President, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, has been unable or unwilling to take full control as president. Ali Abdullah Saleh's sons and nephews are still occupying leading military and security positions, and have publicly announced that the injured president is in good medical condition and will return to rule within a few days.

The opposition has put pressure on Hadi to take over the role of president according to the constitution, and threaten to form their own transitional council if he fails to do so.

The question is, if Saleh does not return and the opposition proceeds to form a transitional council, who is likely to be on that council? The Yemen Times has compiled a list of four public figures who may be likely contenders.

Dr. Yaseen Saeed Noman

Current leader of Yemen's official coalition of opposition parties – the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) – and also secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party, Noman is a likely candidate for a transitional council. He was born in 1947 in the Tawr Al-Baha district of the southern governorate of Lahj. He received a PhD in Economics from Hungary in 1981, and became a member of the teaching staff at the University of Aden.

Noman has occupied numerous influential positions in the Yemeni Socialist Party, in the former state of South Yemen, and also in the transitional period after the unification between the south and the north in 1990.

Sheikh Hameed Al-Ahmar, one of the most influential opposition north-erners, both a wealthy businessman and a respected tribal leader, described Noman as "the most appropriate person to lead Yemen during the transitional period," after the fall of Saleh's 33-year regime.

Noman is seen as a quiet and logical, with a reputation towards negotiation to avoid the use of violence. He was one of a four member committee formed in 2009 to mediate a dialogue between Saleh's ruling General People's Congress Party and the opposition JMP.

A senior Yemeni political analyst said "Noman is the only politician whose political activities are not being run according to any foreign agendas."



General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar

The most influential military leader in Yemen after Ali Abdullah Saleh. He obtained his Bachelor Degree in Military Sciences in 1974 and received a Doctor-Fellowship from the Nasser Military Academy in Cairo in 1986.

He joined Yemen's northern army in 1961, and after receiving his bachelor degree, was promoted from first lieutenant to captain. He continued climbing the ranks until becoming brigadier general. When the first armored division was established, Al-Ahmar was appointed as staff officer of the division. He later became leader of the division, then military leader of the northern west area.

Al-Ahmar has stood firmly with President Saleh, first against the Socialist National Front in the late 70s and early 80s when Saleh was President of North Yemen, and again to help defeat the Socialists in 1994, when civil war threatened to divide the recently united country. He has also led the fight against the Houthii rebels in Sa'ada since 2004. Until most recently, he was considered one of Saleh's strongest allies.

However, Wikileaks documents have revealed that Saleh tried several times to assassinate Al-Ahmar. The motivation of these attacks seems to have been to bequeath rule in Yemen to Saleh's son, Ahmed, who leads the well-trained forces of the republican guards and the special forces.

In a surprise defection, Al-Ahmar announced his support for the peaceful youth revolution on Mar. 21, breaking with President Saleh after at least 52 protesters were gunned down near 'Change Square' at Sana'a University.



Tawakul Karman

A leading member of Yemen's popular revolution. She received a Bachelor of Law from the University of Sana'a and is a journalist, political activist and a human rights activist. She started her own organization 'Women Journalists Without Chains' on Mar. 8, 2005 to coincide with International Women's Day.

Despite her membership of the opposition Islah Party, she broke with both the party's and society's traditions which restrict woman's activities in political life. Her arrest, and subsequent release in late January 2011 helped inflame the popular revolution in Yemen. She has consistently campaigned with the aim of putting an end to injustice, corruption and inequality.

The 32 year-old mother of three has claimed that she and her brother received death threats from President Saleh in Feb.2011. Her brother, poet Tareq Karman who used to be figure loyal to Saleh, was allegedly told: "Tell your sister to stop. Anyone who disobeys the ruler must be killed."

Karman's father, Abdu Al-Sallam Karman, is a lawyer and former Minister of Legal Affairs in the transitional government following the unity between south and north Yemen in 1990. Karman currently lives in a tent at 'Change Square' outside Sana'a University and says she will not leave her tent until Saleh's regime leaves and a modern civil state comes about.



Sheikh Abdu Al-Majeed Al-Zindani

An influential Islamic cleric and one of the founding members of the Islamic Islah Party in Yemen. He was born in the governorate of Ibb in 1942 and received his education in Aden and Egypt, where he met many figures from the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

Al-Zindani participated with Mujahideen fighters in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union during the 1980s. In Afghanistan, he met well known Arab and foreign Jihadists, including Osama Bin Laden and the Palestinian Islamic leader, Dr. Abdullah Azam.

Upon returning to Yemen he dedicated himself to raising Islamic education among the Yemeni youth, Arab youth and foreigner Muslims who had come to Yemen to study Arabic and Islam. In 1995 he founded, and is currently president of the Iman University in Sana'a.

Early in 2004, Al-Zindani was labelled as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" by the US State Department, in part for his previous association with Osama Bin Laden. He has worked against western intervention in Arab and Islamic countries, including the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan. The Yemeni cleric objects to the installation of any western culture on an Arab or Islamic country, and fights to maintain an Arabic and Islamic identity among Muslims.

Despite siding with Ali Abdullah Saleh against the Socialist Party during the 1994 civil war between north and south Yemen, he was one the first Islamic figures who supported the popular nationwide uprisings demanding the departure of Saleh and his regime.



Hassan Zaid

General secretary of the Al-Haq Islamic-Zaydi opposition party. He is close to the Houthi rebels in the north who have been battling the central state since 2004. He holds a Bachelor of Philosophy and Psychology from the University of Sana'a from 1977, and has worked in education in many public schools in Sana'a.

In 2006, he was on the negotiating committee between the Houthi rebels and the state, though no concrete results to end the armed conflict came from these negotiations.



Power outages increase suffering in Hodeida

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, June 22 — Continuous power outages and severe fuel shortages in Hodeida are beginning to take their toll on the citizens of the governorate, many victims of in incredibly high temperatures.

Last Friday, Saturday and Sunday the city of Hodeida experienced a prolonged blackout. The round-the-clock power outages sparked the anger of people in Hodeida who suffer from high temperatures and the dire state of the economy.

Abdulhafeth Mojob, a journalist and human rights activist in Hodeida said that the government intended to increase the hours of power outages since the outbreak of the uprising last January.

"Power outages in Hodeida led to disruption of a number of hospitals, commercial shops and many important facilities," Mojob said to the Yemen Times.

He indicated that the both Al-Olofi and Al-Thwara hospitals are negatively affected due to lack of diesel that needed to run generators to provide power to vital medical equipment.

"The labs, department of radiology and other medical departments were stopped. Some children suffering from respiratory illnesses suffocated because of the high temperature," Mojob explained.

"A large amount of blood in the blood banks was ruined due to lack of power," he said.

"The patients in the burn center in Hodeida suffered from festering sores due to high temperature and absence of power," he added.

According to Mojob, power outages caused an increase in the prices of some basic goods like ice that used to cool water and preserve fish. "Power outages also negatively pregnant women and hundreds of laborers who were sacked from their jobs due to power outages."

Ayman Al-Abdali, one local resident of Hodeida denounced the power outages as 'a silly game by the government'.

"People in Hodeida cannot afford



Since people took to the streets in Hodeida demanding the ousting of Saleh and his regime, the power has been cut off several times for long periods.

one minute without power but they've stayed for days without electricity," he said.

"The temperature in Hodeida is unbearable during the summer. The government should find a solution for this trouble," said Al-Abdali.

Decayed bodies

The bodies in the morgue at Al-Olofi hospital had begun to rot due to lack of power and the smell of the bodies spread throughout the hospital and into the surrounding area according to one hospital official who spoke to the Yemen Times on the condition of the anonymity.

"The smell of bodies disgusted the people who live near the hospital. Unfortunately, the prosecution in Hodeida didn't give us an order to bury these bodies. Some bodies have been in the morgue for more than two years; moreover, numbers of the bodies exceeded the capacity of the morgue."

"We really need an order from the prosecution to bury these bodies and end this trouble."

Yaser Noor, head of National Foun-

ation for Combating Cancer in Hodeida told Yemen Times that the doctors in the oncology center in Hodeida couldn't prepare chemotherapy treatment for cancer patients due to lack of power. "The doctors delayed giving chemotherapy treatments that must be taken on time."

"We have a generator but the fuel is not available in Hodeida," said Noor. "The patients were not able to bear the high temperature."

Eng. Abdurrahman Saif, General Manager of the gas-powered generator in Marib told Yemen Times that the power returned last Tuesday, indicating that the power supplying lines were attacked 40 times since last January by some sheikhs in Marib who want to extort the government.

"The losses of the Public Electricity Corporation since last January until June 21 are about 44 million dollars," he said.

Asked if it's impossible to protect power supplying lines from attackers, he said: "It's impossible to protect the supplying lines from attackers. These lines extend to 260 km."

إختيار شركات الشحن و التخليص – برنامج الاغذية العالمي للأمم المتحدة

يقوم برنامج الأغذية العالمي التابع للأمم المتحدة فى اليمن بمراجعة و تحديث قائمة الشركات التي تعمل في مجال الشحن و التخليص المحتملة.



و على الشركات المهتمة و المؤهلة و الراغبة، تقديم طلب إستمارة الأستبيان الخاصة بالشحن و التخليص ، لتعبئته و إرفاق جميع وثائق و بيانات الشركة و التراخيص ذات الصلة لمزاولة المهنة. خلال فترة أقصاها نهاية دوام يوم الأربعاء الموافق ٢٩ يونيو ٢٠١١ ، و يطلب من الشركات المعتمدة لدي برنامج الاغذية العالمي للأمم المتحدة، تعبئة إستبيان الشحن و التخليص، و تقديم جميع الوثائق و التراخيص ذات العلاقة خلال الفترة الموضحة أعلاه، علما بأن الطلب الوارد من قبل الشركات بعد هذا الموعد لن يأخذ بعين الاعتبار، و ينبغي تقديم الطلب إلى مكتب البرنامج في صنعاء على العنوان التالي، مع كتابة «قائمة شركات الشحن و التخليص»، علما بأن الشركات التي سيتم قبولها في القائمة هي فقط التي سيتم دعوتها للمشاركة في المناقصات.

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Al-Hasaba: The Aftermath

A day in Al-Hasaba

YT photo by Ali Saeed



Armed tribesmen loyal to Al-Ahmar when they took control over state-run SABA News Agency in their war against the state on May 30, 2011.

By: Amira Al-Arasi

Sana'a is the capital of the republic of Yemen and it is one of the biggest cities in the country. This high mountainous area is located in the heart of the country and has no port on the sea. It has an airport represented in Sana'a International Airport.

It has a road that goes from the northern direction to Sa'ada, another road called Sana'a-Hodeida road that goes from the south west of the capital to the port of Hodeida and another road that goes from the south of the capital to Dhamar and ends to Aden.

The area of the capital is about 450 km and it is distributed to ten districts according to the 2001 administrative categorization.

The Al-Hasaba district is located in the north of the capital and many ministries and state's departments exist in this area including the ministry of interior that is only 300 meters distant from the home of sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Ahmar.

The ministry of industry and trade, health ministry, premises of the Yemenia Airways Company, Public Television and Radio Authority, and the police camp are also all located in the district of Al-Hasaba.

The area is the most tribal district in the capital for the existence of Al-Ahmar's home, the leader of Hashid tribal confederation which is the second largest tribe in Yemen.

The first armored division which announced its peaceful support for the revolution borders the district from the west and the building of the standing committee for the ruling party also is in the same district which is 200 meters distant from Al-Hmar's house.

Other state departments including the electricity ministry, water ministry and transportation ministry are also located in this tribal area.

Sheraton Neighborhood to the east of the district where the US embassy is also overlooking the area of Al-Hasaba.

The district is also a commercial center as many tribesmen come to and go from the area with the purpose of purchasing goods and meeting their sheikhs and presenting their complaints to the sheikhs if they have any dispute among them.

During the clashes between Yemen's security forces and Al-Ahmar's armed supporters, the Yemen Times made a visit to the heart of battles.

When we entered the sub-streets of Al-Hasaba, we found dozens of families leaving the area due to ongoing shelling on the area and their fear for their lives. We found them carrying their children and anything they could carry seeking safer shelter away from their homes which became under the fire of the regime and the tribe.

With serious caution and terror of stray bullets may fall on them especially women and children, we met Mohamed Al-Arifi's family.

In one of Al-Hasaba neighborhoods, we found Al-Arifi leaving his home with his nine children.

"I have been living in Al-Hasaba near the premises of the local administration ministry for 20 years and now I'm leaving my home because of the security situation and my fear on the safety of my children and my own," he said "this is the third day since clashes began and I do not think it will calm. My wife and children cannot sleep, they cry all the time, and they want to get out to more

secure and stable area,"

"Now we are on our way to a house of one of our relatives. We will live there as he left it and traveled to the village for the same reason that made me to leave my home, but it is away of the conflict area," he said.

We left them to continue their journey and we passed some sub-neighborhoods. We found some youth each one in front of his house acting the informal security to protect houses.

We resumed our journey without any car to transport us to the conflict area. The sounds of mortar-shells and bullets at the time was shaking the sky of the area..

We met another family who were living in Al-Usaimi neighborhood of Al-Hasaba departing their home. Fatima, a mother for six children says "I came seven years ago from the village for the job of my husband and I left my village and I wish I had not because our night was terrifying due to the sever attacks by shells and bullets."

"I went out of the house with all my family members to the yard of the house and slept in a zinc room in order to avoid the collapse of the house on our heads." "We stayed there until the sun appeared and I entered the house to inspect the house after one day of fierce clashes between the regime and the tribe," she said.

"My house appeared in a very miserable condition, the wall of the house was split into two halves and It was collapsed, so I decided to leave the home and go to my sister-in law until the road to my village is open and I will travel with no return to the capital," she said.

And on Al-Dayri, the nearest place to the Al-Hasaba, we stopped to take a taxi to the place of fierce confrontations, but when the driver heard that we are heading to that area, he refused to take us.

We waited for long time to convince a taxi driver to take us and we succeeded in taking one that appeared courageous and took us to our destination.

For the first time of going there since the recent developments took place, the streets were empty from its people, but full of armed tribesmen. When were passing through, we saw the building of Saba News Agency and it was vacant of employees and damages were clear on the sides of the premises.

Armed tribesmen from Hashid were standing on the door of the building and when I and my colleague journalist: Shatha Al-Harazi walked to them, they directed their guns to us, but we revealed our identities as journalists working with the Yemen Time, so they understood our mission and warned us from snipers on the surrounding buildings. They also requested us to be cautious because this area was not allowed for civilians to move in during that situation.

They were heavily armed with heavy and light weapons and the situation was similar to the building of the ministry of industry and trade.

After that we approached Amran round-about, the closest point to the clashing area. We stopped there to see two women selling the stimulant leaves of qat. One of them spoke to us saying "We come to here on a daily basis from Hatarish village, outside the capital to sell qat. Fire exchange erupted here intensively, but we continue because we earn a lot of money compared to the past days."

The area appeared vacant from citizens and only armed tribesmen moving around and the normal life has been disappeared.

Hasaba locals suffer from psychological trauma and economic crisis

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

People in Hasaba district are still traumatized by the three weeks of fighting that caused extensive damage and forced many families to leave their homes.

The people there sit in stunned silence and live an uneasily calm life. The streets are interspersed with armed men who chew qat next to their sandbags. Many people, including women and children, are not comfortable with those 'strange' men with guns who were sent by the Al-Ahmer family despite the truce that supposedly ended the fighting.

Osama Al-Rawhani, a youth activist and one of the residents of Hasaba told the Yemen Times that people in the war-torn area suffer from psychological problems and many other troubles.

"The poor people became poorer, the people who had jobs became jobless, the people who had homes became homeless, and business owners in Hasaba found their businesses damaged," said Al-Rawhani.

"For me, I'm not focused and my ideas are scattered. This is really what I feel these days. I feel as if I have no ideas about anything, as if I've never worked before. I used to be active in my job but now I'm absent-minded," he explained.

"My mind is occupied with other things. I'm worried about my neighbors, my home and my safety. I'm thinking worryingly about my family who evacuated their house and went to the village. Although they are out of Sana'a but they have been under a lot of stress since they left the house," he said.

During fighting, Al-Rawhani refused to leave his house with his brothers. He explained, "If I had left my house it would have been be in danger and the gunmen might have broken into it,"

"During the clashes and shelling we were very terrified. We were not worried not only about our house but about the whole district," said Al-Rawhani.

However, he also indicated that some nice things came from this painful experience. "It makes the neighbors and people in Hasaba more cooperative and more accommodating. This is the best thing."

"The social relationships between neighbors has been strengthened. Everybody started to care about others. We were phoning each other to make

sure that everybody was OK," he explained.

"People in Hasaba are so peaceful and they don't deserve these violent clashes. Unfortunately, the whole area was hit," he said.

Criticizing Sheikh Sadeq Al-Ahmer, Al-Rawhani said: "Al-Ahmer never intended to withdraw his armed men from Hasaba. Rather, he started to deploy more guards and he put lots of sandbags in different places including near my house."

"People don't agree with these sandbags and gunmen at all. Children and women are afraid to go out because of their presence," he added.

Moreover, according to Al-Rawhani the gunmen in Hasaba are untrustworthy. "I've never seen any woman walking in the place for almost a month because of these strange people...My brothers and I cannot sleep safely so we are taking security measures. We decided to get guns to defend ourselves and our home."

Although the area seems to be living through relative peace, the locals of Al-Hasaba area north of Sana'a were violent clashes took place earlier this month are still anxious. Scores have been killed in the conflict between Al-Ahmar leaders who live in the area and the regime, and thousands have fled their homes. Today some are returning and others have nowhere to return to as their homes were destroyed. The Yemen Times follows the story of Al-Hasaba: the after of the aftermath.

YT photo by Ali Saeed



Sandbags have annoyed residents in Al-Hasaba districts and made children and women afraid to walk out around their houses.

Arafat Soroor, an activist and a Hasaba local, said that many women and children who stayed in the district were petrified with fear. He indicated that some families couldn't evacuate their

homes and move into another place due to of their impoverished circumstances.

"They are disappointed. They lost everything," he said. "But despite what happened to them, the people here are still strong and steadfast."

Abdulaziz Al-Aghbary lives with his 10-member family in Hasaba. His bad economic situation prevented him and his family from leaving the area.

"These clashes have negatively affected our life. There is no water, no electricity, no money and no more food," he said.

"My situation before the fighting was relatively good but now I my family and I have nothing. We have restrictions on movement as well," he said. "Unfortunately, I cannot travel to another place with my big family because I would need a lot of money to do so."

Yemeni Youth for Humanitarian Relief

Some Yemeni youths have decided to establish a group called Yemeni Youth for Humanitarian Relief in order to mobilize efforts to provide emergency aid. Their efforts focused on the city of Aden at first; however, they have now expanded their scope to cover all areas suffering from the damages of political conflict or natural disaster.

Yemeni Youth for Humanitarian Relief is politically independent. It invites everyone to join in and support its work by providing suggestions and contributions.

In discussing its work in Hasaba district, Al-Rawhani said, "The group collected a lot of money to bring food and basic goods to almost 30 poor families."

YT photo by Sadeq Al-Wesabi



Youth activists Osama Al-Rawhani and Arafat Soroor who live in Hasaba district decided to help impoverished people in the district by providing them with food and basic goods and services

Open Day for conflict victims' relief initiative

On Thursday June 23 an Open Day will be created at My Coffee on Beirut street to raise funds for the victims of Al-Hasaba, Abyan and Lahj violence. The open day is organized by the Yemeni Youth Initiative for Humanitarian Relief, who have been working to support the affected families.

Visitors will spend a fun open day this Thursday to ease some of the tension we are facing these days. Music, art exhibition and a kids corner at my Coffee from 10:00 AM - 08:00 PM. Along with cash donations visitors are invited to donate items such as clothes, toys, blankets, etc.

So far, through this initiative thirty one families from Al-Hasaba each received relief supplies of flour, wheat, oil, sugar, tea, oatmeal, rice, salt, biscuits and red beans. The supplies are assumed to last for one week for a family of seven members. The supplies were distributed during last week by YYHR.

The initiative has created packages for the families which was the most that could be supported as the money came from donations raised at Mokha Bunn café in Sana'a, LoOol group and online. There are 290 families in need according to the initiative.

The 31 families selected has 318 members out of which 30% are women, 45% are children under the age of 18, 24% are children between the age 1-3, 3.4% were new born babies to one year old, and 5 pregnant women. Most of these families' homes suffer complete destruction, partial destruction with at least shattering windows, completely burned, or/ and looted. At least ten families out of 31 need a tent. At least 90% of those families reported that their water tanks have been damaged. All families reported that there were no water supply from projects or power supply due to damage to the infrastructure for almost 4 weeks now. Additionally, some members of those families need immediate medical attention due to chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes,



Yemeni Youth for Humanitarian Relief (YYHR)

blood pressure, or injuries and physiological problems as a direct result of the armed conflict.

YYHR has conducted a survey to identify vulnerable families in Hasaba. Out of 290 families, it was found that around 900 are children under the age of 12. Around 115 of those families have returned after displacement in Wadi Dhahr, Amran, Gedr, Bani Hushaish, and Dar Selm. At least two families of those took shelter under bridges in Sana'a. As such, YYHR set up criteria to distribute the limited food sets to the poor families, families with many children and women, families headed by women, orphans, and families that their homes were destroyed. Cost of these supplies which totaled 310,000 Yemeni Rials (around USD 1,500).

"Most of the families expected aid from the state, but they were rather left to bear the consequence of armed conflict on their own," Bakil Mohammed one of YYHR members who was distributing the aid in Al-Hasaba area.

The families were identified after a field survey done by YYHR volunteers. The criteria for families applicable to receiving the aid are the most vulnerable segments in the area such as poor families with many children, or those households headed by women or the families whose homes were damaged by the conflict.

"A man came to us while distributing the aids said

that there are two of his family members who have been injured by shrapnel and there are other kids who have injuries in the neck and chest and have not received any medical help," said Reem Jarhum member of YYHR.

The youth are still working to collect more donations. Some businesses have also offered to help.

Al-Hasaba area north of Sana'a is in urgent need for reconstruction of the infrastructure and immediate humanitarian relief for the locals who were affected by the armed conflict that took place between mid may and early June. The conflict was between Al-Ahmar tribe mainly its sheikh Sadeq Al-Ahmar and the state security. The conflict killed tens of people from both sides and destroyed the infrastructure. Now the locals have no water, no electricity and there are unexploded remnants of war.

Naser Al-Ojaibi member of YYHR said that some of the locals are keeping these dangerous items in their homes as souvenirs.

4U

The food package for each family costs YR 10,000 around USD 42 to accommodate a family of seven for one week. If you wish to donate or support this initiative email relief.yemen@gmail.com or go be part of the Open Day on Thursday June 23, 2011 at 10:00 AM at My Coffee (Serving Yemeni Coffee) Hadda - Beirut St. behind Almatakh Alhadeeth (My Coffee sign on the main St.) <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=226460744050547>

International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI), a US-based international management consulting firm, is seeking an individual for the following local position:

Administrative Assistant

Under the supervision of the Chief of Party and the Finance and Administration Manager, the Administrative Assistant will provide administrative and logistics support to the YMEP program.

The job responsibilities will include but not be limited to:

1. Typing letters for YMEP business needs
2. Scanning documents as requested by supervisor
3. Translating documents as requested by supervisor
4. Managing the timely application, payment and completion of visa and immigration requirements for all YMEP expatriate staff
5. Preparing the logistics, invitations and conference room for YMEP trainings
6. Visiting vendors to seek quotes and view merchandise quality needed for YMEP Purchase Orders in compliance with USAID regulations
7. Managing the timely payment of all YMEP office and residence bills (internet, phone, electricity, water etc.), in coordination with the YMEP Finance and Administration Manager
8. Creating Purchase Orders for YMEP as requested by Chief of Party
9. Maintaining HR files in accordance with USAID compliance
10. Overseeing the logistics, cleaning and day to day administrative tasks of the YMEP office and residence villas
11. Supervise and monitor the drivers and ensure vehicles are maintained and fully fueled at all times
12. Supervise and monitor the YMEP maintenance staff and ensure the YMEP office and residences are clean and all maintenance requests are taken care of immediately.
13. Any other administrative and logistics tasks as assigned by YMEP Chief of Party or YMEP Finance and Administration Manager

Requirements

- Minimum of 5 years experience managing logistics and administrative matters in a large and complex organization
- Has background in Administration and Management
- Has ability to facilitate the support and logistics for events
- Experience working in logistically difficult and fast-paced environment is preferred
- Strong organizational, communication, writing skills, and networking ability
- Remains calm under stress
- Fluency in English is required
- Prior experience in USAID projects desirable

Please send your cover letter, a detailed CV and 2-3 references by email to mmohamed@ibtci.com. The position will be based in Sana'a, Yemen. Only finalists will be contacted.

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.

Health benefits of turmeric (hurudh) tea

A spicy dish of Indian biryani and a hot dog purchased at the ball game may seem to have little in common, but both feature a liberal quantity of turmeric (*Curcuma longa*). In the biryani, the spice is an essential part of the curry mixture that gives the dish its distinctive zing. There is no Indian curry made without turmeric in it!

The good news about this cross-cultural spice is that elderly villagers in India, who eat turmeric in their daily curries, have the world's lowest rate of Alzheimer's disease. That does not appear to be a coincidence. In a study at the University of California at Los Angeles, scientists fed curcumin, an active compound in turmeric tea, to rats prone to accumulate beta-amyloid plaque in their brains - the abnormality associated with Alzheimer's disease in humans. Curcumin blocked the plaque's accumulation. It also appeared to reduce inflammation related to Alzheimer's disease in neural tissue.

Turmeric is traditionally called the «Indian Saffron» due to its color. This anti-inflammatory, free-radical-fighting antioxidant-rich curry spice contains an anti-cancer compound called curcumin which produces almost no toxicity compared to over-the-counter drugs.

Turmeric is also a liver tonic. The liver is the second largest organ in the body and has many important functions. Sadly, our liver is abused from all types of food, alcohol, infections, medications and external toxins. If you've been experiencing digestive problems, constipation, low energy output, arthritis, allergies, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, infertility, insomnia or acne outbreaks, one of things you can do is to take care of your liver. And drinking a liver tonic such as this tea will help your liver get back to normal.

How to make Turmeric Tea:

1. Measure 4 cups of water into a small pot and bring to



a boil on the stove. Make sure that the water has come to a full boil.

2. Add 1 tsp. of turmeric and 1 tsp. of ginger powder to the boiling water and reduce to simmer for 8 to 10 minutes. This will extract the beneficial compounds from the turmeric and ginger. Ginger has many benefits for health also. You can add a little of cinnamon also, if you like. If you suffer from asthma, try 1 tsp. of somf (sammar) in your turmeric tea.
3. Remove the pot from the stove and strain the tea into a cup. The particles of turmeric and ginger will be filtered out.
4. Add honey to taste and a slice of lemon. The honey and lemon will make the tea a bit more palatable.

This tea will awaken your digestive fire. Digestive fire refers to the overall health and activity of your digestive system. If your digestive fire is stagnant or diminished, you'll experience digestive problems such as indigestion, biliousness and constipation which lead to increased accumulation of toxins. When there's accumulation of toxins, it will lead to different kinds of disease. Avoiding cold drinks, sweets, alcohol, caffeine and other liver exhausting substances such as eating too many proteins and carbohydrates, overeating and even lack of exercise will bring your digestive fire back.

Other benefits of turmeric tea:

- Body and liver detoxifier
- Boost immunity by improving liver function
- Cleanses and purifies the blood
- Eases symptoms of coughs and colds
- Improves circulation in the body
- Improves skin complexion
- Prevents internal blood clotting



Tender Notice for implementing Training and Quality of Care Activities

Project: Social Marketing for Reproductive Health (RH) Services: Phase II in Yemen

Contract no.: BMZ Project No. 2007 65 230

The Government of Yemen through the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP), has received funding from Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KfW) for implementing of social marketing of contraceptives through the private sector.

Yamaan Foundation for Health and Social Development (YF): The MoPHP awarded the YF with a three year social marketing project as, the Project Executing agency (PEA). YF invites interested local NGOs and institutions working in the field of family planning (FP) and HIV/AIDS to apply for the tender as per the below Terms of Reference:

The project: the project aims at increased use of modern contraceptives and increased preventive attitudes and behaviour with regard to FP and STIs including HIV, through sustainable programming fully coordinated with the MoPHP. The expected results include increased availability and demand for subsidized modern contraceptives. It will be implemented in Sana'a, Aden, Hadramout, Ibb, Taiz, Dhamar, Hodeida, Mareb, Hajjah, Al-Mahweet, Amran, Lahj and Abyan for three years. Suggested QoC activities are:

Family Planning campaign					
Activity	IUDs insertion &Removal Midwives’ training	IUDs insertion &Removal GPs training	Service Provider’s FP counseling= 250	Short course on contraception methods	
Location and no. of Trainees	Taiz : 20	Sana’a Capital: 20	Mareb	San’a Capital: 100	
			Hajjah		
			Mahweet	Aden&Lahj:80	
			Amran		
	Sana’a : 20			Hadramout	Taiz& Ibb:100
				Lahj	
				Abvan	

Note: All activities mentioned above may change or transferred to other governorates according to the security situation.

The needed information under this call is: (i) Organization background that shows the capability and experience to perform the project components (ii) initial proposal (iii) budget and time frame (iv) Supervision plan.

Interested parties may apply by 3 July 2011 to:

Yamaan Foundation for Health and Social Development
Next to AL-Deewan Restaurant, Sana'a
E-mail : mohammed.alzurqa@yamaan.org



Tender Notice for contraceptive distribution agency

Project: Social Marketing for Reproductive Health (RH) Services: Phase II in Yemen

Contract no.: BMZ Project No. 2007 65 230

The Government of Yemen through the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP), has received funding from Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KfW) for implementing of social marketing of contraceptives through the private sector.

Yamaan Foundation for Health and Social Development (YF): The MoPHP awarded the YF with a three year social marketing project as, the Project Executing agency (PEA). YF invites interested agencies working in the field of contraceptive distribution to apply for this tender. The applications should be for distribution of modern contraceptives across Yemen to distributors of all levels including midwives, pharmacists, and other distribution points. In addition, ensure smooth supply chain and consistent availability of contraceptives.

The needed information under this tender notice is: (i) Agency's background that shows the capability and experience to perform the contraceptive distribution (ii) initial proposal including the budget, distribution plan and supply system.

Interested parties may apply within 10 days

Social Marketing Project; Yamaan Foundation for Health and Social Development Next to AL-Deewan Restaurant, Sana'a
E-mail : fuad.alkhayat@yamaan.org

Arab Spring: Power not giving up without bloody fight

By: Tony Ilitis

“Power never gives up without a fight.” These words of United States civil rights leader Martin Luther King were quoted by US President Barack Obama in his May 19 policy speech on the Middle East.

The quote is certainly a true description of the response of the region’s regimes to the Arab democratic upsurge. But Obama failed to mention that the biggest power in the Middle East is the US.

Arab dictators have continued suppressing pro-democracy protests with varying degrees of violence. Western politicians continue to silently supply the means of repression to friendly dictators while decrying the violence of those they deem “unacceptable.”

Western military intervention has included NATO airstrikes and missile bombardments against Libya, ostensibly to protect the population from the Gaddafi regime’s violence, and support for the Saudi invasion of Bahrain to protect the ruling Khalifa family from the population.

In Yemen, the US initially stood by dictator Abdullah Ali Saleh, whose regime has faced months of mass demonstrations that have brought millions of Yemenis onto the streets in defiance of brutal repression.

AFP said on June 11 that at least 200 protesters had been killed in the more than four months of anti-government protests.

However, in the face of unrelenting protests and with Yemen’s numerous other social and political fissure’s being exacerbated, Washington began gently trying to ease Saleh out to save the regime as a whole.

Saleh is still recovering in a Saudi hospital from a June 3 nail-bomb attack. In his absence, the Yemeni elite has engaged in armed power struggles to fill the vacuum.

The democracy movement has continued its protests in Saleh’s absence. On June 15, hundreds of thousands took to the streets across Yemen to demanding Saleh’s rule be replaced by a transitional

government, YemenPost.net said the next day.

The protests condemned reported attempts by Western powers to restart Gulf Cooperation Council -brokered negotiations with the regime for a “power-sharing” arrangement to end the crisis. Opposition groups described the talks as dead.

The US response to the crisis has been to resort to a surge in its drone strikes on Yemen.

Justified as part of the “war on terror” targeting suspected Al Qaeda militants, Yemen defence ministry officials confirmed that US has been launching drone strikes on a daily basis during June, with more than 15 confirmed strikes already in June.

The deputy governor of Abyan Province said at least 130 people were killed in those attacks, PressTV reported on June 15.

The June 14 Wall Street Journal said the Obama administration was transferring control of the operation from the military to the CIA, responsible for drone attacks in Pakistan that have killed thousands.

In Libya, neither the propaganda of the Gaddafi regime nor the West is credible.

Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi claims to have always resolutely opposed the West’s imperialism and the West claims to resolutely oppose Gaddafi’s tyranny.

In fact, Gaddafi and the West were on good terms until the uprisings began in February and had been for the past decade.

It is not possible to know for sure the truth to the competing claims that Gaddafi has deployed cluster munitions against the city of Misrata or that NATO has deployed depleted uranium (DU) munitions in its operations in Libya.

What is known is that if Gaddafi did use cluster bombs, they were most likely supplied by the West.

Up until the imposition of sanctions in recent months, Libya was a major client for the Western arms industry, particularly those of Britain, France and Italy.

The West’s closest ally in the Middle East, Israel, frequently uses cluster bombs both in ongoing low-intensity aggression against Palestinian ghettos and in bigger acts of aggression, such as the

2006 invasion of Lebanon.

Cluster bombs left over from this war are still maiming and killing civilians in southern Lebanon.

What is also known is that NATO routinely uses DU munitions in the type of operations it is conducting in Libya airstrikes against artillery and armour.

These radioactive weapons are even more capable than cluster bombs at killing and maiming long after conflicts are over. Not only do they leave long-lasting sources of radiation, but the radiation can cause genetic damage that shows up generations later.

With Syria, it is also difficult from the outside to distinguish reality from propaganda. The blog Gay Girl in Damascus was frequently cited in the media as an authentic source from inside Syria until an investigation by journalist Ali Abunimah of the Electronic Intifada exposed the blog’s author as Tom MacMaster, a middle-aged US man living in Scotland.

What is undeniably real is the presence of 10,000 refugees in Turkey who fled the scorched earth tactics being used by Syrian forces around the northern town of Jisr al-Shughour.

The town was retaken by government troops on June 12. The government said they had lost control of Jisr al-Shughour after 120 soldiers were killed in an ambush by terrorists.

Refugees told a different story.

Al Jazeera said on June 11: “An activist based in Jisr al-Shughour and trusted by experienced local reporters described how a funeral on June 4 for a man shot dead by plain-clothes security a day earlier grew into a large anti-government protest.

“As the demonstration passed the headquarters of the military secret police they opened fire right away and killed eight people,” the activist, who was among the crowd, said. “But some of the secret police refused to open fire and there were clashes between them. It was complete chaos.”

“All foreign media have been banned from reporting in Syria so it is impossible to verify the account firsthand. However, it tallies with other testimonies from residents of the area that clashes between security forces had taken place.”

There have been reports of defections

from the security forces in other parts of the country.

Protests have peaked on Fridays, after Friday prayers. On June 17, Reuters said security forces killed 19 people throughout the country after tens of thousands protested.

Following these latest killings, “France urged tougher EU sanctions against Syria while US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton discussed UN action with her Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov,” AFP said on June 17.

Despite the US’s verbal condemnation of the Syrian regime for its human rights abuses, the same regime has been used the US as part of its “extraordinary rendition” program in the “war on terror” whereby the US sends victims to third countries to be tortured.

Despite rhetoric, which have become routine as the violence in Syria escalated, the West is showing no sign of planning direct military intervention in Syria.

Western media are generally hostile to the Syrian regime, but have echoed some of the regime’s propaganda, such as describing the conflicts convulsing Syria in religious sectarian terms.

Western politicians’ statements on Syria and Libya contrast with the total lack of acknowledgement of ongoing struggles for democracy in the face of state repression by pro-Western dictators, such as the kings of Morocco and Jordan.

The level of repression in Bahrain has been great enough that some acknowledgement has had to be made by Western leaders.

However, at most, Western leaders have (as Obama did in his May 19 speech) simply called on the monarchy and opposition groups to hold talks. Obama balanced this by giving credence to the monarchy’s lie that Bahrain’s pro-democracy movement was an Iranian plot by also calling for an end to “Iranian interference” in Bahrain.

The democracy movement in Bahrain holds a particular threat to the West. Not only does Bahrain host of a major US naval base and an important oil terminal, the highly autocratic, oil-rich monarchies of the Gulf are central to Western concerns in the region.

This is why the West supports the mil-

itary occupation of Bahrain since March by the most powerful of these monarchies, Saudi Arabia.

On June 13, the trial began in Bahrain of 48 surgeons, doctors, paramedics and nurses, accused of trying to overthrowing the government.

Their actual crime was treating those injured by government and Saudi forces. They were also charged with the murder of protesters they were unable to save.

Renowned journalist Robert Fisk said in the June 14 Independent: “These are the very same doctors and nurses I stood beside four months ago in the Sulaimaniya emergency room, some of them weeping as they tried to deal with gun-

shot wounds the like of which they had never seen before.

“The surgeons were frightened that they did not have the skills to save these victims of police violence. Now the police have accused the doctors and staff of killing the patients whom the police themselves shot.

“The idea that these 48 defendants are guilty of such a vicious charge is not just preposterous. It is insane, a total perversion no, the total opposite of the truth. The police were firing at demonstrators from helicopters.”

The struggle for democracy continues to rage in many places across the Arab world as does the West’s hypocrisy.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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



Title: Procurement Associate
Type of Contract: Fixed-Term Appointment – G6
Duty Station: Sana'a

Under the direct supervision of the Procurement Officer, the Procurement Associate ensures the execution of transparent and efficient procurement services and processes in Country Office (CO). The Procurement Associate promotes a client-focused, quality and results- oriented approach in the Unit.

Responsibilities:

- Full compliance of procurement activities with UN/UNDP rules, regulations, policies and strategies; implementation of the effective internal control.
- CO Procurement business processes mapping and elaboration of the content of internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in Procurement and Logistics in consultation with the direct supervisor and office management.
- Preparation of procurement plans for the office and projects and their implementation monitoring.
- Organization of procurement processes including preparation and conduct of Request for Quotations (RFQs), Invitation to Bids (ITBs) or Request for Proposals (RFPs), receipt of quotations, bids or proposals, their evaluation, negotiation of certain conditions of contracts in full compliance with UNDP rules and regulations.
- Preparation of Purchase orders and contracts in and outside Atlas, preparation of Recurring Purchase orders for contracting of services, vendors’ creation in Atlas. . Buyers profile in Atlas.
- Preparation of submissions to the Contract, Asset and Procurement Committee (CAP) and Advisory Committee on Procurement (ACP).
- Implementation of the internal control system which ensures that Purchase orders are duly prepared and dispatched. Timely corrective actions on POs with budget check errors and other problems.
- Implementation of joint procurement processes for the UN Agencies in line with the UN reform.
- Development and update of the rosters of suppliers, implementation of supplier selection and evaluation.
- Implementation of Inventory and physical verification control in the CO and projects.
- Organization of travel including purchase of tickets, Daily Substance Allowance (DSA) calculation, PO preparation; arrangement of shipments; vehicle maintenance; conference facilities arrangements.

Qualifications:

- Secondary Education with specialized training in procurement. University Degree in Business or Public Administration would be desirable, but it is not a requirement.
- 6 years of progressively responsible administrative experience is required at the national or international level. Experience in the usage of computers and office software packages (MS Word, Excel, etc), advance knowledge of automated procurement systems, experience in handling of web based management systems.
- Fluency in English and Arabic languages.

Monthly Salary for this post is approximately \$1,500

Only Online Applications will be accepted

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

Response will only be made to short listed candidates

The deadline for receiving applications is July 8, 2011

Strong, capable Arab females are defying the stereotypes

By: Natana J. DeLong-Bas

What do Asma Mahfouz, Munira Fakhro and Tawakul Karman all have in common? They are all strong, capable women defying the popular Western image of the oppressed, repressed, suppressed Muslim woman hidden behind a black chador or blue burqa, helplessly waiting for Western liberation.

The biggest challenge these women face is not dispelling Western stereotypes, but claiming their place in the Arab Spring, not only during the revolutionary and transitional periods, but, most importantly, in the resulting new systems.

In Egypt, Asma Mahfouz became known by many as the “Leader of the Revolution” after posting an online video calling young people to demonstrate en masse, helping to spark the revolution that forced President Hosni Mubarak’s resignation.

In Bahrain, political activist Munira Fakhro played a leading role as an organizer and spokesperson for the Pearl Square demonstrations, demanding government reform and building

a movement that was “not Sunni, not Shiite, but Bahraini.”

In Yemen, human rights activist and journalist Tawakul Karman has protested nonviolently outside Sanaa University every Tuesday since May 2007, demanding that President Ali Abdullah Saleh step down from power.

These women are not waiting for someone to come rescue them. They are active participants in their own liberation. They are leaders who provide vision, strategy, technological expertise, networks, logistics, determination, courage and sheer numbers.

In stark contrast to the image of Arab women in charge of nothing but their homes, these women are picketing outside supermarkets, staging sit-ins with their children, organizing protests, networking with each other, teaching workshops on the tactics of nonviolence, tearing down security fences and marching through checkpoints to connect with people on the other side.

They are not only pitching tents and serving tea, but also working as doctors and nurses, providing medical services to those wounded by police and military crackdowns on demonstrations. And over the past several months, they have been beaten, tear-gassed, shot,

arrested, tortured, raped and killed by government forces.

Their issues are not just “women’s issues” but national issues. They are standing and working alongside men in their quest for greater levels of freedom, a voice in the government, an end to corruption and the right to jobs, a decent education and a better life, not only for themselves, but for everyone.

As we look at the Arab Spring today, we must remember the lessons of Algeria and Kuwait. Although many courageous women risked their safety and gave their lives in the struggles for independence, once the conflict was over and independence declared, women were thanked for their contributions and sent back home to leave the “real” work to the men. The ruling entities may have changed, but the patriarchal order remained intact.

Hints of history repeating itself are already apparent in Egypt. There, the “Council of Wise Men” was established to advise the transitional government, leaving women without a direct voice. Demonstrations in support of International Women’s Day in Cairo and calls for the protection of women’s rights under Tunisia’s Personal Status Code were interrupted by men telling women to “go back home where they

belong.”

If we in the West are serious about supporting genuine democracy in the Arab world, we must help ensure that women are not treated as divorced from the critical interests of society. And we must all recognize the many roles that women already play in Arab society, far beyond the cherished roles of wife and mother. Western and Arab policymakers must make sure women are included in government and leadership positions and public life, not as tokens, but as equals.

Just as their sisters in Jordan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Turkey, Indonesia and elsewhere have served as prime ministers, presidents and Cabinet members, so too must the women of the Arab Spring take their places as public officials, leaders and contributors to the construction of their new and reformed regimes.

The inclusion or exclusion of women from the corridors of power and decision-making is, at heart, nothing less than a litmus test for the authenticity of any democracy. Women have already proven their determination to create change and work for reform through the tactics of nonviolence, even at the price of their own lives. Will we take them seriously?

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Hajja - The enchanting land of fog

From ‘eagle-nest’ fortified mountain villages and fairy tale fortresses perched on hills, spectacular terrains, jaw-dropping scenery and views looking over towns and villages to the delighting legacy of its people, Hajja is definitely the target for tourists seeking to explore unique places.

By: Mohamed Alabsi
Courtesy of Yemenia Magazine

A veil of mist covers its hills and mountains many times around the year, giving it the name “land of fog.”

All that, in addition to Hajja’s mighty presence in Yemen’s profound history has attracted enough attention from the Authority of Tourism to drag it into it vision and promote the province as a promising attractive tourist center.

Hajja town is the capital of the province with an altitude iof 1800m above sea level. Located on the highest peak of Hajja if the famous Alqahera fortress “Fortress o Impregnability” which has stood there overlooking the town for the first time ten centuries ago. Till 1962, and before the revolution broke out, the large underground prisons of the fortress were used to house hostages from tribes and those who were considered by the Imam as the most dangerous Yemen leaders and rebels who fought against his regime. Today the fortress is a tourist attraction.



Stunning scenery and glorious culture

Hajja province has so many enchanting places to see, among if which are the following:

Mahabasha

Mahabasha the pearl of Sharafain district and its capital, is located on a mountain range of astonishing and unique beauty. Rising high over green valleys, the landscape is breathtaking; with scattered villages on peaks and mountainsides. The scene of agriculture terraces climbing up all the way to mountain tops is very much a showcase for the change of man and nature. A story that seems to be very old as told by the ancient buildings and fortresses that you find almost everywhere you go to confirm that Yemen is truly one of the oldest enters of civilization in the Middle East.

Mabyan

To the north of Hajja town is Mabyan, another fabulous place that is boasting its own natural beauty,. Again the



mountains rising steeply to 2300m are lined with hundreds of intricately fashioned terraces. These are part of an age-old but highly sophisticated system of water and soil management that enabled and agriculture-based society to flourish in an otherwise hostile environment. The terraces of Mabyan are used to cultivate the famed Yemeni coffee, which has always been among the most highly praised in the world for its distinct flavor and authentic taste. Wadi Moor (Moor Valley) surrounds Mabyan from East to West dividing the mountains and moving heavy seasonal rainfall toward the sea. The Bazel dam is one of its old landmarks. The dame, which is the biggest in the district, is still useful to this day. Shommokh An-naser is a must-see castle in Mabyan that’s towering over hills and terrains with valleys falling away behind, where the contrast of nature reveals genuine beauty. The area offers a wonderful opportunity for paragliding.

Shaharah

As once said, fortified mountain castles and fortresses are two a penny in Yemen, but Shaharah remains a different story. It is incredibly impregnable and has never been conquered by an invading army. Shaharah is located 2600, above sea level. The famous bridge of Shaharah is another authentic example or the ingenuity of Yemenis in architecture. It was built almost five centuries ago to connect two villages separated



for centers back by the deep gorge at a couple of hundred meters height from the ground.

Trekking

Most of Hajja’s highlands surely present some of the best opportunities for trekking. Especially since the distance between villages are short, with plenty of picturesque and stupendous views, fascinating landscape, remarkable architectural style and helpful people. The climb up from plains to those mountainous villages gives an idea why invaders repeatedly failed to break down the defenses of such places. Some of the most famous mountains of Hajja are:

- Afar Mountain that has the ancient Kohlan Afar fort at its peak.
- Hajja Mountain where the Kawkanban Hajja Fort.
- Maswar Mountain, which has several forts at Qodom and Anasirah, Eliahili and Addafeer forts if Mabyan.
- Sharafain Mountain Range including the mountains of Hajoor. Many fortresses are located there on

mountain peaks such as the forts of: Ash-Shahel, Qoffleh, Kohlan ElSharaf, Aslam and many other fortes.

- Parallel to Sharafain Mountains to the north are those mountains of Wash-aha, which have a number of important peaks such as Elmuashah, Elqara and Qushar mountains. These also have numerous fortified villages, forts and old schools.

Hajja Coasts

As the highway follows the Westland the landscape changes dramatically in the transition from western mountain slopes toward the coasts. The coastal area, often called the “hot land” of Tuhama “the low land” is a desert-like plain 30 to 40 km wide. Many beautiful beaches face the Red Sea in the areas of Haradh and Meedi.

Customs and traditions

Like in landscape, diversity is also in customs, traditions and dialect in this amazing province. You will find that

too in traditional dresses, Jambiah, Khayzaran and straw hats, architecture, food, songs, music and dance. A diversity that reflects difference between mountain and plain communities.

Handicrafts

Hajja’s mountain and plain communities have several handicraft products. Among these are the elaborately-made Khayzaran hats, stone pits and jars and potteries.

Hajja Souqs

There are several weekly Souqs in Hajja where the diversity of communities and handicraft products can be easily spotted. These are some of the Souqs that could be attended by visitors and tourists:

- Wadi Shares Sunday Souq
- Kohlan Afar Monday Souq
- Mabyan Wednesday Souq
- Haradh Tuesday Souq
- Attor Friday Souq
- Abss Souq for Wednesda and Thursday
- Shammar Tuesday Souq

Yemenis look to tribes as force for change

Defying stereotypes, tribesmen join protests, call for strong government

By: Judith Spiegel
For the Media Line

It is early morning in Change Square, as the opposition has dubbed the epicenter of their months’ long sit-in in the Yemeni capital. Abdulmajid Ali, a sheikh of the Arhab tribe, is standing at the front of the tent his tribe has set up at the site as tribesmen start the day by sweeping the floors and folding blankets.

“We want a new system. We don’t care if the tribal rules no longer play a role in that system, it should be the rule of law that prevails,” Ali, who is in charge of the Arhab tent, told The Media Line.

It is a view echoed among the thousands camped out at Change Square and, if it prevails, it could bring about a new era in a country whose government and society have been built on edifice of tribes, clans and families, with a central government perched precariously atop trying to keep its balance.

Indeed, Change Square is already acting as a laboratory for a new Yemen. Not so much a square as a warren of streets and allies abutting Sana’a University, Change Square is both a temporary city replete with cafes, shops and art exhibits but a place where tribal rivalries have given away to the common cause of ousting Yemen’s president of three decades, Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Saleh ruled by keeping the countries’ tribes loyal through a complicated system of payoffs and patronage. The strategy unravelled earlier this year when many tribal leaders turned on him, bankrolling the opposition movement. Saleh is gone for the time being after he was wounded two weeks ago

during a battle with tribesmen and is now convalescing in a Saudi hospital.

His exit could open a new chapter in the history of Yemen, the poorest country in the Arab world. Few doubt that the countries’ tribes and their leaders will play a decisive role. But while the tribes are in the democratic opposition, many analysts fear that they are a barrier to change, opposed to economic development and the emergence of a modern, centralized government employing the rule of law. Indeed, they have been accused of providing aid to Al-Qa’ida.

In Change Square, however, the tribesmen themselves say they are ready for modernization.

Arif Al-Sabri belongs to the Madhazj, a small tribe from the area of Taiz. He doesn’t fit the stereotype of a turbaned man with a grizzled face and a rifle in his hand wandering a barren desert landscape. An unemployed engineer, Al-Sabri wears Western clothes and speaks near-perfect English. He has been protesting against Saleh’s regime since strikes broke out in February. But he is a loyal tribesman nevertheless.

“Of course, I belong to a tribe We all do, belonging to a tribe gives people a sense of dignity, of pride, tribes are the root of Yemen,” he told The Media Line. “It doesn’t matter whether Yemen is tribal, it matters whether people are educated.”

Tribal divisions are an essential part of Yemeni society and no one doubts they will disappear in the post-Saleh era. Almost every Yemeni belongs to one and can identify another’s affiliation usually by their last name. The only major exceptions are people at the very bottom and top of Yemeni society -- the qarar, who unaffiliated and considered of lower class, and families believed to be descendants of the prophet Mohammed and therefore enjoy a higher status than the tribesmen.

Many experts argue that it isn’t the

tribes that bring underdevelopment but the other way around: Tribes fill the gaps of a failing state apparatus with their own law and order. Daniel Corstange, who teaches at the University of Maryland, came to that conclusion after conducting a survey of attitudes among 1,400 ordinary tribesmen.

While he found variations among those who view tribal law and institutions positively, depending on education, tribal affiliation and gender, Corstange concluded that Yemenis fell back on tribal law for lack of a better alternative from the central government. “The second-best alternatives provided by tribal law are clearly preferable to nothing,” he wrote in a 2008 study.

“Of course conflicts happen, like in Western societies. There, however, the police step in,” Nadwa Al-Dawsari, director of Partners Yemen and expert on the tribes in Yemen, told The Media Line. “Here, the tribal areas have no functioning institutions like the police or courts, so the tribes maintain security and stability by mediation. That is their traditional role and we have to admire the fact that conflicts aren’t escalating.”

Al-Sabri, the engineer, admits that the tribes play host to Al-Qa’ida fighters, which the U.S. regards as the single biggest danger in Yemen today, not because they sympathize with the movement’s Islamic extremism but out of a tradition of hospitality and protection. “If you ask a tribe for protection, they will give it to you. This is tribal custom,” he says.

But Al-Dawsari disagrees. Under tribal custom, she says, criminals cannot be protected and must be brought to justice. Some Al-Qa’ida militants who belonged to important tribes were expelled by their tribes and have been forced to stay on the run. Moreover, she says, Al-Qa’ida is competing with the authority of the tribes, for whom it



has little respect.

“They preach an Islam that isn’t compatible with the version of Islam of the tribes,” Al-Dawsari says. “In fact, the Islam of Al-Qa’ida speaks very poorly of tribes.”

That doesn’t mean that if the state becomes stronger, tribes will disappear, but they will become repositories of culture and tradition. Saudi Arabia, for example, has many tribes, but they no longer play a role in the maintenance of law and order, Al-Dawsari says.

For Al-Sabri, being a member of a tribe is a matter of tradition and identity, not of politics. He waves his arm towards the tent behind him. There, his fellow tribesmen are chewing [the narcotic-like plant] qat, watching television and discussing the situation. “Silmlia!” they shout to passersby, which means peaceful.

“If this revolution succeeds, this country will be modernized and, of course, the role of the tribes will change as well. The current influence of the tribes is caused by a failing state

system” Al-Sabri says. “Because the state-based law does not work in Yemen, tribal power is still strong.”

Yemeni tribal leaders aren’t after political power in their own right, says political analyst Hassan Al-Haifi. They prefer to throw their support behind leaders, typically the one who pays them the most. “Tribal leaders don’t want responsibility, and other tribes would never allow that. They are only after the overthrow of the regime,” he says.

Al-Dawsari says the tribal system is disintegrating. While the sheikhs have retained their power, they have lost the loyalty of many of the younger generation by growing rich on government subsidies and favoring their children with education and other benefits while their followers remain poor.

“We saw that during the uprising. Many of the young and educated tribe members joined the youth. They no longer follow their sheikhs. They are enrolled in the normal political process. Within a tribe, people vote for different

political parties,” she says.

Because Saleh never tried to break the power of the tribes, that job that awaits Yemen’s next leader. But many fear that he will be replaced by a president who continues with his policies. Among the likely candidates are Saleh’s son and military leader, Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, and Hamid Al-Ahmar, a businessman and one of the leaders of the Islamic Islah-party, both of whom are regarded as too stuck in the ways of the old regime.

Indeed, the failure of Yemen’s next generation of leaders to reform the system and revive the economy could provide Al-Qa’ida with an opening to seize power. Poor and frustrated and lacking any role in the political decision-making process, younger people are likely to turn to Islamists.

“That is the biggest danger,” says Al-Dawsari. “If the youth on the squares in cities like Sana’a or Taiz don’t get what they want, they will be extremely frustrated. They are the new recruits for Al-Qa’ida.”

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Faces from Yemen's revolution



Alaa Jarban (right)

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

In February, a few young students from Sana'a University started protesting, calling for change and an end to President Saleh's regime. It was called 'the day of rage', but unlike that in Egypt, the Yemeni protest didn't last longer than the afternoon, and then they went back to their normal lives again.

A group of those students created an initiative to clean the streets where the protest had taken place. The idea, as they describe it, was to clean up what 'politics' has caused in Yemen.

"We wanted to prove to the others that we didn't protest to ruin the country, but to reform it," said one of the protesters.

That first protest was one of the initial sparks that would lead to the sit-in in front of Sana'a University, soon to be renamed 'Change Square', that continues to this day. Attending that first protest was Alaa Jarban, a 21 year old in his third year of a business administration degree at Sana'a University.

Alaa has always believed in more freedom, democracy and human rights before "the youth revolution" started in Yemen. He had already been engaged in human rights activities, spending six months in Bulgaria with the Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER). This is a youth-to-youth initiative pioneered by UNFPA that brings together more than 500 non-profit organizations and government institutions. Its thousands of young members work in the area of adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

Alaa is also responsible for his family of three sisters and his mother.

"My mother kicks me out of the house, urging me to go to Change Square," said Alaa.

On Feb. 24, two young journalists and three activists were called upon to meet President Ali Abdullah Saleh, and to deliver their message stating why they wanted him to step down. The five decided to call those who they believed in to share the moment where they could speak clearly to the president and ask

him to leave. Alaa was one of those they called.

He attended the group discussion about what to say to the president. Together they papered a draft of demands for a civil state that Saleh's regime has still failed to establish. Alaa worked hard with the group until nightfall. But by the end of the meeting, he stood up and told the group that whilst he appreciated the way they thought, he could not join them.

"I believe that two hours with Saleh is wasting our time. I prefer to be doing something else in the protest that the people will get benefit from," said Alaa.

Over the five months of anti-government protest, Alaa took shifts in the security committees of the protest, and used social media to mobilize people for marches and escalations. He has been dedicating his time to tweet the international community the events unfolding in Yemen. These efforts have attracted threatening messages and phone calls.

"On a personal level, I have received threats that I will be eliminated, via phone calls, SMS, Facebook and even Twitter. My phone has been tapped for a while, and strangers have tried to kidnap me a few times now when leaving Change Square and walking in the city. I have friends who have been captured and tortured by the security forces. Then they are conditionally released. They are now planning to leave the country," Alaa wrote.

"This all puts a heavy psychological pressure on me. I can't go out easily. I can't go out on my own, and I can't stop worrying about my family's safety. The financial pressures also adds to the troubles. There's a fuel shortage, and long lines of cars waiting at empty gas stations on a false hope that they will find few gallons of fuel and diesel so they can provide food for their family."

"Whether this is planned by the failing regime or not, the world needs to know that Yemenis are living in a severe humanitarian catastrophe. It may get even worse, and we really need the international community's help to survive."

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Internet cafes provide escape for youth when electricity goes off



An internet cafe late a night filled with young Yemenis.

By: Mahmood Al-Matari

With electricity off most of the time in Yemen, many youth escape to an internet cafe with a generator to spend their time until the electricity comes back.

The power blackouts are caused by attacks on Mareb Power plant which supplied most of the country with power as well as on the connecting network. Usually angry tribes or vandalism are behind those attacks, but the rest of the country suffers.

In Sana'a many people bought their own generators but it is more difficult to use them now that there is a shortage in fuel subsidies because of the instability in Yemen today. This is why internet cafes who have their own generators have become a refuge for Yemenis who want to access the internet even when everywhere else is without electricity.

Mahadi Al-Jabri, the owner for the Al-Rasheed Net, said when the electricity goes off, many of his neighbours hear the sound of the generator and flock to the cafe like moths following the light. When the power comes back on, most of them leave.

Majed Al-Qadasi is a university student who studies at home all day for his final exam later this month.

When the electricity goes off at night, he tries to study with a candle but can't study long - so he goes to the internet cafe to spend time.

Al-Qadasi made a deal with his cousin, who always stays at home, to call him when the electricity comes back so he can go home and study.

He also has a generator at home, but with crisis, he could not find any petrol in gas stations - and he would have to pay five thousand to get 20 litres on the black market on the streets.

Before the electricity crisis, Al-Qadasi goes to the internet cafe for two hours a day, but nowadays he spends three hours a day there.

He added that the only time that he goes to cafe is at night. Al-Jabri said it's the same for most of his customers.

"Most of the people come at night more than the day. They don't come for any purpose - usually they

see news, then they spend time on other things, like Facebook or any chat website," said Al-Jabri.

Without electricity, the price sometimes doubles in internet cafes in the city, which use generators, petrol and diesel to stay open.

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"The continuous interruption of electricity is also a cause for breakdown for the computers in the cafe - this month I have four broken computers," said Al-Jabri.

Cafe customers are usually 18 to 35 years old, but some cafes allow any age, and they fill up with children - even late at night.

"The increase of the people who come to the cafe is noticeable nowadays - more than before the crisis. But we have our repeat customers who come every day," said Al-Jabri.

Tawfiq Nasser, a graduate student, goes immediately to the cafe when the power goes off.

He spends about an hour check-

ing emails until the power turns back on, but it usually takes more than three hours for the electricity to come back, so he just goes back home to sleep, even if it's early.

Neither Nasser nor other people suffer from the price of the internet cafe in particular, and they said it does not make problem for them - it's the cheapest thing in Yemen right now, and it is a nominal price.

Usually Nasser and others spend the day reading books, studying, hanging around, working or doing other things, but at night, most of the people just go to the internet cafe because there is not much else to do.

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