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رمضان مبارك Ramadhan Mubarak

Fierce battles continue between Republican Guards and tribesmen in Arhab

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, July 31 — Dozens of people were killed on Thursday in fierce battles between Republican Guards loyal to Saleh's regime and tribesmen loyal to the Islah opposition party in Arhab, 30km north Sana'a, local sources told the Yemen Times on Saturday.

Around 20 opposition tribesmen were killed while the number of soldiers killed is unknown, according to an independent source in Arhab.

The state run Saba News agency reported on Saturday the funeral of three officers of the third mountain infantry brigade, among them two lieutenants who were killed in battles on Thursday with armed tribesmen.

Fighting between the two sides erupted again on Thursday after a tribal envoy failed to negotiate a common solution between the two parties, Sheikh Abd Al-Jaleel Sinan, a tribal leader of the Arhab tribes who chairs the mediation committee, told the Yemen Times by phone on Saturday.

"It is a fierce war from all directions, and there are dead and wounded on

both sides," Sinan said.

The tribal negotiation envoy began their task three months ago when armed conflict first occurred between camps of the Republican Guard and opposition armed tribesmen loyal to the Islah party.

Around two weeks ago, the head of the tribal mediation envoy told the Yemen Times that opposition tribesmen affiliated to the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) opposition coalition were procrastinating on a ceasefire proposal that had been agreed on by Saleh's forces.

The mediation committee resumed its job last weekend and met with General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, commander of the First Armored Division, who joined the opposition last March. Al-Ahmar defected after at least 52 peaceful protesters were killed on March 18 by snipers said to be from the Republican Guards, commanded by President Saleh's son, Brigadier General Ahmed Ali Saleh.

The committee met with Al-Ahmar in the hope that his authority could pressure the opposition tribesmen to accept the ceasefire proposal, but violent

battles erupted that evening.

"On Thursday [28 July] we went to General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar and asked his assistance to create an understanding with this group [the armed tribesmen in Arhab] because he can influence them, and he agreed," the head of the mediation committee said.

"He [Al-Ahmar] proposed some conditions: a four-month ceasefire, that both sides return stolen military equipment, the formation of a hazards-assessment committee, and in general to work hard and seriously to end the conflict," said Sheikh Sinan. "We conveyed these proposed conditions to Abdullah Al-Kibsi, envoy to the mediation efforts for Ahmed Saleh and Vice President Abd Rabo Hadi."

"We agreed with Ahmed Ali to hold a meeting on Saturday July 30 at 11:00 am, but he apologized on Saturday saying he was unable to attend the meeting while we and around 22 sheikhs [tribal leaders] were waiting for him at my house in Sana'a," said Sinan.

Sheikh Sinan said that neither party could overcome the other in this fight.

Mohsen Al-Zubairy, a tribal leader in Arhab and supporter of Saleh's regime, explained that the opposition groups were clashing with three military camps of the Republican Guards: The Al-Thawma camp, the Al-Sama mountain camp and the Al-Firja camp.



Anti-regime armed tribesmen in Al-Hasaba district of the capital Sana'a who entered a 13-day war with Saleh's forces and now they are on ceasefire brokered by Saudi Arabia.

He said that "the opposition armed groups are attacking the camps to be able to take control of the capital Sana'a, as this military area is the gate to Sana'a."

He said that opposition armed groups

have a wide variety of weapons including rocket launchers, Katyusha rockets, armored vehicles, rocket-propelled grenades, bazookas and different size-machine guns.

"Other opposition armed groups from

Marib, Al-Jawf, Nihm and Khawaln are also participating in these battles against the Republican Guards," he said.

He added that "there are also armed men affiliated to the Southern Movement who come from southern areas to fight with the opposition against the government forces."

An anonymous local source who is aligned with the Islah opposition party denied the involvement of outside armed groups saying that "only [local] tribesmen are fighting on the ground."

Another local source added that "this is sedition and the tribal leaders are trying to calm the situation. Only Yemen's enemies are benefiting from this conflict."

"This conflict is related to the anti-Saleh revolution which started peacefully. Some leaders of the Republican Guards have tried to create armed fronts to turn the peaceful uprisings into violent confrontations," he concluded.

The armed conflict in Arhab district broke out three months ago after some units of the Republican Guard attempted to move from their camps into the city of Sana'a. This provoked a violent response from local opposition tribesmen who claimed this force would be used against anti-regime protesters in the capital, or against the First Armored Division that had sided with the protesters.

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More casualties in Abyan while US considers a different approach with AQAP

By: Yemen Times Staff and Agencies

ABYAN, July 30 — Over 15 Yemeni military men were killed in Abyan during the last three days according to state officials. The men were ambushed by Al-Qaeda elements who attacked army units on Friday and later days.

The losing battle with the jihadis and affiliates of AQAP in Abyan has made US strategists rethink their policy in the region regarding this group.

Former US intelligence Chief Dennis Blair has tried to convince the Obama administration during a recent security forum to reconsider the \$80 billion a year it spends to fight terrorism. He said that CIA drone campaign aimed at Al-Qaeda is backfiring by damaging the US-Pakistan relationship. The alternative is relying more on local forces however, there are questions on the efficiency of this approach as well considering that Al-Qaeda has taken over the city of Zunjibar in Abyan since May and the Yemeni state cannot take it back since.

Moreover, there is an undecided group of Yemeni tribes who regularly change sides in the conflict areas and who many

times become casualties of the Yemeni government's attacks just as reported in official media on Saturday that Government airstrikes in southern Yemen targeting Al-Qaeda linked militants accidentally killed 14 pro-government tribesmen.

Security official Abdullah al-Jadana told AFP on Saturday that men from the Fadl tribe advanced on Zinjibar, killing two militants and occupying a government communications building before at least three airstrikes hit the area late Friday, he said. Fourteen tribesmen were killed in the strike.

Yemeni military forces arrested an four al-Qaida fighters, including a field commander, in southern volatile province of Abyan, where government forces have been combating the terrorist group since May, the country's Defense Ministry said Saturday.

"Al-Qaida commander Abdullah Saeed Omar Habibat and three other terrorists were arrested by army forces in separate areas in Abyan," the ministry said in the statement posted on its website.

"Habibat, who is among the most wanted terrorists by the Yemeni Inte-

rior Ministry, was arrested in a security checkpoint between Abyan and the port city of Aden on Friday, while the three other al-Qaida-affiliated fighters were captured during battles at the front line near Abyan's capital city of Zinjibar on Saturday," said the statement.

So far the conflict in Abyan has claimed the lives of tens of Yemenis from both sides while around 54,000 civilians have fled Abyan to neighboring areas.

After weeks of pleas for support from a besieged military brigade near Zinjibar, the government sent the first reinforcements on Saturday, aiming to flush militants out of the seaside city.

"The head of the Defence Ministry sent reinforcements including tanks, rocket launchers and 500 extra soldiers," a local official said.

Residents said dozens were hurt on both sides in street fighting, after troops and tribesmen entered the city from the east. The conflict has created a standstill in daily life and many of the regular activities such as going to work or school have been interrupted.

In nearby Jaar, Islamist militants who seized the city in March sent gunmen

to surround and occupy a government hospital, medics at the hospital told Reuters.

The militants were now using the hospital to treat their wounded fighters from Zinjibar, they said. Doctors and patients were permitted to leave the hospital, they said, as the militants brought their own medical team into the hospital.

A local official earlier told Reuters some 20 militants were killed and dozens on both sides were injured during the fighting. He said 35 militants had been killed since the offensive began, but only confirmed the death of two soldiers.

Medical workers in Zinjibar declined to give an estimate of soldiers' deaths, saying they were too overwhelmed with casualties entering the hospital.

Militants who seized Jaar in March and took Zinjibar in May had taken control of a football stadium outside Zinjibar in June, where the army had been using as a makeshift supply base.

Troops had been fighting militants around the soccer field since dawn, residents and a local official said, and armoured vehicles shelling the area destroyed part of the stadium.

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Taiz receives Ramadan amidst a street war

By: Emad Al-Saqqaf

TAIZ, July 31 — The ceasefire from last Monday in Taiz between armed opposition men and the regime was broken only two days following its signing.

The agreement which stipulated the withdrawal of all military units and the removal of all armed groups was broken when armed men attacked a military vehicle transporting lunch meals to security units in Jamal Street in the city.

The armed men killed one soldier and wounded two others before taking the vehicle. Street battles have continued since noon on Thursday in different areas of the city including Al-Masbh, Kulaba, Al-Rawda, Usaifara, Al-Sateen, and around Freedom Square.

An unconfirmed number of people have been killed and wounded from both sides in these confrontations. Civilians have also been targeted since a woman with her daughter were killed last Friday in the Kulaba area by shrapnel from a shell.

A source from the ceasefire committee told the Yemen Times that they met on Friday and discussed the reasons why the agreement has been breached.

"We learned that there are warmongers who are attempting to break the ceasefire because they are benefiting from the deterioration in security in the governorate," said the source.

"We have a great hope that the ceasefire will work and we are working on the present problems until things return to normal. Especially as we are heading into Ramadan when Yemenis usually encourage love and ties of brotherhood among each other," the source added.

This situation has confused many of the citizens of Taiz and plunged their daily life into terror and panic. Most citizens



An attacked governmental office in June in Taiz by armed tribesmen who vowed to protect anti-regime protesters against Saleh's loyal forces.

are unable to go shopping for basic food items and do not even have money to buy such items, locals told the Yemen Times.

Muslim Yemenis used to receive Ramadan with deep delight and traditionally would shop more and buy new clothes. However, the security condition in Taiz has prevented people from being able to enjoy doing so this year.

"Two days ago we started to be optimistic that security had improved [in Taiz]. We started thinking as to how to receive Ramadan this year, since we have not received our salaries for this month," Dabwan Saeed, a teacher in Taiz said. "But unfortunately the armed groups came out again."

"It is true that we have been receiving Ramadan amidst tough financial times during the past few years, but our suffering has increased this year. We will be forced to receive Ramadan with incomplete pleasure, mixed with terror and depression after we lost our security," he said.

"We have become unable to live peacefully and we do not know who has

caused this situation. Is it the regime or the revolution?" he added.

Noman Qayed, another citizen in Taiz said, "We were used to the sound of the mud-canon when we were kids receiving Ramadan, and knowing the breakfast and Al-Sahoor [an Islamic meal eaten before dawn] times. This year we will have our breakfast to the sounds of the Republican Guards' canons."

"We will not be able to walk around the streets of the city, or the popular markets which have distinctive flavor in Ramadan. The present Ramadan will be with the flavor of blood and gunpowder. The sounds of bullets and canon shells have killed even the children's pleasure in receiving Ramadan, and we are unable to go out and practice the annual traditions of receiving Ramadan which saddens us even more," Qayed concluded.

Armed conflict broke out in Taiz between President Saleh's forces and armed opposition men in late May, after Saleh's security forces stormed the anti-regime protesters camp, killing over 50 peaceful protesters and burning their tents.

Councils compete in lead up to transition of power

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANA'A, July 31 — Competition has begun between opposition parties to gain public support for either a National Council or a Transitional Council. Both councils are supposed to represent anti-government protesters nationwide.

In Al-Baida governorate, 14 members withdrew from a meeting of the National Council and announced a preparatory committee for the revolutionary leadership council, which is an expansion of the Transitional Council in Sana'a.

The National Council including the coalition of opposition political parties, the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), along with the National Committee for Dialog headed by Hameed Al-Ahmeer, promised to announce its members within 18 days of July 20. Secretly, opposition leaders are choosing six members from each governorate, three that are independent and three who are JMP members. The criteria for membership is not clear yet.

The National Council came as an alternative proposal to the Transitional Council formed by activist Tawakul Karman, who announced the members of the Transitional Council without informing them. The Transitional Council has not taken steps on the ground as yet, although many anti-government protesters were happy of its creation as a step in escalating protests.

"We are getting confused. We wanted to have the regime withdraw and finish the revolution by now, but by every party is thinking of their own interests and fame, which has made finishing the revolution hard to accomplish," said one of the anti-government protesters.

The National Council is attempting to be more comprehensive and representative than the Transitional Council that consists only of 17 well-known national figures. But the National Council has not included the Houthis who have been a main player in the anti-government movement since February. The Transitional Council is now trying to represent more people by creating preparation committees for revolutionary leadership in other governorates.

Political analyst, Ahmed Al-Zurqa, said that the JMP is trying to gain international and local support for their actions by forming the National Council, while Tawakul is more concerned with the revolution and needed some action for escalation purposes.

"The ideas behind the national or the transitional council are not yet clear. They should have worked together and unified their efforts for the country's best interests and not personalized the revolution to gain more interest for themselves," said Al-Zurqa.

Other players in the game include a tribal coalition headed by Shiekh Sadeq

Al-Ahmer, head of Hashid confederation of tribes that announced their solidarity with the peaceful youth revolution on March 19.

The tribal coalition vowed to protect protesters and to support the Arhab tribes that are currently fighting the state just north of Sana'a. One of the goals of the coalition is to maintain the unity of Yemen.

Al-Ahmer said that Yemen's tribes are looking forward to a civil state, as the tribes "get bored" of being armed and having to carry their weapons all the time.

The tribes warned against any assault against the protesters, saying that any violence would require a reaction from their side. They said that they would use all means to stop an attack against protesters, even if cost their money or lives, indicating their readiness for war if required. They also called on the regime to immediately stop using its forces and military assets against the Yemeni people.

Al-Ahmer vowed that president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has been hospitalized in a Saudi hospital in Riyadh since an assassination attempt against him on June 4, will only reenter Yemen "over Al-Ahmer's dead body". Al-Ahmer added that he was not aiming for Saleh's position and that the presidency should only be taken by the best qualified person.

UN's optimism at a political solution challenged by opposition

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, July 31 — Concluding one of his longest visits to Yemen of around two weeks, UN envoy Jamal bin Omar announced to media that he is hopeful and will return soon for his sixth visit to Yemen since January this year.

Bin Omar reinstated the need for a peaceful transfer of power in order to save the country from a state of collapse.

"It is the time for Yemeni political stakeholders to take on their responsibilities towards finding a political solution in Yemen that is based upon the Gulf initiative," he said to the media on Friday.

After meeting with officials from all sides he hinted at a new deal in the making, although he did not give many details. However, Mohammad Qahtan a spokesperson for the opposition coalition Joint Meeting Parties, clearly reacted to the UN's deal by saying that the JMP

will not enter into any agreements unless and until an actual transition of power has taken place.

Bin Omar said on Monday that the ruling party and the opposition had laid down some new conditions that hinder attempts to reach a reconciliation deal.

"I urge Yemen's various parties to reach an agreement immediately that is acceptable to all sides to put an end to the crisis," Omar told a news conference organized by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC).

Any solution should meet the Yemeni people's aspirations, the UN official said.

He stressed that Yemeni political powers should make an agreement on how to enter a transitional period as soon as possible.

Jamal Bin Omar said, "There is political will in a large number of the political leaders, and they are all aware that the country's situation has worsened so much

so that the people are now suffering and cannot tolerate these conditions. The incentive is for all to seek the possibility of getting out of this crisis."

On Saturday, the opposition rejected the envoy's offer to start a dialog with the ruling party, demanding that President Ali Abdullah Saleh first transfer power to his deputy. But the UN envoy remains optimistic about the future of peace.

The UN has so far been successful at not commenting on the Transitional Presidential Council or any other initiative created by Yemeni groups to end the political stalemate, although on more than one occasion bin Omar insisted that the solution to Yemen's problems must come from Yemen. The new plan seems in-sync with the Gulf initiative, although giving it a UN cover which was welcomed by all traditional political parties in Yemen, while the youth in revolution squares remained indifferent.

Fuel crisis eases yet tensions remains

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SANA'A, July 31 — With the new initiative of importing unleaded fuel and flooding the local market with it, the lines of cars waiting to refuel outside gas stations have ended. However, citizens across the country have complained that the increase in fuel prices, especially during the traditionally expensive season of Ramadan, has caused price hikes.

Some gas stations, such as one on Al-Khamseen Rd. in Sana'a, are selling regular fuel as unleaded or at the price of unleaded, according to locals. Customers have been told that they have instructions from the Ministry of Oil to do so in order to compensate gas stations for the financial losses incurred during the fuel crisis.

The crisis, which lasted for around three months, was caused by a shortage in local production as well as difficulty in transporting oil between cities due to insecurity. Minister of Trade and Industry, Hisham Sharaf, has taken the initiative of importing only unleaded fuel and selling it at the standard international

price, double the price of regular fuel.

"This way we can end the black market, because the price at gas stations and in the black market will be similar, and there will be no point for citizens to purchase fuel through the black market," he said.

He said that the state has distributed unleaded fuel to all the stations and those who are selling unleaded are violating the law. Some smugglers will be trying to get rid of the quantities they have of the regular fuel but soon the quantities will be over and only three stations in each cities will be allowed to sell regular fuel at the cheaper prices, those stations are to be announced later.

"We would like to warn people from buying fuel from the black market because there is no guarantee as to its quality and using bad fuel will damage vehicles," he added.

However, there have been outbreaks of violence over fuel across the country. In Ibb governorate two men were killed over a quarrel regarding fuel at a gas station two days ago. In Al-Dhale' governorate protesters blocked the main

road between Sana'a and Aden, while protesters in Lahj burned a gas station and blocked the main road after a violent protest march.

In Hodeida, public transport drivers have been on a two day strike causing long delays for local commuters. And in Aden, women demonstrated in front of an oil company demanding a decrease in oil prices regardless of the type.

"The problem with Yemenis is that they are very emotional and many times short sighted. They only see the immediate results and do not understand long term consequences," said consumer behavior researcher Amatalbari Al-Jawli.

"They were OK lining up for fuel for days as long as it was at the regular price. It was as if time did not matter. They were also forced to buy fuel at exaggerated prices on the black market, and that also did not matter," she said. "Now that fuel is available and at a price less than what they used to find it on the black market, they are angry."

She explained that even though Yemenis suffered high prices and scarcity during the crisis, they are more scared

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

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OUR OPINION

Yemen's everlasting transition

The absence of active involvement by the strongest and only recognized opponent to the regime during the last few weeks has hurt Yemen's revolution, and somehow was behind the creation of the presidential transitional council.

The revolution's youth were always one step ahead of all political parties, but even this council seems to have lost its zeal. Now we have yet another initiative, this time by former members of the ruling party, who although have not registered their own party have given it the name 'Justice and Construction'.

This initiative is another suggestion at a possible transitional structure, but one that includes everyone. This is the deal breaker between the youth and everyone else.

In a way, the independent youth wanted to mimic Libya's transitional council based in Benghazi which received international recognition and support instantly. But so far it is not working, for three logical reasons. First, the youth don't have full control over any cities, they are sharing authority in some spaces across the whole country. Second, whilst the youth have some military support, they do not have any visible structures that could be recognized as parties to rule the country during a transitional period. And finally, there are no visible youth leaders agreeable to all, nor is there an electoral mechanism through which leaders could be elected.

For the same last reason I don't think the transitional council will work. It is a good idea but without much passion or support behind it, and therefore it will not work. Also, there is always the question of legitimacy.

The best solution for something like this are elections in each of the 'Change Squares'. Cheap and safe elections where protesters can cast their votes to identify at least five representatives in each square, at least one of whom is a woman. Then those elected can then do the talking with others. I don't see any solution otherwise.

A lot of people ask me whether I see a political solution on the horizon. Unfortunately, I know Yemen too well to be able to say 'yes'. We take too long on everything and we don't get along enough to make compromises and put the country's interests before our own personal gains. That the truth of Yemeni politicians, and I think, of many politicians around the world.

The US and the UN and everyone else keeps sending officials to work things out. The way I see it, nothing will happen until Yemenis decide, and I am not talking about Yemeni politicians as they are too narrow minded and limited. I am talking about the Yemeni people. And we don't really need the whole people, we just need a few people who have brains and passion - only then will change take place.

And for that we will have to wait a long long time. Until then we might as well try to make use of whatever resources we have to make a good living and just get by. At least until enough people finally decide to work together for the greater good of the country.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

The convoluted debate on drones

By: Malou Innocent The National Interest

The same week U.S. Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta declared "we're within reach of strategically defeating al-Qaeda"—an assessment that many believe reflects the efforts of seven years of CIA drone strikes—former Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair called America's "unilateral" drone war in countries like Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia a mistake. "Because we're alienating the countries concerned," Blair said, "because we're treating countries just as places where we go attack groups that threaten us, we are threatening the prospects of long-term reform."

Given that our Nobel Peace Prize-winning president has drastically escalated the use of these flying, robotic hitmen, there seems to be some confusion at the White House.

Speaking to attendees at the Aspen Security Forum, Blair said drone strikes in Pakistan should be launched only when America had the full cooperation of the government in Islamabad and "we agree with them on what drone attacks" should target. As explained elsewhere, this author accepts the efficacy of America's drone war, but with enormous reluctance. That said, part of Blair's assessment seems wildly out of touch. Why would Washington wait for permission from Islamabad to hunt al Qaeda?

First, individuals either within or with ties to Pakistan's spy agency have collaborated with insurgents that frequently attack U.S. and coalition troops in Afghanistan. That doesn't speak well for Blair's call for joint cooperation. Second, we've known for years that elements within Pakistan have thwarted—on several occasions—foreign-led attempts to find and take out terrorists. Even someone who is not wildly enamored with drones understands the argument for employing them unilaterally when confronted with uncooperative governments. Policymakers, however, should be weighing the ability to keep militant groups off balance against the costs of facilitating the rise of more terrorists, particularly in a country as volatile as Pakistan.

A statement even more out of step

than Mr. Blair's came from Michael E. Leiter, former head of the National Counterterrorism Center. Earlier this week at the Aspen Security Forum, Leiter contended that assessments that al Qaeda was on the verge of collapse lacked "accuracy and precision," and that al Qaeda's leadership and structure in Pakistan "is still there and could launch some attacks." He also raised concerns about the possible long-term effects of intensive CIA paramilitary operations on conventional espionage and analysis for issues like China: "The question has to be asked: Has that in some ways diminished some of its strategic, long-term intelligence collection and analysis mission?"

Leiter's comments are troubling due to the basis for his concern about the effectiveness of counter-terrorism. To emphasize why the growing consensus that al Qaeda is "on the ropes" is premature, Leiter noted that the failed plot to blow up a vehicle in Times Square in May 2010 was carried out by an American trained by the Pakistani Taliban. This statement is misguided in what it implies. By no means can America ensure that terrorists never come from Pakistan, or anywhere else. Such an aim epitomizes our overreaction to terrorism. It gives planners in Washington not only a convenient justification to prolong the wars we're already in, but also an open-ended rationale to intervene anywhere else. Let's remember that the United States is already fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, is threatening to launch a third against Iran, bombs remote villages in nuclear-armed Pakistan, and has expanded operations into Somalia, Yemen, and possibly elsewhere. This is especially concerning given the current construction of a not-so-secret U.S. air base in the Middle East for more targeted strikes in Yemen.

Unfortunately, the President's choice to replace Mr. Leiter, Matthew Olsen, said at his confirmation hearing this week before the Senate Intelligence Committee that he would define the strategic defeat of al Qaeda as "ending the threat that al Qaeda and all of its affiliates pose to the United States and its interests around the world." This, too, is problematic. U.S. policy toward "ending the threat" from al Qaeda has been mainly through wars and intervention,

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and one of the many unintended consequences of American intervention has been the radicalization of Western-born Muslims.

Take, for instance, Somalia, where Washington has repeatedly tried and failed to bring order. Over the past two years, as many as 20 Somali-American men have disappeared from the Minneapolis area. Many analysts fear these men were recruited to fight alongside al-Shabab ("the youth"), the militant wing of the Islamist Somali government the United States and Ethiopia overthrew in 2006. In describing Shirwa Ahmed, a naturalized American of the Somali diaspora believed to be the first U.S. citizen to carry out a terrorist suicide bombing, FBI director Robert Mueller said, "It appears that this individual was radicalized in his hometown in Minne-

sota." Somalia is a classic case of how American intervention is forever self-perpetuating.

Debates over drones should not be cut and dry. Scholars, no matter the subject, should be "intellectually honest." Supporters of counterterrorism can and should feel comfortable having reservations about the tactics employed, given Washington's tendency for threat inflation. Drones may well become America's new permanent wartime footing. Sadly, we have learned nothing from 9/11 if drones provide policymakers a more antiseptic avenue for satiating their endless appetite for intervention.

Malou Innocent is a foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute and blogs for The Skeptics at The National Interest.

Yemen: It ain't over till the fat lady sings "Freedom"

By: Safa Mubgar The Independent

Mark Twain said: "Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please." For many, Yemen is one of the least-known countries in the world, newsworthy only for Islamist militants, or its backward, "savage" exoticism. Yet Yemen, situated on the south west corner of the Arabian Peninsula, cradled successive, significant civilisations: being ruled by Minean, Sabaeen and Himyarite civilisations, each depending for their fabulous wealth on the incense trade. Myrrh and frankincense were the oil of the ancient world: they fuelled sacred rituals across myriad ancient cultures, including Egyptian, Greek and Roman. Now fast forward through 2000 years of colonialism, internal conflicts, dictatorship and poverty. Today, buoyed on the tidal wave of Middle Eastern uprisings and revolts, Yemen is the subject of international attention once more.

Although peaceful dissenting voices have existed for years (such as the southern al-Hirak al-Janubi movement, and civil society groups in Sana'a and Ta'iz), the immediate impetus for the Peace Revolution came in January, when events in Tunisia stirred, and

erupted the night that Mubarak of Egypt fell. Yemenis came out in their millions - men, and women, teenagers and children; townsmen were joined by unarmed tribesmen (remarkable in the second most heavily armed country in the world), and then eventually by the Political Opposition. Inspired and organised, millions protested - setting up tents in the main squares. The poor people of Yemen, whom many analysts thought would not revolt out of underdevelopment, rose from their poverty and with one voice cried "Irhal" (Go!) to their tin-pot dictator. Within Yemen and beyond, Yemenis began to harness the power of solidarity and support through traditional and new media: handbills, newspapers, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, with magnificent artistry and creativity.

We tossed and turned with every coming Friday; that would be the day Ali Abdullah Saleh would Go. But the People have endured four months of misery: no electricity, no water, no gas, no oil; no life. For 33 years, Saleh was cruel and exploitative, abusing his own people; his removal would seem as long, bloody and deceitful as his rule. First, the JMP (Joint Meeting Party - a disparate, mixed group of people representing the Political Opposition) tried to negotiate the terms on which Saleh might step aside peacefully; in-

stead, he began his tirade and simultaneously let loose his regime thugs on the peaceful protestors, killing scores.

Then, the "Yemen file" was passed to our Gulf neighbours, especially the Saudi Kingdom. The GCC (the Gulf Cooperation Council) Transition Proposal started a twisted drama more suited to a ghastly soap-opera. The proposal was flawed in origin and design, being a selection of Saleh's statements stitched together, and handed to the self-interested GCC. As such, it was never going to address the root cause of the problem: the corrupt and murderous regime. The GCC's apathy left Saleh feeling stronger; he declined to sign the deal, and began to provoke and attack the people, drawing the country and tribes into his cycle of divisive violence.

Even now, after an attack on his Presidential compound wounded him and many cronies gravely, Yemenis remain unsure of his condition, since the drama continues in some secretive hospital in Riyadh. The future of Yemen hangs equally in the balance, as his sons, nephews and lackeys jostle for position and power in his absence, and the Opposition continue to be as ineffective in his absence as they were in his presence.

Meantime, the demands and aims of the Peaceful Revolution of Yemeni

Youth struggle to be heard, both domestically and internationally:

- An end to oligarchic dictatorship, and its replacement with parliamentary democracy;

- A transitional period, to build civil society and promote rights and responsibilities;

- A separation of powers to ensure professional judiciary, military and security forces;

- A rehabilitation of the educational system, the economy, and national infrastructure.

All the People know Yemen's complexities and problems; no one is blindly optimistic but rather, cautiously hopeful. The road ahead is full of bumps, twists and turns, with the occasional crash ahead; indeed, casualties are already mounting. But to tell 24 million Yemenis that their hopes and aims are not worth the journey is to be heartless as well as mindless. We don't know when; we don't know how; and we don't know the cost; but we all know for sure that freedom will come to those who believe. Freedom will come to Yemen.

Safa Mubgar is a Londoner with an eye for the world, and a lazy passion for culture and books. Also a Springing Arab, of the Yemeni variety.

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By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

Hesham Al-Ziyadi

Inspired by the success of Tunisian revolution in January this year, an independent pro-democracy protester, Hesham Al-Ziyadi, decided with a group of students and youth to demand the stepping down of President Saleh.

Al-Ziyadi is a student at the Faculty of Mass Communication at Sana'a University and has had a noticeable role in the revolution. He isn't only active in the field but also in his media-related activities and contributions.

In addition to his participation in all marches and demonstrations, Al-Ziyadi takes part in different political symposium and conferences to express his views about the revolution.

"Our revolution requires a steely determination and considerable efforts to succeed. I will continue giving my services and contributions to the revolution tirelessly," he said.

Recalling his memories from 'Change Square' over the last six months, Al-Ziyadi said: "I found



many lovely and trusted friends from different governorates and different political affiliations in Change Square. We have eaten together, dreamt of our new civil country and demonstrated

against the regime together. Some of those friends have been killed and some seriously injured."

The revolution, according to Al-Ziyadi, has two chance of

success – either via the military action of the tribesmen against the Republican Guards, or via a peaceful solution by the revolutionaries.

Al-Ziyadi confirmed that

the revolutionary youth are determined to cling to peaceful means despite the frequent violent crackdowns by the regime's security and thugs.

"We don't want to drag our country into a civil war as the regime wants. We will endeavor to build our new civil state without more bloodshed and damage," he said.

"The current clashes between the tribesmen and Republican Guards are not a civil war. Those tribesmen are fighting against the regime's security in self-defense," he explained.

"We are really afraid because this regime wants to drag the country into a destructive civil war. If the regime continues its crack down and its brutal killing of Yemenis, the people will resort to armed struggle," he said.

Over the last six months, Al-Ziyadi has received several threats from unknown people because of his contributions towards the revolution.

"Some of my accusers ask me what international agencies we are working for. Unfortunately, the regime accuses us of working for international agencies and receiving money from them," he said. "One accuser threatened to put me in jail if I continue my revolutionary activities, and told me to also tell my friends to stop their activities."

"We have received many provocations, threats and attacks from the security forces and thugs, but we decided to be patient," he said.

"One day, on one of the channels I described President Saleh as the former president and accused his regime of committing many crimes against humanity. After my statement I received the same threats by known

people," he said.

Al-Ziyadi indicated that the next few days will be witness to several political and military surprises.

Speaking about the current momentum of the revolution, he said: "The revolution has started to gather momentum after the victories of armed people in the fighting areas. These victories have been a crucial factor in the success of our revolution."

Asked about the achievements and advantages of the revolution, he said: "Our revolution has caused the plan of bequeathing power to the president's family to fail, and made all people vigorous in getting the to corrupt regime to step down."

He added: "The revolution has united all people with different political and religious affiliations against the dying regime. It has convinced all people, including Islamists, of the importance of establishing a civil state."

Al-Ziyadi listed a number of reasons behind the delay in the success of the revolution: "The excessive force used by the Republican Guards against Yemenis, the regime's exploitation of economic resources to fight peaceful pro-democracy protesters, the American and Saudi stance on our revolution, the opposing parties' submissiveness to initiatives and the weak stance of the UN led, have all led to a lengthy delay in the revolution's victory."

Al-Ziyadi confirmed that all protesters are united, though minor differences still exist between them. "We dream of establishing a civil and liberal state with the principles of justice, dignity, freedom and equality," he said.



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The first and the only national meeting in Yemen on the occasion of the World Hepatitis Day



Prof. Dr. Yasser Abdulmughni
Gen. Manager of the 48 Hospital



General Abu Bakr al-Ghazali



Mr. Ammar Al-Madhagi
National Customer Manager
MSD Yemen

On the occasion of the World Hepatitis Day, the Model 48 Hospital held a scientific forum (the first of its kind in Yemen) under the theme "New approaches in diagnosing and treating viral hepatitis and the prevention ways".

During the seminar that was initiated with the national anthem and some verses from the Holy Quran, **Prof. Dr. Yasser Abdulmughni**, Gen. Manager of the 48 Hospital made a welcome speech. "It is a pleasure," **Prof. Dr. Abdulmughni** said, "to share with you this seminar that is the first of its kind in our country on the occasion of the World Hepatitis Day. We are one of the countries that need this approach most because we have now an area infested with liver virus. I believe that as long as there are specialists and consultants who recognize the significance of the matter, we will do what other countries have done, that is finding a way to establish a program to combat this disease and curb the increasing rates of liver cancer in our country."

He added, "We should thank Allah that at 48 Hospital, we have modern diagnosis instruments that would help us to reach a comprehensive national program whose preparations are made at this moment and you are concerned with this matter through your work today and through reviewing the latest developments in this field as well as sharing information. We, the management of 48 Hospital, are prepared to make all efforts to create a scientific, research and consultative infrastructure the hospital may need and we will allocate all necessary resources for this purpose as long as such results are practically experimented as a means to form a plan that would bind the parties concerned with the implementation of the comprehensive national program. At the 48 Medical City, we are working to establish a center that specializes in diagnosis and treating viral hepatitis and liver diseases. There were other centers in different fields that had been established with direction and support from the leadership of the Republican Guard in addition to an integral war center that would be added to the existing centers at Model 48 Medical City. Finally, I wish you luck and success in your work." In the end of meeting, **Prof. Dr. Abdulmughni** mentioned his thanks for all participants from NGOs, Specialists, experts and for MSD management represented by **Mr. Ammar Al-Madhagi**, National Manager, MSD, Yemen and for its distributor in country, Dawa Pharma.

Another speech was delivered by the Republican Guard Gen. Staff, Brig. **General Abu Bakr Al-Ghazali** who addressed the participants by saying:

"General Manager of 48 Mdeal Hospital, esteemed guests and members of the specialized committee concerned with keeping abreast of all new developments in diagnosing, treating and preventing liver diseases,

it is my honor to initiate this function on behalf of the Republican Guard, Brig. **General Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh** who conveys his regards and congratulations on organizing this forum. The benefit of such scientific seminars is to review what is new in the field of medicine and its various specialties and in liver diseases to which a World Hepatitis Day was assigned in view of its

significance and the seriousness and widespread of such diseases all over the world. We in the Republic of Yemen realize, but you as specialists know about this matter better than I do, that this plague spreads partly as a result of lack in awareness while it is said that prevention is better than cure. We hope this seminar would come up with recommendations that emphasize the importance of spreading health awareness on all media in addition to direct lectures on all occasions. I would like to commend the Republican Guard and the Special Forces medical services and the efforts they make to hold awareness lectures for all their units. We wish that the ministries of information and health would focus on awareness campaigns as a part of treatment, which we hope to be a result of this scientific seminar.

We extend our thanks to the management of 48 Hospital as well as medical services of the Republican Guard and the Special Forces for hosting this scientific forum that would be of benefit to all its participants, specialists and the government when its outcomes are published.

I congratulate you on the arrival of the holy month of Ramadan, which we wish to be auspicious and blessing and to be the end of our troubles.

Mr. Ammar Al-Madhagi, National Customer Manager, MSD Yemen, declared:

MSD is a global healthcare leader working to help the world be well, we demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to healthcare through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships to help people around the world lead healthier lives and also we aspire to be the best healthcare company in the world and are dedicated to providing leading innovations and solutions for tomorrow.

Al-Madhagi mentioned more: I want to clarify that the World Hepatitis Day is an opportunity for society to know the facts about Hepatitis C in terms of prevalence, modes of transmission, treatment ways and the risks of late diagnosis and its burden on the social & economical situation of Yemen, that is why the meeting was an opportunity to clarify all this issues in addition to focusing on The Dawn of New Antiviral Therapy, thus I am really proud of Model 48 Hospital management that was caring in providing the best health service in the country by following the updated guidelines and theories in diagnosis and treatment and according the global standards and strategies in improving the health system.

Al-Madhagi added, MSD as a

partner is initiative in providing the updated information to improve the awareness and knowledge about different Hepatitis C aspects in the country and we will ensure receiving the best service for Hepatitis patients not only by providing the proper medicines but via conducting many helpful programs that will improve the diagnosis and treatment of Hepatitis dramatically and unprecedentedly all together in collaboration with Model 48 Hospital to avoid the current situation in the country of starting the diagnosis and treatment in the late stage of disease, and for the purpose of improving the social and economical burden of Hepatitis C in the country, thus we have to know that the hepatitis burden is a part of the economical crisis in the country since it affects negatively on the productivity of manpower in the different sectors of Yemen's economy so it is a must to start relieving this burden as a participation to improve our economical crisis.

Last but not least, I want to thank the management of Model 48 Hospital represented by **Prof. Dr. Yasser Abdulmughni**, general manager for his unique service in development the health care system in the hospital and his proposal to start establishing the first center in the country for prevention and treatment the viral Hepatitis and Liver diseases with support and orientation of higher leadership represented by the Commander of the Republican Guard and Special Forces.

Al-Madhagi closed his declaration by appreciating country, regional and the global management of MSD for their support in devoting the best resources to flourish the service of hepatitis diagnosis, treatment and their efforts to decrease the prevalence of Hepatitis in Yemen and finally he showed his greetings for MSD's distributor in Yemen Dawa Pharma and its general manager, **Abbas Aljabal** for his cooperation in ensuring improvement the health service in the country.



A priest, a rabbi and a minister hold a press conference

New organization hopes to put some faith into climate-change discussion

By: **Arieh O'Sullivan**
The Media Line

While Palestinian and Israeli leaders may not be able to agree on peace-making efforts, prominent Muslim, Jewish and Christian leaders have embraced the idea of using religion to boost awareness about climate change and preserving the environment.

"The heart of all of our faiths is the sense that there is more to the cosmos than purely physical components," said Rabbi David Rosen, a leading member of the World Council of Religious Leaders, said at a conference to launch the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development (ICSD). "This leads to a sense of connectedness and should lead to a sense of responsibility and obligation to both respect and protect it."

Religious groups have played a relatively marginal role in addressing global warming. Most organizations focused on the environment tend to be secular and humanist. This started to change when United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon acknowledged in 2009 that the world's religions were "an untapped source of hope" to influence discussions on global warming and should use their weight to push for policies that protected the planet.

"When governments, civil society and particularly religious communities work together, transformation can take place. Faiths and religions are an essential part of that equation. Indeed, the world's faith communities occupy a unique position in discussions on the fate of our planet and the accelerating impacts of climate change," Ban said in November 3, 2009 address in Britain.

Last April, the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, which represents the highest religious authorities in Israel and the Palestinian Authority, adopted what became known as the "Holy Land Climate Change Declaration Project."

It called for Muslims, Christians and Jews to "reduce their personal emissions of greenhouse gases and to urge their political leaders to adopt strong, binding, science-based targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases in order to aver the worst dangers of climate crisis." It also urged adherents of the faiths to reassess how they "consume, use and dispose of earth's blessed resources."

"Our way of life is out of balance, thus our environmental crisis is a spiritual crisis," said Rabbi Yonatan Neril, founder and director of the ICSD, a project that brings together Israeli, Palestinian, Muslim, Christian and Jewish seminary students to focus on the environment.

Speaking at an inaugural forum arranged by the center, Msgr. William Shomali, the Latin bishop of Jerusalem, said religion had enormous scope and the message of sustaining the environment needed to permeate to the street.

"We shall speak in churches and synagogues and mosques about how to respect nature," Shomali told The Media Line. "When we respect creation, we are also respecting the creator."

Echoing Shomali, Rabbi Rosen, who is also the International Director of Interreligious Affairs of the AJC, said religion as humankind's "most important delivery system" in raising awareness about preserving the environment.

"In Judaism we are taught one must not destroy anything wastefully. It is a principle that needs to be emphasized," Rosen said.

But Haj Salah Zuheika, deputy minister of religious affairs of the Pales-

tinian Authority, said the problem was not with theology.

"The imams do speak of the importance of ecology. What is missing is the application of the message," Zuheika said.

Bishop Shomali said that even though religions hold common principles, "the implementation is many times in the hands of politicians."

Rabbi Rosen stressed that many organizations working to address global warming and environment protection were "out of touch" and "not interested" in what religions are saying.

"Most of these organizations are secular agencies, which tend to be staffed by people who are far away from religion and have a degree of alienation from it," said Rosen. "The question is how to bridge the gulf, the secular-religious divide, so that organizations leading the good fight actually see religion as allies."

But some environmental activists said the greening of religion was more about ulterior motives than about saving the world.

"What is happening with religions is that they need to adjust themselves to draw people to them because people are losing interest, especially the young," Dhyana Or, a long-time activist of Roots of Peace, an organization promoting the removal of land mines, told The Media Line.

"In my personal opinion, there is no relation between religion and environment. To make one is artificial and purely for marketing. They are looking to make religion suitable for the changing world and are looking for hot items and social issues that are attractive. And this goes for the Jews, Muslims and Christians," Or said.

"Just as they can bring a quote from the bible to back caring for the environment, you can also just as easily say that like the biblical flood, today's global warming is a punishment from God," he added.

Human-based gelatin? Yum!

By: **Miriam Kresh Green Prophet**

Reading the ingredients list in any processed food is always thought-provoking. If you really want to know what those mysterious combinations of letters and numbers mean, you have to become adept at Internet research. So I suppose it could be argued that artificial colors and flavorings, the various forms of sugars, like that derived from GM beets, addictive chemicals, and strange substances like meat glue are actually good for us.

I mean, it's intellectually stimulating – tracking down their origins and possible side effects. Like a puzzle or a good detective story, right?

Not.

Now how about human genes in your drug capsules, dessert, or cosmetics?

The latest stomach-turning development in the science of food processing is gelatin derived from human genetic material. According to this article from the American Chemical Society, scientists at the University of Chemical Technology in Beijing, China, are working on culturing human collagen genes to yeast. In this highly synthesized process, the human-DNA-laden yeast does what yeast does so well, reproducing itself many times over and making massive amounts of gelatin. The advantage in this gelatin over the conventional animal-based kind, is being able to get around allergic responses and risk of infectious diseases carried by animals, claim the Chinese scientists.

Having spoken to a biochemist of my acquaintance who prefers to remain anonymous, it becomes clear that the gross-out factor is the major deterrent in our minds. There's no question of cannibalism. It's not necessary to boil down human bones or skin. An inner-cheek swab would provide enough DNA to start the synthesis. According to my source, the manufacturing process is already well-known and widely used. And the original human material is so remote from the finished product that ethical concerns are irrelevant.

Well, it depends on what you consider

ethical. To observant Jews and Muslim, not to mention vegetarians, this kind of food is abhorrent. In addition, humans are full of infectious diseases, just like animals, so the "cleaner than animal-based" argument seems specious.

Since this gelatin falls under the safe food category, it might not even be required to appear on labels. One more reason to avoid processed foods. As if we needed another reason.

Yet the scientist I spoke to brought up another issue: this kind of gelatin is essentially another genetically modified food. It's not yet known how our bodies

ultimately react to synthetic foods. We were born with enzymes that help us metabolize animal and vegetable foods, but handling synthetic foods wasn't built into our body's blueprint. They are viewed as irritants by our natural systems and treated as such.

Now, what's an allergy? Reaction to an irritant, isn't it? And with current theories about the origins of many cancers coming from constant cellular irritation, you really do have to pause for thought. Before you treat your child to GMO food, swallow a capsule, or apply makeup, that is.

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Painted face, change square: A protester at Change Square before the march to Sixtieth Street commences on June 7th, 2011. Photo by Luke Somers

Majnoon in Sanaa

By: Alaa Aj Jarban
Project Yemen

Since the day the revolution started, Yemenis have been suffering from lots and different problems in all Yemeni cities. There

are two kinds of suffering now in Yemen; the first is the people who suffer financially who can't get or get access to fuel, electricity, water food and sometimes shelter (this can include people whom are not active in the revolution, and people in conflict areas).

The second kind concerns the people who are actively involved in the revolution. These people suffer mentally, as they receive threats by the national security of hurting them and their families, and also suffer by witnessing their friends getting captured by national security, tortured

and threatened to be eliminated! At this point, I'm suffering the two kinds horribly, so I feel I'm reaching a crazy state, which we call in Arabic "Majnoon".

On a personal level, I have received and am still receiving threats to be eliminated via Phone calls, SMS, Facebook and even twitter. My phone has been tapped for a while, and strangers have been trying to kidnap me while going out of change square and walking in the city a few times now. Nevertheless, I had friends who got captured and tortured by the security forces before they release them conditionally. They are now planning to leave the country.

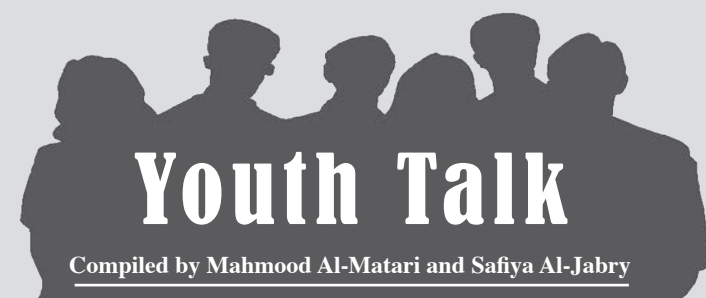
This all put heavy psychological pressure on me. I can't go out easily, I can't go out on my own and I even can't stop worrying about my family's safety. The financial pressure also adds to the troubles. There's a fuel shortage and long lines of cars waiting at empty gas stations on a fake hope that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

The phenomenon of illegal markets has appeared, selling all forms of fuel at tremendously expensive prices. In a country where extreme poverty affects more than 40% of the population, this is unimaginably unbearable! It's hard for us to find transportation, therefore we can't move easily.

In Sana'a, we only have electricity for one hour a day if not less. That's literally driving people crazy, including me. The fact that people living in a capital city in the 21st century without electricity, fuel, water or food is enough to lead people to lose their sanity.

What's worse is that we have no security at all. Every night we have difficulties to sleep because we can hear random gunfire in most of the neighborhoods, which is meant to scare us. Whether this is planned by the falling regime or not, the world needs to know that Yemenis are living in a severe humanitarian catastrophe, which might get worse and we really need the international community's help to survive.

Alaa is a young activist, who has been active in the protests from the very beginning. He has been working with media outlets such as BBC and CNN and has become one of the faces representing the Youth in international media. Views expressed in this account may not represent the opinion of ProjectYemen. Translated to English by Kim Salmutter.



Youth talk is an exciting section which usually tackles youth concerns and gives youth an opportunity to share and express their ideas on certain issues. This week, however, we decided to compile a small piece on the Holy month of Ramadan for all our readers. We hope you enjoy it and send us your opinions on Ramadan and what it means to you.

Ramadan Kareem

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic calendar. It's the month that Muslims spend observing the fast and bettering themselves in the principles of faith. Islamic months follow the lunar calendar, in the same tradition as the Jewish community. Therefore, in relation to the solar, or Gregorian, calendar, Islamic and Jewish months will annually differ by around 11 to 12 days. This means Islamic events will always fall roughly around the same time in the Islamic calendar, but always on a different date in the mainstream solar calendar.

This year, Ramadan begins in the first week of August, depending on the sighting of the moon, and will end approximately 30 days after in the first week of September, when Muslims conclude the month with festivities and celebrate Eid.

Allah (SW) says in the Holy Qur'an: "O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was for those before you, so that you may learn self-restraint." (Qur'an, Surat Al-Baqara 2:183).

Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was sent down as a guide to mankind and to give clear signs for guidance and judgment between right and wrong.

Fasting during Ramadan did not become an obligation for Muslims until 624 C.E., at which point it became the third of the Five Pillars of Islam. The others are faith (Shahadah), prayer (Salah), charitable giving (Zakah), and the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj).

Muslims fast to discipline their body and mind. The absence of food and drink and other pleasures provides a perfect opportunity to concentrate on prayer and worship. Not having the luxuries of life to hand makes it easier to reflect on life and be grateful for what we do have. Muslims use this month to start afresh and give their life a new direction.

Many Muslims use Ramadan to make resolutions, similar to New Year's resolutions. It is a time when they decide how they want to live their life for the next year and try their very best to adhere to their new commitments. Commitments such as greater commitment to God and faith. Ramadan is a time when Muslims can introduce practices into their life to reflect their religious identity. A lot of Muslims have a desire to pray more and learn more about Islam. Others wish to be better and nicer people while some want to learn Qur'anic Arabic to better their understanding of the Holy Book. For these people, Ramadan is the best opportunity to begin this grand affair with something so personal and spiritually enlightening.

Allah says in a Hadith Qudsi: "Fasting is for Me and I will reward for it. He gives up his desire and his food and drink for My sake." (Narrated by Al-Bukhaari, 7492; Muslim, 1151).

Allah has promised the people that the reward for good deeds and actions during the holy month will be multiplied greater than usual, and this encourages many to increase their level of worship and prayer. Ramadan does make it easier for Muslims to observe their faith though, largely because all Muslims are following the same pattern and so they are always offering each other moral support and encouraging each other to do better. Ramadan brings people much closer than normal as they forgive each other for any misdemeanors of the past, forge new and positive relationships and treat each other with greater respect.

Let's try to make this years Ramadan better than the last one, because it only comes once in a year and because we don't know if we will be alive to witness it next year. Let's try to make it a month of worship and a month of helping those in need.

We wish all Yemen Times staff and readers a happy and blessed Ramadan.

Shahr mubarak w saum maqbul Insha'Allah

Feel free to reply and share your stories, poems, feedback, and opinions with other young readers by sending an e-mail to: tyouth@gmail.com.

What happens?

By: Faisal Alhashidi
alfaisal8080@yahoo.com

What happens when behaviors contradict principles, when actions contradict words, when reality contradicts dreams, when falsehood covers truth, when aims are not clear and we move towards the unknown, when education is understood as dictation, when education does not reflect on situation, when students are taught what to think not how to think, when education is defined as words, phrases, clauses and sentences to be memorized and parroted, when education is an excuse not a medium, when the wrong definition is given to education? What happens is chaos.

A question to everyone

What is the definition of education in your mental dictionary? How do you reflect what you study at college on your life?

What is the ultimate goal of you going to college? And do you feel that you are achieving that goal by going to college? In other words, do you feel that you are quenching your thirst of learning there?

Don't you think that some so called educators themselves don't know what and why they are teaching? In that sense, classes will dull the minds rather than develop them. I am not against college education, rather I am for proper education.

Before asking for political freedom, people should ask for educational freedom. They should be given freedom to think and create. Minds are curbed by educators. I think minds should be freed before any sort of freedom. And that is the real meaning of freedom. Educators should be guides not dictators.

God created this world with an earth beneath us and an open spacious sky over us. So, our ambitions and dreams should be like the open space above, as long as they are within the Islamic framework.

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- Prepare and disseminate periodic reports for Nutrition cluster partners.
- Assist in analyzing the reports.
- Identify and report on near future response priorities, gaps in assistance and areas of in-effective service delivery.
- Streamline methods to share information, using internet, e-mail groups, written reporting, verbal feedback at coordination meetings;
- Coordination with other clusters and their working group information managers to ensure complimentary data products with their IM systems and cross-sectoral analysis of information on the disaster response.
- Identify and promote the localization or handover of information management services to appropriate agencies as appropriate.

Expected background and Experience

- Yemeni National;
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- At least 5 years relevant professional work experience in the above field
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- Knowledge of information systems and databases, with an emphasis on user needs/requirements, database design, database distribution and map production
- Ability to work well with people and to give "hands-on" training with database is required
- Techniques of data organization and management

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- Prior experience in managing web based databases including GPS spatial databases (development and deployment).
- Prior experience in system/network administration.
- Prior experience of imparting trainings and conducting workshops.

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- Fluency in English.

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- Excellent communication and facilitation skills.
- Ability to relate well to people and to work in a multi-cultural environment

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Kitabi Kitabak: An invitation to read

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

It all started through a Facebook announcement in 2009. A lady from Jordan, who had successfully launched an initiative to gather children's books and distribute them to kids who otherwise would not have the opportunity to read, decided to broaden the project. She called the initiative *Kitab Kitabak* which translates to 'My Book, Your Book'.

"My friend Amani Al-Baba saw the information on Facebook posted by Hana Al-Ramli from Jordan asking for people in other Arab countries to join

her initiative My Book, Your Book. So we did," said Ola Abu Shaar, who is currently leading the project in Yemen.

Ola and her friend Estand Shukri were among the first to work with Amani because they had studied library and information sciences in college, which made them more interested in promoting the initiative.

"So many of us were excited; we had a meeting and during the Yemeni Book Exhibition in 2009 we announced the initiative," said Ola.

The group talked to the exhibition's visitors and decided to create four collection points for used children books in Sana'a. The Yemeni Book Authority was supportive and gave the team two wooden libraries, which the team then filled with donated books.

"Once we were organized, we gathered as many books and as much support as possible, even from organizations. Then we decided it was time to find out where to distribute them," said Ola.

A team of around seven volunteers sorted and categorized the books and restored some which were in poor condition in order to make them usable. They reached out to possible recipients from civil society organizations on the condition that the organizations must allow children in the neighborhood to have free access to the books and provide



Amani Al-Baba reading to the children and using sound effects to keep them in the story at alsabeen park.



Artists Bilqees Jaroon and Amani Al-Baba decorating a library for children in a charity.



Children reading story books in a campaign entitled "reading for all" in coordination with Alnoor Foundation.



Children enjoying colors and books on 21st July open day initiative for Al-Hasaba victims.

them with a friendly space in which to read them.

The first time the books were distributed was in February 2010, in coordination with the Milad Al-Amal Association for widows and their children. They were distributed after the team checked feasibility and verified that the association would allow all children to use the library for free. The room that the organization dedicated for the library was originally a plain old storage room, but the team cleaned and decorated it and, because they had an artist among them, even created drawings on the walls.

Once the place was ready, they installed the first library and invited neighborhood kids to come and use it. They also organized a launching session whereby the team read stories for the kids, making sound effects and using gestures to draw them into the imaginary worlds in the books.

"The children were so excited -- for most of them it was the first time someone had actually read a story for them. I believe this created a cultural change, because after one month we visited the library and found that it has grown in size because other children contributed to it. It was their point of pride," said Ola.

The initiative then teamed up with the British Council initiative "I Love My Book," which held an event at Sabeen Park. Artist and team member Amani Al-Baba drew for the children and wrote for them. Other artists, such as Bilqis Jaroon, carved pumpkins and created different attractions such as the puppet show.

In the park there was also a story reading session every half-hour on the opening day, and at each session the children gathered around the story reader, filled with awe.

Moreover, the Kitabi-Kitabak team invested in people and trained 40 librarians in schools in dealing with children, organizing children's libraries, and encouraging kids to read. They also provided the schools with children's books.



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Sanaa
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The team has also demonstrated they are willing to expand to new places, reaching out to patients in the kidney section of Al-Thawra Hospital. Their next step is to work with children with disabilities, even blind children, and provide them with books they can enjoy.

The beauty of this project is that they do it all as volunteer work. As such, they are always looking for new helpers. "We need shelves that can be hung on walls, cupboards and library shelves, and furniture. We always need books mainly Arabic books, and most importantly we need people who have enough creativity and artistic and drawing skills to help enrich the children's experience," said Ola.



Ola Abusha'ar organizing a library for children at the hospital ward.

4U

For more information on this initiative contact
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The story of Hana

Hana Al-Ramli, who started the Kitabi Kitabak initiative in Jordan, came up with the idea after all her children had grown and she realized that she had over 700 children's books at home. She decided to do something with them, created a library for Palestinian refugees, and invited children between the ages of 5 and 17 to read.

Today this project has grown into a small center and has participants have decided to spread the initiative across the Arab world.



(My book is yours) Initiative
Knowledge is a sacred right
Kitabi Kitabak association
for child and family education

uni-ball eye
Made in Japan

Faces from Yemen's Revolution on page 4

SHARK ENERGY DRINK
افتحة واربعه
تبدأ المسابقة من ٢٠١١/٧/١ لمدة ستة اشهر
استلام الجوائز من احدى فروع شركة الشرق الاوسط (متكو)
تعر: ٢٤٨٨٩٤/٥٧ - صناعه: ٢٠٤٢٢٧-٢١٥١٤٥ - عدن: ٣٥٠٩٤٨/٣٥٠٨٥٩ - الحديدة: ٢٢٠٨٤٩-٢٢٠٨٣٥
اب: ٤١٧٧٢٢٤/٤ - الكلا: ٢١٤٢٦٩ - سينون: ٤٠٥٣٦٦