

Thursday, 1 September, 2011 • Issue No. 1499 • Founded in 1991 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Sagqaf • [www.yementimes.com](http://www.yementimes.com) • Price 50 Yemeni Riyals

## Yemen's state-tribes armed conflict map

**Open the Second**

The Yemeni's postcard writings against Qutbi's 33-year rule were supported by live demonstrations from security forces and the republican guards in different areas of Yemen. This was considered into armed clashes between it forces loyal to the opposition and the republican guards who is still loyal to president Qutbi and commanded by his son Inspector general Ahmed Ali Abdullah Qutbi. These clashes expanded to include three areas in Sana'a, Aden, Hodeidah and Al-Hudaydah in south India Yab city.

The Vietnam Times provides here a map of region operations around conflict with solid background on each page.

Republican Guards—opposition tribesmen armed conflict in Arba, 50 km north the capital Bana'a. This armed conflict erupted three months ago after some units of the Republican Guard attempted to move from the camps into the city of Bana'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. Hundreds of persons were killed from both sides during these ongoing battles. Houses, mosques and water wells in the area were destroyed.

There have been a tribal arbitration committee to end the conflict, but every party kept procrastinating to respond to the ceasefire proposal, according the committee.

**Republican Guards**  
—opposition tribesmen armed conflict in Niham, 30 km north the capital Sana'a. The fighting in Niham broke out simultaneously with Arhab after some forces of the republican guards in the area wanted to go to Hadramout which made the local opposition tribesmen of Niham to stand against that saying this force might be used against protesters in Hadramout.

State-tribesmen conflict in Al-Hasaba: This conflict broke out on May 23rd between security forces loyal to Saleh's regime and the largest tribal confederation of Hashah which headed by Sadeq Al-Ahmar. Hashah also is the home of president Saleh. This conflict continued for around 13 days in which 3,000 people were killed in Al-Hasaba district where large number of governmental buildings such including ministry of interior, commerce ministry, tourism ministry and local administration ministry. 1,500 dead persons were from Al-Ahmar's gunmen and the other from the security forces. Dozens of houses and state buildings were damaged and hundreds of families have fled the area to their ancestral villages. Both sides have stopped the fighting on June 4th by the Saudi king brokered ceasefire. However the area is still witnessing sporadic clashes and the Al-Ahmar's gunmen are still taking over many positions of the district.

**Republican Guards – opposition fighters armed conflict in Al-Hama, 60 km west of the capital Damascus. This conflict started on May 10 and continued until the beginning of June. The confrontations erupted when Republican Guard soldiers replaced the 100 policemen on duty in the area with 200 soldiers from their own brigade armed with heavier weapons. Soldiers of the republican guards attempted to occupy a military base in the area being to the defeated army of the first armed division commanded by General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar. The opposition fighters stood against that in which the republican guards sealed the villages with different heavy weapons. It is still unknown accurately how many people were killed from both parties. Some houses were destroyed and some families were displaced. The confrontations were stopped at the beginning of June with no explanation.**

Rapabouan Guards –opposition tribesmen armed conflict in Taiz, 285 km south the capital Sana'a. The battles started in Taiz late May after security forces stormed the camp of anti-regime protesters, killed over 50 protesters and burned their tents.

This made the tribal leaders of Taiz to vow protecting the protesters with support of defected soldiers and officers. The fighting escalated into street battles in different areas of Taiz city in which many civilians were killed and wounded.

Dozens of people from both sides were killed and wounded. There have been many ceasefire attempts by local social leaders and businessmen to end the conflict, but every time they sign a ceasefire agreement, it doesn't last more than two days.

# A power vacuum is enabling Yemen's southerners to do what they like

## The Economist

Between a statue of Britain's Queen Victoria and what used to be the East German embassy, separatists who want the southern slice of Yemen to secede from the once dominant but now faltering north meet in downtown Aden, capital—until two decades ago—of the independent republic of South Yemen. Suppressed until recently as enemies of the state, they now gather openly, promoting their plan to revive southern independence. But their first aim is to organise a defence of the port city against marauding gangs of Islamists who have taken over several nearby towns and a string of villages—and against the national army still loyal to the creaking government in Sana'a, the capital, up north.

Yemen's southerners have long felt treated as second-class citizens. Ruled in the distant past by the Portuguese, the Ottoman Turks and then, until 1967, by the British, Aden fell under the influence of the Soviet Union as capital of South Yemen until, in 1990, it was united with North Yemen. It has not been a happy marriage. Many Adenis and other southerners say they detest President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a northerner who, until his recent flight to Saudi Arabia after being wounded, ran the roily united country from Sana'a. They say Mr Saleh has siphoned off the wealth from oil in the south and east and rewarded his northern friends with juicy jobs in government and business.

"British colonialism was tame compared to this new occupation," says an Aden resident in a common refrain. "It's brutal, tribal and ignorant." But Mr Saleh's forced departure has given the restive southerners a fillip.

When on June 24th soldiers from the regular army fired on a funeral proces-


sion cum secessionist rally in Aden, they were fended off with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades in a battle that lasted hours. Whole districts of Aden have been fortified and bedecked with flags of the old southern republic and with portraits of southern victims of what locals see as northern repression.

Months of nationwide protests and a quickening rate of defections from the security forces have loosened the regime's grip, feeble at the best of times, on much of the country. Greying southern secessionists recall sharing prison cells in Sana'a with northern rebels of the Houthi clan and with assorted Islamists. Now dissidents of all stripes are filling the security vacuum by carving out their own fiefs.

The province of Abyan, north-east of Aden, has been under the sway of the “soldiers of Sharia” since the national army withdrew to rural bases outside Aden in May. With heavy weapons and a web of support, this group has put many locals to flight and declared an “Islamic emirate” in the devastated towns they now run. To mounting panic, their shadowy cells have been popping up across the south. East of Aden, Islamists control the town of Zinjibar, where at least 50 people have been killed in the past few days. If the army fails to resume control, the Islamists could pour into Aden itself.

Two weeks ago hundreds of such zealots briefly took over Hawta, the capital of nearby Lahej province, due north of Aden, only to melt away a day or so later. Masked and bearded men now patrol parts of Aden's northern suburbs. The government says they carried out a car-bomb attack on an army outpost on June 24th.

*Continued on page 6*




**الجزييرة للتأمين واعادة التأمين**  
**AI JAZEERA INSURANCE & REINSURANCE**

# Al-Jazeera

## Insurance & Reinsurance

### An Umbrella Which Serve your Objects . . .




**Head Office:**  
Sana'a - Faj Attan - P.O.Box:1376  
Tel.: +967 - 1 - 428809/425012/13  
Fax: +967 - 1 - 418369

**Aden Branch: Al-Mullaa St.**  
Tel.: +967 - 2 - 243101  
Fax: +967 - 2 - 243202

**Hodeidah Branch:**  
Tel.: +967 - 3 - 248011  
Fax: +967 - 3 - 248010

**Al-Mukalla Branch:**  
Tel.: +967 - 5 - 307187  
Fax: +967 - 5 - 307188



الجزييرة للتأمين واعادة التأمين  
AI JAZEERA INSURANCE & REINSURANCE

الجزييرة  
التأمين واعادة التأمين

[www.al-jazeeraair.com](http://www.al-jazeeraair.com) - [aljazeeraair@y.net.ye](mailto:aljazeeraair@y.net.ye) - [info@al-jazeeraair.com](mailto:info@al-jazeeraair.com)

## Yemen's economy looking up tentatively

**By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf**

SANA'A, Aug. 28 — After months of plunging downwards the Yemeni market is displaying timid signs of improvement as prospects of armed conflict diminish and a political agreement is in the air.

"Basically it all depends on politicians," says Masoowd exchange shop manager in Sana'a. "If they agree, the currency exchange rate goes down and prices go down or at least stop going up."

The fuel crisis had caused many companies to slow down production and some even had to let go of employees. Now with the oil problem settled several factories and large

scale companies are back in business.

"It is still too early to say because in Yemen you can't predict. But I am doing much better now than I was a couple of months ago," said Yemeni Taxi driver Abdullah Jahan.

Just two weeks ago, Yemen's Minister of Trade and Industry Hisham Sharaf said that the country's economy lost up to \$8bn during this year until the end of July because of protests that have swept across Yemen. This loss was a combination of low oil production, freezing of state operations such as tax collection and other income generation sources and the deterioration in the private sector's economy especially because of

the oil scarcity.

But most significantly was the tourism revenue because of instability in the country is predicted plunge to less than \$50m in 2011 from \$1.1bn last year. Sharaf added that Yemen's Gross Domestic Product has stood at \$33bn, a 40% drop compared to the preceding year.

Even local tourism has stopped as many Yemenis did not have the means or the confidence to travel for holidays within the country.

"Every year we used to go to Aden or another sea town in Yemen to celebrate the Eid holiday. This year we are staying here because my father says it is not safe," said Nisreen Jalal a teenage Yemeni girl from Sana'a.

According to a source in the Ministry of Oil, there are measures to revive the oil production that will come into place once the political agreement is in place which he hoped will be announced soon after Eid holidays in the first week of September.

Yemen is a low income country that is highly dependent on declining oil resources for revenue. Petroleum accounts for roughly 25% of GDP and 70% of government revenue. Yemen has tried to counter the effects of its declining oil resources by diversifying its economy through an economic reform program initiated in 2006 that is designed to bolster non-oil sectors of the economy and foreign investment. In October 2009, Yemen exported its first liquefied natural gas as part of this diversification effort. In January 2010, the international community established the Friends of Yemen group that aims to support Yemen's efforts towards economic and political reform, and in August 2010 the IMF approved a three-year \$370 million program to further this effort. Despite these ambitious endeavors, Yemen continues to face difficult long term challenges, including declining water resources and a high population growth rate.



**التوزيع في الجمهورية اليمنية**  
توكيلات المصامة ( عدن - كريتر ) بإحدى مسجد إبان  
عمارة عسيوان ت/ ٢٦٠-١٥٧ فاكس/ ٢٦٠-١٨٨

**الشعبه**  
صنعاء - شارع القصر - تحت فندق الملكة أروى ت/ ٢٧٥ ٤٩٩  
عدن كريتر - شارع الميدان - تحت فندق الجزيرة ت/ ٢٦٧ ٨٢٨  
مركز عدن مول - معرض ١١٤ ت/ ٢٦٢ ٠١٨  
تكر - شارع ٢٦ - مركز الصعيد التجاري - معرض ١٢ ت/ ٥٢ ٤٧٠  
إب - شارع المصافطة - مجمع الجندعان معرض ٢٤ ت/ ٦٦١ ٨٤٨  
e-mail: alynmahagencies@y.net.ye

devious designs  
**PURPLE**  
BY TITAN

Partner of Constructions and Development

## الشركة الوطنية للأسمنت NATIONAL CEMENT COMPANY

- NCC is a subsidiary of the Hayel Saeed Anam (HSA) Group of Companies.
- NCC Produces Ordinary Portland Cement (OPC) and Sulfate Resistant Cement (SRC) to ASTM & EN Standards.
- Available in both Bulk and 50kg Bags.

تلفون: +967 (2) 510800 +967 (2) 510800  
فاكس: +967 (2) 510840 +967 (2) 510840  
ص.ب. 10001 لج

[www.nccyemen.com](http://www.nccyemen.com)

 **ALSA'EEED TRADING COMPANY**  
A Yemeni Closed Stock Company

**Yemen's Largest Exporter  
of FMCG products.**

Yemen, Telf: P.O. Box 5351  
Telf: 0687 (4) 232727 (10 Lines)  
Fax: 0667 (4) 228551 / 231642 / 249442  
E-mail: [info@alsa'eedtrading.com](mailto:info@alsa'eedtrading.com)  
Website: [www.alsa'eedtrading.com](http://www.alsa'eedtrading.com)



# The situation in Ibb governorate today



Al-Khaleej revolutionary square in Ibb governorate



By: Shatha Al-Harazi

Ibb today is less noisy than Sana'a. There is less violence on the political level. It is more stable on an economic level due to this year's copious rains.

Located in the inland south of the country with Ta'iz Governorate to the southwest, it has an area of 5,344 km<sup>2</sup> and a population estimated at around 1,665,000 in 2004, making it the most densely populated governorate in Yemen outside of Sana'a city.

Ibb has been more peaceful than other major governorates with active anti-government protests. The main reason, according to many observers, is the neutrality of the authorities, including the governor and local council.

"Ibb is an excellent model for the peaceful revolution for many reasons," said Ahmed Dammaj, an anti-government protester from Ibb. "The heads of

the local council are balanced in their treatment of the anti-government protesters and the pro-government ones."

According to Dammaj the head of the local council allows the protesters to carry on as they choose without placing obstacles in their way, even though he is not part of the peaceful revolution.

"When he talks about the protest he speaks fairly about it. He uses terms such as 'revolution,' which show his recognition of it."

Although the number of protesters in Ibb is huge, they face no major clashes or attacks against them as in Sana'a or Taiz. Security forces there have also proven neutral toward the protesters.

"We had some clashes in the past but not too many, as the security forces are objective and do only their job the best way they can," Dammaj added. "The security forces do their job by dispersing the protesters peacefully."

One of the reasons that make Ibb a paragon among the more conflict-prone governorates in Yemen is the high percentage of emigrants who have left this region for the USA and Saudi Arabia. Their experiences have accustomed them to greater rights and freedoms, so they help other people understand and support the revolution.

"Some of those emigrants were treated badly abroad. Especially in Saudi Arabia, they are treated like slaves that makes them feel that the revolution will gain them back their dignity" Dammaj explained.

On the other hand, Bassam Al-Shuja'a a citizen from Ibb said that what makes the migrants active with the revolution is that they have experienced better lives outside Yemen. They work to make their own country as good as the other countries they have been to.

"Logically, they would support

the revolution more than those who haven't traveled anywhere outside of Yemen. There is a famous saying that he who hasn't seen the light does not know to curse the darkness," said Al-Shuja'a.

Journalist Abdul Raheem Al-Oqab also from Ibb attributes this stability in Ibb to the role of the media in covering Ibb's issues. Specifically, he notes the ability of Ibb radio to talk transparently and objectively about the governorate's affairs.

"We [Ibb radio's staff] were trained by the BBC before the revolution stated on how to discuss any problem transparently, so we produced two programs in which people could express their opinions and problems freely," said Al-Qap.

Al-Qap, who is a radio program reporter and journalist at the state-run Al-Thawra newspaper, told the Yemen Times that Ibb is still peaceful and

stable, even though its people are split into pro-regime and anti-regime factions.

The only violent incident he can recall is once during anti-government march, a car displaying President Ali Abdul Elah Saleh's photo passed a group of protesters. The protesters turned the photo over. The owner of the car was a powerful tribal sheikh. Provoked by the protesters, he got out of the car and began shooting. The protesters then surrounded him and beat him after taking his gun away. They detained him for several hours.

Al-Shuja'a noted that the sheikh's tribal fellows wanted to react violently. The governor tried to stop them by explaining that a retaliation would make the protesters explode. The tribesmen went ahead, but they found the protesters protected by other tribesmen who had joined the revolution.

On an economic level, Ibb does not

witness the same crises as Sana'a or Taiz because of continuous rains, especially since the entire governorate relies on rain water for irrigation more than underground water like other areas. This is why the fuel crisis did not affect them as much due to the supply and demand equation.

Diesel is in abundant supply in Ibb. The problem, however, according to Al-Qap, is that people from Sana'a and other cities go to Ibb to buy fuel, depleting the city's share. However, the governor is doing his best to prevent the emergence of black markets and price escalation. Already the owners of five gas stations have been prosecuted for illicitly raising prices.

However, Al-Shuja'a, who works for a humanitarian organization, told the Yemen Times that the fuel crisis is still a problem as many infrastructural projects remain incomplete without generators.

## Taking a chance on a democratic Yemen

**The Yemeni youth movement represents the country's best chance for democracy - but it needs outside support to succeed.**

By: Abubakr Al-Shamahi  
Al-Jazeera

Yemen finds itself in the fifth month of mass anti-government protests that have left the country with a severely injured President seeking treatment abroad, an economic and humanitarian disaster, and a seemingly intractable stalemate. The youth, who comprise the vast majority of a population whose average age is 18, are increasingly divided, yet increasingly adamant that all the corrupt remnants of the old regime should be replaced by a fully-functioning democratic system.

This wish, in line with the aspirations of millions of Arabs inspired by the events of the "Arab Spring", may appear to be idealistic and even naïve in a country like Yemen. Poor education levels, the lack of an established middle class, the prevalence of qat, and, perhaps most importantly, various armed uprisings, secessionists, and militant activity, are seen as roadblocks preventing any realistic democratic enterprise. However, the events of the past few months have given hope that a new, more democratic, Yemen might emerge out of the ashes of the current crisis.

There is no denying that the current anti-government movement is supported by the majority of the Yemeni people, especially in the restive areas of Taiz, Aden, Saada, Ibb, and Hodeida. Even in the capital Sanaa, where pro-Saleh sentiment is seen as strongest, the biggest and most regular rallies have been those calling for his removal from power.

The anti-government protest movement encompasses a wide cross-section of Yemeni society, centred around a student-based youth movement, and growing to encompass various civil society groups, the traditional opposition parties, women's groups, and a significant tribal element. The cultural change that may bring hope for the future of the country can be seen in the seemingly uniform calls for a pluralist state by the protesters, and the conferences, town hall style meetings, and even poetry nights that are held at the

protest squares around the country.

Nonetheless Yemen, in keeping with its history, is different. Yemenis have not had their "resignation moment", as Egyptians and Tunisians did, and yet they have a President who has left the country, unlikely to return. Ali Abdullah Saleh's son, Ahmed, has taken his father's role in the palace, without officially taking over, nor having the power to. Vice-President Abdu Rabbo Mansur Hadi, whom the constitution designates as acting President in light of Saleh's absence, is seemingly powerless, and torn between the various sides who all want to influence him. Some revolutionary groups have set up transitional councils, yet the details are shady. State media, usually a good indicator of the control of an authoritarian government, remains the official mouthpiece of the Saleh regime, and still labelling protesters as criminals and mobs.

One of the main reasons that the regime has carried on without Ali Abdullah Saleh is that his sons and nephews, especially his son Ahmed and his nephew Yahya, have effectively been running the show for the past few years. This period has seen the President replace his old advisors with these family members, and the accompanying period of instability in the country can be seen as evidence of this transfer of power. Although the figurehead is no longer in the country, the Salehs have been busy building on their established military and security power bases to consolidate power for themselves.

The traditional outlook on current events in Yemen has gathered around two issues, an internal power struggle in the Yemeni elite, and the role of outside powers in the unrest.

The power struggle narrative focuses on the various factions of the elite that are now apparently fighting for power. President Saleh finds his old friend, General Ali Muhsen, on the side of the protesters as their main defender. This Saleh-Muhsen rivalry is seen as a battle within the various families of the Sanhan tribe, a part of the wider Hashid tribal confederation. The leaders of Hashid, the al-Ahmar family, provide another element, with

the al-Ahmar brothers, led by the tribal Sheikh Sadiq and the most politically active brother Hamid, allied with General Ali Muhsen.

### Fear of a strong Yemen

Then come the two states with the biggest influence in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the US. Saudi Arabia has two goals in Yemen: to try to retain its influence in the country, and to bring about a stable Yemen without letting Yemen get too strong. Here we can refer to the alleged deathbed advice of King Abdulaziz: "Keep Yemen weak". While this may not have happened, Saudi policy in the country certainly bears it out. Support for the royalists in the civil war in the 1960s, and for secessionists in the civil war of 1994, are two examples.

The youth movement therefore presents a serious problem for Saudi policy in Yemen. The movement has goals that are the antithesis of the way Saudi Arabia is run. Should the movement succeed in bringing about a civil, democratic state in Yemen, this would present a dangerous model in the eyes of the ruling al-Saud. The youth movement also appears to not have been co-opted by Saudi Arabia yet, which puts the country in the strange position of having a powerful grouping in Yemen not under its sway.

Should the youth movement succeed, there is no doubt that there would be a move away from Saudi Arabia, and an attempt to bring about an independent foreign policy. Yemen, the most populous country on the Arabian peninsula, could become a relatively strong, democratic country, in the long term. This would no doubt upset the balance of power in the region.

However, Saudi Arabia and the rest of the GCC states need not worry so much. A stable Yemen certainly means a much more stable wider region. The perceived main threat for the Gulf, apart from Iran, is al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). In allowing the Yemeni revolution to be successful, and giving glimmers of hope to a democracy advancing in the country, the Gulf would be severely weakening AQAP and its legitimacy. AQAP currently gathers its main support from disaffected tribes who feel that the central government has mistreated them. Should the Yemeni government act in a more even-handed way with these disaffected people, then it is obvious that support for AQAP would wither.



Pro-democracy protesters say they will stay in the streets; behind the scenes, a few players are vying for power.

### A prosperous future?

A Yemen without the endemic corruption that the country suffers from today would also have a good chance of advancing its economy. Yemen is not poor in resources: the widely-held assumption that its oil reserves will run out in 2017 was made on the basis of an inherently corrupt bidding process that did not document several new oilfields. Apart from oil and gas, the country's waters are rich in fish, the climate is good for agriculture, and the country's manufacturing and tourism industries both have strong potential.

This does not mean that Saudi Arabia and the rest of the GCC would not be needed after any potential revolution. Although most Yemenis would welcome the end of the practice of payments to the leading powers in Yemen, many of whom are corrupt, they would also welcome help with the reconstruction of the country. Many leaders of the youth movement are starting to develop a pragmatic outlook, and know that they will need the help of the Gulf to reconstruct the country, especially following the devastating effect the last few months have had on the Yemeni economy.

Qatar is the country most trusted by the youth of Yemen, following its support for the youth movement, and therefore they would gain the most from the emergence of a democratic Yemen. Qatar would emerge as Yemen's number-one ally in the Gulf region. However, Yemen would not reject Saudi Arabia's money at this time of need, and so Saudi fear of a total loss

of influence in what it has historically seen as its backyard is premature.

The other outside power with major interests in Yemen is the United States of America. When dealing with Yemen, the Americans usually perceive everything through the lens of terrorism and al-Qaeda. President Saleh has successfully convinced the Americans of the al-Qaeda threat in the country, and has thereby been able to get much in the way of weaponry, equipment, and training from the Americans. This has then often been used against non-Qaeda problems in the country, such as the Houthi rebels in the northern Saada province.

The Americans now privately accept the fact that the issue of AQAP has been overblown by the Yemeni government, and that it was a useful tool for Saleh to garner support from the US. This explains the less-than-supportive US statements issued in recent months about Saleh and a transition to democracy. However, there still appears to be some hesitation in calling for Saleh to step down immediately. The American support for the GCC proposal, which only calls for Saleh to step down in 30 days, is increasingly bizarre, with him currently out of the country, his sons controlling many government institutions, a growing economic and humanitarian disaster, and attacks against protesters and individual activists continuing.

This can only be described as the result of the remnants of the old policies on Yemen refusing to go away. The old fear of abandoning the country to al-

Qaeda has meant that Saleh's threats are partly believed, despite the protest movement's full opposition to al-Qaeda ideology. A democracy in Yemen would be a coup for the US, and would give the argument for democracy in the Arab and Muslim world a strong push, especially after the Iraq debacle. Rescuing the Yemeni economy would also severely limit support for AQAP and extremist ideology in general.

### Youth movement needs Western support

The youth movement presents the perfect opportunity for the US and its Western allies to change the course of Yemen, from an apparent failed state housing its own franchise of al-Qaeda to a relatively prosperous democratic state.

However, this will not happen without Western support for the youth movement. The youth movement does not have any power in Yemen apart from its numbers and its continued ability to bring the country to a standstill, and therefore needs overt Western support. The flying of French and British flags in Benghazi is something that would have been outlandish a year ago, and its occurrence in the past few months shows the changes in local attitudes that can come as a result of positive Western policy in the region.

Yemen is currently in dire straits. The youth movement present a positive future for the country, although its members are increasingly fractured, and seemingly sidelined by all the major players. Although risky, a bet on the youth movement would present the best chances for a positive outcome for the outside region, not just for the GCC and the wider Arab world, but also for the US and the West.

Taking a chance on a democratic Yemen would severely reduce the capabilities of the number-one Western fear, AQAP, and a stronger, democratic Yemeni state would set an encouraging precedent for other states in the region. It might even help in the fight against piracy in the Arabian Sea. Old habits die hard, but this is a moment where outside powers must take a risk in Yemen. Otherwise, the future does not bode well for the country or the region.

*Abubakr Al-Shamahi is a British-Yemeni freelance journalist and is the editor of Comment Middle East commentmiddle-east.com, a platform for young people to write about the region.*



# Can Obama Ignore Anti-AQAP Protests?

By: James Gundun  
Palestine Chronicle

It's a contest that no revolutionary wants to enter: most ignored. Although Western backing hasn't generated decisive victory for Libyans or Syrians, these revolutionaries would presumably pass on swapping with their Bahraini and Yemeni peers. The dual-core of Saudi Arabia's counter-revolution exemplifies America's double-standard towards manipulable regimes, and Yemenis understand this much about Washington's relationship with the murderous Ali Abdullah Saleh. However their realization doesn't fully alleviate the pains of international isolation, especially after largely peaceful demonstrations defied Western notions of extremism.

Yemenis have been left to wonder what could possibly attract international support if not six months of bloodshed. Soon the question will shift to how long the Obama administration can ignore demonstrations against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

Ideally President Barack Obama and his national security team would have no need to ignore Yemenis, but within the ugly world of geopolitics, the White House has too many reasons to shun their revolution. Rooted in training and funding for Saleh's personal security forces, Washington pumped low-level economic aid into his corrupt regime in a vain effort to balance one-sided militarism. Crowning three decades of misrule, widespread economic shortages and misappropriated counter-terrorism units finally pushed Yemenis into revolution mode, disrupting Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) and the CIA's escalation in their country.

Labeled an inconvenience, revolution against Saleh was immediately flagged as "against U.S. interests" and green-lit for a controlled transition. This policy fuels a negative cycle whereby anti-American sentiment is exploited to justify unilateral or "joint" military operations: drone strikes, a network of Special Forces and CIA "trainers," and a flotilla parked off Yemen's southern coast. Last month, during one of several admissions that support for Saleh's regime is ongoing, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told the Senate Armed Services Committee, "It's obviously a dangerous and uncertain situation, but we continue to work with elements there to try to develop counterterrorism."

In searching for measures to preserve semi-obedient "elements," the Obama administration went beyond orchestrating a favorable power transfer through the Saudi-backed Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which would leave a shell of the current regime in power. Mimicking daily power outages in Yemen, one of Saleh's many stall tactics, the administration cut the lights on Yemen's revolution. Only after March 18th's sniper massacre in Sana'a, when at least 50 protesters were gunned down by Saleh's security units, did Obama condemn Yemen's sweeping violence. 92 days have elapsed since he mentioned Yemen – a single line in his "Moment of Opportunity" – and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton last grazed over the revolution in early June.

The administration in general remains silent on vicious human rights abuses committed by U.S.-trained security forces, now considered war crimes by Yemenis. At one point in Taiz's Change Square, the Republican Guard's gasoline-filled water cannons rolled over tents and torched protesters in their sleep. Neither the White House nor State Department has issued a reaction to any transitional council, months of bombardment against anti-government tribes or a government-induced humanitarian crisis. Meanwhile Panetta has accordingly filled the White House and State Department's vacuum, keen to protect the Pentagon's investments by hyping AQAP and ignoring Ali Saleh.

Tasking U.S. Ambassador Gerald Feirstein with the daily grunt work of mingling with Saleh's regime, counter-terrorism chief John Brennan has assumed the role of Obama's leading diplomat. Brennan is supposedly close to both Saleh and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, a toxic mix to Yemenis.

Washington's response to their revolution (and the refusal to break with Riyadh) has infuriated some protesters, confused many more and given rise to the belief that no Western support is forthcoming. Although many rightfully declare that a revolution can only be achieved by the people, revolutions historically receive external assistance. Yemenis also deserve U.S. support after their mistreatment; unlike Syria's Bashar al-Assad, Washington played a direct role in empowering Saleh's regime. This complicity has rendered U.S. cooperation and UN sanctions a fool's hope, except Yemenis haven't given up trying to attract President Obama's support.

They just needed time to organize and probe the depths of Western misconceptions.

Last week in Taiz, one of several revolutionary epicenters, a group of activists hosted a symposium entitled, "Our Revolution Against Terrorism." The first of many planned events against AQAP, the gathering rebuked perceptions of unchecked extremism and pledged to combat terrorism after Saleh's regime falls into the dustbin of history. A "rejection of al-Qaeda and terrorism" march is tentatively planned and more demonstrations will follow if all goes according to schedule.

"Saleh is willing to do anything to stay in power," explains Dr. Abdulkani Alguneid, a leading Taiz activist who gave a seminar on Saleh's relationship with AQAP and Saudi Arabia. "He sold Yemen's image as an al-Qaeda sanctuary, to the wealthiest oil country and to a superpower. Yemen's revolution is all about civil society and civil state. Both Saleh and al-Qaeda have no place in such a habitat."

The process admittedly struggled to come online due to a vast divergence in Yemeni and American mindsets. Many peaceful Yemenis don't think twice in associating AQAP with Saleh, whereas Americans generally consider Yemen as a backwards breeding land for terrorists. Although the country has become a hotbed of anti-Americanism and some fighters made the journey to Afghanistan or Iraq, Yemen's revolutionaries want nothing to do with terrorism. Believing it was planted in their country, they point to Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab's failed Christmas bombing in 2009 – to a Nigerian finally attracting the U.S. public's attention – and to the Saudi legion that formed AQAP's old guard, many released from Guantánamo Bay.

Then comes Saleh's systematic methods of enabling AQAP: crippling Yemen's economy and alienating tribes within AQAP's area of operations (including cleric Anwar al-Awlaki), exploiting al-Qaeda's name to quell the secessionist-oriented Southern Movement, funding his own "jihadists." al-Awlaki "is not part of our fabric," says Alguneid, though he acknowledges that Saleh's corrupt system drove the cleric to action. Yemen's besieged tyrant has a vested interest in keeping AQAP alive and continues to play his double-game with Washington, going so far as to cede territory and weapons in the south. Saleh's regime then leaks a steady flow of intel on AQAP to keep himself useful, resulting in

unpopular U.S. air-strikes.

By propping up a despot and killing rows of civilians, America has contributed to AQAP's growth by validating al-Qaeda's political ideology.

AQAP does exist and so do its plans to strike outside of Yemen. However its influence, strength and source have all been misrepresented by Western governments and media. The end result is that an anti-AQAP campaign became a footnote to the revolutionaries, who periodically reaffirm their commitment against terrorism with the sinking expectation of being ignored. Even as they organize to disprove foreign impressions, the White House fired a blatant shot of propaganda by warning of a non-imminent ricin attack. This Goldilocks threat – not too hot, not too cold – is tailored to smother the revolution through the GCC's initiative. Yet as stalemate with Saleh and his arms drags on, Yemenis are planning to increasingly fold anti-AQ themes into their political narrative.

"Yemenis are most tolerant when it comes to other people's faith," Alguneid argues, adding that they prayed after the assassination of John F. Kennedy and accommodated American tourists in the 1970s. "Yemen's heritage, culture, precedents and soft Islam are so rich that we can't be tempted easily by new comers to tell us what we should or should not do."

AQAP's limited influence still doesn't negate the risks assumed by Yemen's protesters. If the group decides to save the remainder of its popularity and avoid targeting demonstrations, Saleh's regime could exploit the tension with its own plots. Supporting Yemen's revolutionaries is more vital than ever – to their interests and to U.S. interests. Ultimately the real terror threat stems from Saleh and aborting Yemen's revolution through the GCC, which Saleh has no intention of signing. An opposite course towards democracy provides the best opportunity to counter AQAP's ideology and territorial growth.

If Washington still doesn't hear a mass of Yemenis chanting against al-Qaeda, the revolutionaries will have no choice except to believe that America truly wants AQAP to stay.

- James Gundun is a political scientist and counterinsurgency analyst. His blog, The Trench, covers the underreported areas of U.S. foreign policy. He contributed this article to PalestineChronicle.com. Follow him on Twitter: @RealistChannel.

# How the CIA is Trying to Pave Over Yemen's Revolution Evicting Yemen's Drone Base

By: James Gundun

The Washington Post recently published a controversial report about the future of al-Qaeda "2.0 and U.S. operations against the network. The ensuing narrative speculated whether the Pentagon and CIA are now manufacturing war after Osama bin Laden's death, or whether news organizations should conceal a "secret" drone base inside Yemen.

Lost in the media haze is the base itself, a pillar of U.S. resistance against Yemen's revolution.

Ultimately The Washington Post added little to previous reporting from The Wall Street Journal and Associated Press. By the time this "secret" base was outed in June, MQ-9 Reapers had already increased their patrols over Yemen and begun to search for targets after a year-long slowdown. U.S. Hellfire missiles had terminated the deputy governor of Marib in May 2010, killed while allegedly meeting an informant from al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). CIA Director David Petraeus, then CENTCOM commander, negotiated these joint-strikes under Ali Abdullah Saleh's table, only for Yemen's strongman to flip after a tribal revolt.

When U.S. warplanes and drones again increased their activity "to exploit" the power vacuum opened by Saleh, the besieged president had actually begun passing new information to Washington, starting with AQAP cleric Anwar al-Awlaki. Saleh's tactics haven't changed before or after Yemen's revolution and neither has U.S. policy.

The Wall Street Journal's key piece of information was an acceleration to this base's construction from two years to eight months, a response to Yemen's "instability." Similarly, The Washington Post reported one vital piece of information: the base is scheduled for completion in September. Planning for a post-Saleh world became unavoidable and the Obama administration needed to finish its base before Yemen's revolutionaries accomplished their own mission. The timing synchronizes with the revolution, eight months from February to September. Instead of supporting Yemen's people, the White House's first order of business was to further militarize their country at the hands of a delusional tyrant.

Speeding up the building process wasn't a matter of adapting to security concerns but of overriding sovereignty. Throughout six months of peaceful protests, hundreds of civilian casualties and a government-induced humanitarian crisis, this one asset has overruled the Yemeni people's support.

The drone paradox appears endless; Washington requires a base to hunt al-Qaeda operatives, when U.S. policy has boosted AQAP's growth beyond what it would have obtained through its personal means. A base wouldn't be necessary if America enjoyed the people's support, but the administration opted to pump military equipment and economic aid into Saleh's corrupt regime. U.S.-trained "counter-terrorism" units deployed against the Houthis, Southern Movement, tribal militias, revolutionaries and finally AQAP. When the revolution began, world powers labeled it a "political crisis" and summoned the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to negotiate a biased settlement for the

regime. As protesters have refused to submit to foreign intervention, the past three months yielded a combination of U.S. air-strikes on AQAP units, anti-government tribesmen and civilians.

Since these collective measures resulted in deep hostility against U.S. policy, a base must now be constructed against their will. How does this equation make any sense? Most Yemenis and some observers firmly believe that Saleh and Washington are using each other to create chaos, a vain attempt to justify their illegitimate authority. Coolly rational, yet utterly deranged.

Half of Washington's rationale involves Special Forces and CIA trainers currently active in Yemen; Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) and the CIA's Special Activities Division are running white (training) and black (field) ops on the ground and aerial operations from Djibouti. A portion of these forces would presumably relocate to a concealed desert strip, revealing its full dimensions. The CIA's base serves as Petraeus's keystone to expanding Special Operations across the region, from the Persian Gulf to Somalia and all the waterways in between. Yet on the side of madness, any Yemeni believing that AQAP is enabled by Saleh would be frightened to know that, "the Obama administration is bolstering the CIA's role in Yemen, seeking to replicate its pursuit of al-Qaeda in Pakistan."

As if U.S. foreign policy is flourishing in Islamabad.

Worse still, the agency "is expected to work closely with Saudi Arabia to exploit its tribal ties," developed to undermine Saleh's patchy rule in the north. Although some tribal figures continue to take Riyadh's handouts, Saudi Arabia may be the only foreign entity more unpopular than America. Even the powerful al-Almars, leaders of the Hashid tribe, are slowly losing their connection to Riyadh as the revolution overtakes their political ambitions. Newsweek reacted oddly to the notion of "Pakistaniization," writing in a profile of Petraeus, "Yemen, now on the verge of civil war, is hardly the ideal model for future operations, but it has been a critical proving ground."

Thus failure has been proven and the administration's response is to fail harder. Pakistan's "system" and all of its mistakes are being duplicated: alienate the populace through a combination of abandonment, support for an unpopular government and unilateral militarism.

This spiral of death has brought misery upon Yemen's people and weakened America's national security, rather than erode AQAP. What if Saleh is then tossed out or brought to trial? What if al-Qaeda dries up? What purpose would this base serve? Such neo-colonialism hollows out client states into U.S. zones of autonomy – into a base predicated on the knowledge that Saleh's regime will crumble. However a unilateral base inside Yemen will become a liability after the revolution topples him, an immoral and militarily questionable strategy.

Perhaps the Pentagon and CIA desire their creation at any cost to America's interests, or to the brave revolutionaries fighting for a democracy that America should be nurturing. Eventually, though, both the Yemeni people and Washington may be wondering how to conjure away a white elephant in the desert.

# Inconclusive exit in Yemen

Editorial  
The Hindu

After months of dodging promises to step down, President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen has exited — in a somewhat unexpected manner — after being wounded in rocket fire by opposition forces targeting the presidential palace in Sana'a. While his departure has led to rejoicing in Yemen, the next steps in a volatile country where al-Qaeda is feared to have a significant presence are far from clear. From January 2011, anti-government street protests put increasing pressure on Mr. Saleh to remit office. It is unlikely that the

Yemen strongman, who ruled for 33 years beginning as the President of North Yemen in 1978, will return to his country from Saudi Arabia where he was flown for treatment of his wounds. Even if he overcomes his injuries, Saudi Arabia, which shares a border with Yemen and is nervous that the protests in its neighbourhood may spread to its soil if not ended swiftly, will do everything to prevent his return. An indication of this came with the Saudi regime joining the United States in the call for the swift implementation of a Gulf Cooperation Council plan for a transition in Yemen. The GCC plan envisages Mr. Saleh's resignation in return for immunity for himself and his family members, and a caretaker govern-

ment that will hold parliamentary elections within 90 days. Three times he accepted the plan only to change his mind at the last minute, setting his forces on the protesters, raising the spectre of a civil war as Yemen's fractious tribes joined the fighting on both sides. It may be easier now to persuade him to sign on the dotted line. Indeed, the first step in the plan, handing over the reins of government to the Vice-President, has already been accomplished with his exit. But Mr. Saleh's family members remain in charge, with control of the intelligence service and the Army. Making them cede power peacefully may not be easy.

In these circumstances, a democratic election is hardly in sight. Unlike in

other countries touched by the "jasmine revolution," the mass protests in Yemen do seem to have an identifiable leadership. Initially propelled by youth and ordinary people, the movement could not have survived six months but for the backing of an important opposition leader from a rival tribe, Hamid Al Ahmar, a telecom tycoon who is said to have funded the protests. His brothers are also key figures in the movement. An important military general also defected and has claimed to support the protests. What is of concern here is that their opposition to the Saleh regime is based more on tribal and personal rivalries than on any commitment to democratic values. If Yemen is at the cusp of real change, it is as yet hard to see.

**YEMEN TIMES**  
www.yementimes.com  
*First Political English Newspaper in Yemen. Founded in 1990 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf*  
Tel: +967 (1) 268-661  
Fax: +967 (1) 268-276  
P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a, Yemen  
Letters: ytreaders.view@gmail.com  
**ADVERTISEMENTS:**  
Tel: +967 (1) 510306  
Email: adsyemen@yahoo.com

**Publisher & Editor-in-Chief**  
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf

**CEO**  
Khair Aldin Al Nsour

## Editors

Jeb Boone

**Senior Reporter**  
Mohammed bin Sallam

**Head of Design Dept.**  
Ramzy Alawi Al-Saqqaf

## Editorial Staff

Ali Saeed  
Malak Shaher

Sadeq Al-Wesabi  
Shatha Al-Harazi

## Offices

**Aden Bureau:**  
Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed  
Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596  
Fax: +967 (2) 347056  
Email: ytaden@y.net.ye

**Taiz Bureau:**  
Imad Ahmed Al-Saqqaf  
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156,  
Telefax: +967 (4) 217157  
P.O.Box: 5086, Taiz  
Email: yttaiz@y.net.ye

## Subscriptions

For subscription rates and related information please contact Majdi Al-Saqqaf, Subscription and Distribution Manager, on 268661/2 ext 204 or mobile: 711998995

## Policies:

- All opinion articles that have not been written by Yemen Times staff on the Opinion, Op-Ed and Youth pages do not necessarily represent the newspaper's opinion and hence YT could not be held accountable for their consequences.
- Letters to the Editor must include your name, mailing address, or email address. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity, style, and length.
- Submissions will not be returned to the writer under any circumstance.
- For information on advertising, contact the advertising department at any of the Yemen Times' offices



Ahmed Abas Al-Mokhtafi, general director of Sa'ada Radio, speaks in an exclusive interview with the Yemen Times

## “The principle which harms the country most severely is that authority is represented in one person and that if he leaves, the state will leave.”

Sa'ada, 340 km north of the capital Sana'a on the Saudi south border, has been a site of fierce clashes between the Houthis and Yemeni army since 2004. The rebels engaged in open fighting with Saudi armed forces beginning in late 2009. The warring parties signed a ceasefire in February 2010.

However, with the nationwide uprising disrupting the tenuous balance of power in the governorate, factions in Sa'ada have begun an open revolt against Saleh's regime.

Last March, the governor of Sa'ada, Taha Hajer, appointed by Saleh in February 2010, was expelled from his office. A new governor, alleged former arms dealer Sheikh Fares Mana'a, was elected by different local political powers including the Houthis.

Since that time the Sa'ada radio has enjoyed expansive broadcast freedom and has sided with the revolution against Saleh's regime.

To learn more about these developments, Ali Saeed of the Yemen Times met Ahmed Abas Al-Mokhtafi, general director of Sa'ada Radio in the capital Sana'a. He reports his interview below.

### How is the situation in Sa'ada now?

The situation has become stable and safe after six episodes of war. It is quiet and calm. Business activity has resumed on a large scale. Sa'ada now receives displaced people from other conflict areas in Yemen because of its security, stability and order. Perhaps it is the only governorate where public institutions are still operating, in contrast to many other areas of Yemen, because all the people there have participated in the decision-making. There is no fissure between people supporting the regime and those supporting the revolution. Most everyone now is for the revolution.

Many people who fled Sa'ada during the war have returned home. When the clashes erupted in Sana'a's Al-Hasaba district late May, many people there have now been displaced to Sa'ada.

There are also internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Abyan who fled to Sa'ada from the fighting between armed Islamists and the [Saleh's] army since last May. IDPs are flowing to Sa'ada from neighboring Al-Jawf because of fighting between the Houthis and the Islahis over the past three months.

With these new arrivals to Sa'ada, now you can see taxis in Sa'ada City. This kind of service was not there before.

The population has grown noticeably in Sa'ada City. There are now traffic jams. Business activity has even been revitalized in rural areas of Sa'ada. This has reinforced people's confidence in the security and stability of the governorate.

Locals began rebuilding their damaged houses, business and shops. Some have started up new business because they feel now that there will be no more war or warplanes shelling their area.

### But might not this temporary calm and stability break down at any moment?

I do not think so. I invite you to come to Sa'ada. You will not find evidence of what you are suggesting. Despite the negative image of Sa'ada presented by the media, the security condition

there is good. The Houthis' entrance to Sa'ada has broken the stereotype that the Houthis are armed groups who destroy cities and kill people. Now all of this is gone and this myth has disappeared. Because when the Houthis took control of the city, despite expectations to the contrary, they were able to restore security.

You see soldiers sitting together with Houthis. You see high-ranking officers with the Houthi leaders. Everything is normal since there is nothing that sparks problems between the two sides.

### Who is now managing Sa'ada governorate?

Local authority is vested in the current governor of Sa'ada, Sheikh Fares Mana'a. He was elected legally, and not, as some claim, installed in the post by the Houthis. There was a consensus on his election among the present security leaders and the Houthis in the governorate.

So Mana'a has become a local authority of Sa'ada, and the governorate still receives state financial allocations from the central government in Sana'a. These include the governorate's operational budget and salaries for public employees.

### So how is it that Sa'ada is out of the state's control and yet the central government is still paying for Sa'ada's operational budget?

I'm basically against saying it is out of the state's control because the military officers, policemen and the traffic police are still present in the governorate. Each one is doing his duty.

### So, if there were a conflict between two citizens, who would settle it?

The local authority, except in rural areas, where citizens would go to tribal leaders who are loyal to the Houthis. This is a central characteristic of Yemeni society, in which tribal leaders in Yemen's rural areas wield more power and influence than the state.

### Who is running the police stations in



Ahmed Abas Al-Mokhtafi

### the governorate?

The police themselves. There are functional courts and things are normal.

### Are the policemen and army in Sa'ad siding with the revolution or are they still loyal to Saleh's regime?

Most of them have sided with the revolution, but units of the central security forces still believe in Ali Abdullah Saleh. They have opportunity to speak their minds and raise Saleh's pictures despite the popular trend of standing against the regime.

But, some locals in Sa'ada told us that the Houthis do not allow anyone to air an opinion against them, for instance, describing them as Twelver Shiites.

First of all it is misleading to say that the Houthis are Twelver Shiites. They are not. They are Zaydis.

### Are you a Houthi?

No I'm not Houthi, I'm a state-employee at Sa'ada Radio. We used to be against the Houthis. I'm Zaydi and over 99 percent of the population in Sa'ada is Zaydi, but there is no group here called Twelver Shiites.

And it is not true that the Houthis prohibit others from expressing their opinions. If this were true, they would prevent the Salafists from practicing their traditions such as Taraweeh prayer [a prayer done at night during Ramadan after the Al-Esha festival], which does not exist in the Zaydi school.

But if you went to Sa'ada today, you would find the religious traditions of both Zaydis and Salafists performed in their mosques with no problems. They

are not going to bring their prayers out of the mosque and argue that our Zaydi School approves of this religious practice. And not only Salafists, but Islahis practice there as well.

There is also hard-core group of Salafists called Muqbil group. They are extremists and they have their school in Damaj, Sa'ada. They carry out their traditions in complete freedom.

### Three weeks ago, a Salafi imam was murdered in Sa'ada. Does this point to sectarian conflict in the governorate?

No, I do not think so. Because even the Salafis were disappointed about this happening. The real story of the murdered imam is that he was carrying hand-grenades to bomb some buildings in the governorate. You may have heard two weeks ago of a similar incident, in which an explosion targeted the republican hospital in the city of Sa'ada. So they [the people who killed him] tried to disarm the grenades. He attempted to throw the grenades at them, so they were forced to kill him. And they are now in custody pending state trial.

### Do you have any information on the armed conflict between the Houthis and Islahis in Al-Jawf governorate?

What I know is that there have been fierce armed clashes between the Houthis and the Islahis.

### Do you know why these clashes are taking place?

At the beginning they were both on good terms and stood together with the

revolution. But we have heard that there was a foreign intervention – frankly, from Saudi Arabia, which shares a similar religious ideology – in which the Saudis armed the Islah groups in Al-Jawf with heavy weapons to fight the Houthis and prevent their extension into other parts of the country.

This is what we heard from the locals there and we also heard that the Saudis pay any one who participates in the fighting. This armed conflict in Al-Jawf has killed many people. Because of the high casualty rate, some people have named it the seventh war.

But the nice thing now is that both sides have signed a ceasefire agreement, and a new governor was recently elected in Al-Jawf. The problem is that everything in Al-Jawf was at standstill and even salaries of public employees have been suspended for over six months, in contrast to Sa'ada where the state government is still paying salaries.

So I would like to explain that Sa'ada did not separate from the state. Yemen's flag is still present, and the national anthem is performed on Sa'ada Radio despite its being a revolutionary radio.

The radio in Sa'ada has sided with the revolution, but it is still committed to the national constants including the national anthem and different radio programs. There has been a serious focus on revolutionary programs and projects, but our policy towards the key constants is still unchanged.

### If a new republican decree were issued, would you air it on Sa'ada Radio?

If it were relevant to the nation, we would publish it, but unfortunately the Public Radio and Television Department has been suspending all of Sa'ada Radio's financial allocations for over three months.

And despite this financial suspension, the daily seven-hour broadcasting in Sa'ada has published its Ramadan programs scheme in the Al-Thawra state-owned newspaper. The governor provides some allocations to the Radio, but they are small amounts.

### How would you compare Sa'ada Radio's popularity before and after it sided with the revolution?

I will be frank with you on this. Some people who are still connected to Saleh may have stopped listening to Sa'ada radio for a period of time to voice their anger and disapproval, but the nice thing is that I was able to attract them again as I presented moderate topics. I used to present a program called “Sessions Talk.” On this program I would receive SMS from listeners. Some of the messages expressed thanks to Saleh and I was reading them on the air to prove that we accept all opinions, whether they are with Saleh or against him. And the same thing for callers

who glorified Saleh. This decision has created trust between the former listeners and me, plus the new listeners who were disappointed with me in the past for including the Houthis and the anti-regime movements.

And now I can confirm that Sa'ada Radio's audience has grown.

### Do you think this experience can be applied to other local radios, such as Sana'a Radio?

I really think so. But the problem in Yemen's visual and audio media is that it belongs only to one party, and anyone can prove this. No one is able to present different point of view on the radio or the television.

### Which would be best for Yemen: to leave the visual and audio media as it is now or to neutralize it?

Surely the best thing for any state to move forward is to have open, independent media. If you look at any country you will find that cultural awareness is high when the media is open and independent.

The majority of Yemeni society is illiterate, and those who can read and write are uncultured people. Because of this, the state-owned media are able to stream information to serve one person's agenda.

### What are the main principles that the state-owned media has instilled in the minds of Yemenis?

The principle which harms the country most severely is that authority is represented in one person and that if he leaves, the state will leave. And this is the fundamental issue. If Saleh goes, Yemen will end and fall into conflicts. This is what has recently been inculcated by the national radios and television.

And you notice when there is good news about Saleh, they switch on the electricity, open the water. If Saleh is in a bad condition or has traveled, they start switching off the power and so on. For instance, the fuel problem, which has created a very deep crisis and seriously harmed citizens has led even some revolutionaries to wish for Saleh's return.

### What do you think will be the Houthis' strategy when Saleh's regime goes?

The People in Sa'ada take to the streets twice a week demanding the fall of Saleh's regime and the establishment of a modern state. These demonstrations are organized and led by the Houthis.

I recently sat with some Houthi leaders, and I said to them, “Now you are armed. Will you continue like this?” They said they want a modern state and when the political situation stabilizes in the country, they will free Sa'ada city from all weapons. And this is a good trend.

## Qaddafi's fall rivets Yemen

### How the rebel victory in Libya is inspiring the revolutionaries in Sanaa.

By: Tom Finn  
Foreign Policy

Shock waves are once again rippling across the Arab world. Scenes of Libya's “freedom fighters” streaming into Tripoli on Monday, Aug. 22, were soon reverberating across the region and the world. It was not long before eyes were turning to the other rulers under threat in the Middle East, searching for the next candidate to fall. Most turned to Syria, where some are prophesying that a similar fate awaits the beleaguered and increasingly isolated President Bashar al-Assad.

But in Yemen, the poorest and youngest country in the Arab world, tens of thousands were also tuning in to soak up the drama unfolding in North Africa. It was the downfall of Egypt's Hosni Mubarak in early February that first set Yemen's protest movement ablaze, sending thousands of young men spilling into the capital's dusty streets to face the rubber bullets and water cannons of President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime.

Six months of mass demonstrations and armed clashes have come to a grinding stalemate between the seemingly irremovable Saleh and a fractured opposition struggling to form a transitional government to manage the democratization of Yemen.

But Sunday night, as the Libyan rebels tightened their grasp on Tripoli, that same feeling of nervous energy and unfathomed potential was back in Sanaa. Excitement seemed to ripple down the long lines of dusty, battered tents in Change Square, a sprawling shantytown filled with thousands of die-hard protesters, as men fumbled with their television remotes and cranked up the volume on their radios.

Within minutes a huge crowd had assembled around a projector in the middle of the square to watch the fuzzy images of jubilant Libyans being broadcast live on Al Jazeera dance across a white sheet of tarpaulin. One man tugged at my sleeve, beckoning up at the sight of two men draped in Libyan flags holding each other in an emotional embrace, and shouted in English, “We want this too!” A teenager who had shimmied up a rusty lamppost with a megaphone in his hand soon whipped the crowd into a frenzy, shouting, “O Ali and O Bashar,

Qaddafi lost his head.”

“Our turn tomorrow,” the crowd roared as it marched out of the square.

The Libyan showdown has brought a welcome breath of fresh air to Yemen's uprising, which as it enters its seventh month is threatening to grow stale. A few months ago, the deafening calls for the strongman to go followed by a series of mass defections by major generals and senior members of Saleh's government and tribe appeared to have brought his regime to its knees. But in recent months the momentum has ebbed. The Yemeni youth movement is slowly being nudged aside by powerful tribal warlords and military chiefs jostling for position.

Little has changed since early June, when Saleh was airlifted to Saudi Arabia for medical treatment after a suspected booby-trap explosion ripped through the mosque in his compound, maiming the president and injuring several of his aides. Saleh was lucky to escape with his life. On Monday, Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, the speaker of Yemen's upper house of parliament and the third-most powerful political figure in the Yemeni government, succumbed to the injuries he sustained in the same attack. Ghani, known to be one of the

few officials Saleh trusted, is the second senior official to have lost his life in the palace explosion.

But now, nearly three months and 10 operations later, Saleh looks to be gearing up for a dramatic return to his country. He rounded off a televised address to the country last week with a vow to his supporters that he would “return to Sanaa soon.” His speech was met with a deafening chorus of boos and gunfire as his supporters fired their Kalashnikovs in celebration, and his opponents in protest, at the prospect of his homecoming.

Ironically, Saleh's exodus has helped ease the strain on his crumbling regime, which is currently headed by his deputy, Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi, and shielded by his son, Ahmed Ali, the head of Yemen's elite Republican Guard. Those rallying in Change Square, now bereft of their once deafening, powerful rallying cry, “Irhah, ya Ali” (“Go out, Ali”), are being forced to come up with a new set of demands and strategies to try to push their uprising forward.

But with no common enemy, the fragile alliance binding the disparate members of Yemen's opposition is beginning to show its cracks. On Sunday, a group of influential politicians pulled out of a

143-member national council formed last week by the opposition, claiming it did not fairly represent politicians from the oil-exporting south. (North and South Yemen were unified under Saleh in 1990, but southerners often accuse the north of discrimination.)

Yemen's formal opposition, the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), a motley grouping of Islamists, socialists, and tribal elements -- not to be confused with the street movement -- has spent months trying in vain to broker Saleh's exit. In May, the JMP signed a deal drawn up by the Gulf Cooperation Council that sought to end the veteran leader's 33-year rule. But Saleh has repeatedly refused to sign, and the fear remains that if the president goes for good, the bonds holding together Yemen's Shiite rebels, southern secessionists, and English-speaking students will quickly unravel.

A sudden reappearance by Saleh might breathe new life into the protesters, but it could just as easily spell civil war. Sadeq al-Ahmar, the grizzled bearded sheikh at the head of Yemen's most influential tribe, which has sided with the opposition, recently swore “by God” that he would “never let Saleh rule again.” The last time hostilities

between the Saleh and Ahmar families turned violent, in May, a week's worth of mortar battles erupted, flattening an entire neighborhood in the capital's east and killing hundreds on both sides. With thousands of Ahmar's rebel tribesmen and renegade troops loyal to deposed general Ali Mohsin roaming the capital, it would only take the smallest of sparks to reignite hostilities.

Whether it's Saleh or someone else who seizes the reins in Yemen, the country's next leader will have a lot to contend with: a growing political vacuum, a rapidly imploding economy, and the prospect of even deeper chaos as outlying provinces slide from the government's grasp into the hands of al Qaeda and other jihadi groups that are exploiting the political turmoil to move more freely and launch more ambitious attacks.

With little prospect of NATO or other foreign troops on the ground in Yemen, Saleh may not be as rattled by the Libyan experience as some might hope. Yet the sight of Qaddafi behind bars could still have an earth-shattering effect in Yemen. If Egypt was anything to go by, Libya might still prove inspirational enough to set things here in motion again.



# In Pictures: Triumphant entry into Tripoli

Libyans celebrate as country's six-month conflict nears a close following rebels' advance on the capital.

By: Al Jazeera staff

Jubilant Libyan rebels have moved from the west into the centre of the capital, Tripoli, as Muammar Gaddafi's sons and defenders lose their grip on the state. Thousands of euphoric civilians rushed out of their homes to cheer the long convoys of pickup trucks packed with fighters shooting in the air. The rebels' surprising and speedy leap forward, after six months of largely deadlocked civil war, was packed into just a few dramatic hours. By nightfall on Sunday, they had advanced more than 32km to Tripoli.



Members of the media gather in the corridors of the Rixos amid heavy gunfire ringing outside the Tripoli hotel where most of the foreign press were staying [Reuters]



A Libyan reacts to news of rebels claiming to have seized control of Tahrir ('change') Square in Tripoli [Bob Strong/Reuters]



Rebel fighters and civilians ride through the town of Maia celebrating after rebels pushed to within 25km of Tripoli [Reuters]



Civilians celebrate rebel gains in Maia [Reuters]



Libyan rebel fighters ride through the town of Maia celebrating after advancing onto the outskirts of Tripoli [Reuters]



A man places the Libyan rebel flag onto a road barrier as rebels advance through Maia [Reuters]



A Libyan rebel fighter uses the rebel flag as a cover while resting at a checkpoint near the town of Aziziyah [Reuters]



Thousands of people, mostly Libyans, gather and celebrate rebel gains outside the Libyan Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia [EPA]



Men hold a cartoon of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in Benghazi during celebrations of rebel fighters' entry into Tripoli [Reuters]



A Libyan in Benghazi reacts at news of rebels claiming to have seized control of in Tahrir Square in Tripoli [EPA]



Fireworks explode as people gather near the courthouse in Benghazi to celebrate the entry of rebel fighters into Tripoli [Reuters]



A rebel holds up the rebel-adopted old Libyan flag as they race down a road in a vehicle in Gadayem, west of Tripoli [AFP]

## SANA'A BRITISH SCHOOL



"Education is the Window to the World"

Sana'a British School SBS announces that registration for the 2011-2012 academic year is now open! Our school offers a unique opportunity for families to have their children experience a high quality private education coupled with a rich understanding of the British National Curriculum, taught with an open mind and open heart.

Sana'a British School helps educate children from Nursery aged 2 years through to Secondary School. Preparation for the Yemen Ministry of Education Examination is also offered in year 9. The IGCSE ("O" levels) is the basis for instruction in years 10 & 11. Sana'a British School is a University of Cambridge Examination Centre.

Our dedicated teachers and staff offer a warm, welcoming community which provides a nurturing, challenging environment that encourages the students to reach their full potential, and become self confident, responsible citizens with a strong connection to their community.



for more info and general enquiries please contact:

Tel: ( 967-1 ) 203 960 fax: ( 967-1 ) 206 136

mobile: ( 967 ) 736 010 501

e-mail: [administrator@sbyemen.org](mailto:administrator@sbyemen.org) - [schoolteacher@gmail.com](mailto:schoolteacher@gmail.com)

website: [www.sbyemen.org](http://www.sbyemen.org)





# Diesel shortage threatens livestock in Hodeida

By: Ali Saeed

The cattle in Hodeida coastal area, 200 km west of the capital Sana'a and known as Tehama region, is at risk due to a lack of fuel nationwide.

The three-month diesel shortage means that farmers in Tehama are unable to run their water pumps to irrigate animal food crops, according to local farmers who spoke to the Yemen Times over the phone.

"For the first time in my life the animal food stocks in Tehama have run out this year - due to the diesel problem and especially when farm owners cannot find diesel to run the water pumps and grow new grass," said Abdullah Hussein, a local farmer in Hodeida.

"The price of one grass armful has increased from YR 100 (around third of one dollar) to YR 600 (USD 3) and it is an acute shortage," said Hussein.

"Sometimes we go to the grass market and we come back with empty hands."

Hundreds of farmers were forced to sell large numbers of their cattle and sheep because they were unable to afford the food, according to Sultan Hadi, another local cattle farmer in Hodeida.

"I sold some of my sheep at a low price because I'm no longer able to pay for their food," he said.

The rainy season, which often takes place during March-August, did not happen in Tehama this year which has exacerbated the problem of cattle food shortages.

Tens of thousands people in Tehama region depend on animal husbandry for their income and the lack of cattle food will affect the livelihoods of thousands of households. Mustafa Nasr, chairman of the economic studies and media center in the capital Sana'a, told the Yemen Times.

"This is a dangerous sign for the agricultural sector - particularly Yemen's animal wealth since Tehama region is Yemen's main source of animal food and cattle," Nasr said.

"The cattle production will continue



Livestock is a primary source of income for many farmers in Yemen, accounting for over 50 percent of their income.

to fall due to the lack of animal food caused by the diesel shortage and Yemen will have to import cattle on a large scale instead of exporting," he added.

Nasr explained that this will also have a negative impact on thousands of households who mainly rely on rearing animals for their living.

He blamed Saleh's regime of cutting off the diesel supply to many areas of the country to punish the people for demanding an end to Saleh's 33-year rule.

"We demand the urgent supply of diesel to such areas and I know it is the regime who detains this important fuel on purpose. The problem is basically political and not economic," said the chairman.

In late March Yemen's main oil pipe-

line in Mareb was blown up by local armed tribesmen in dispute with the government. Since then, Yemeni officials have blamed the opposition for the supply problems, saying they sabotaged the oil pipe that transfers the crude oil to be refined in Aden.

Despite the fact that the oil pipeline was fixed over one month ago, Yemen received three million barrels of crude oil as a grant from Saudi Arabia and the government has bought tons of fuel and diesel - but diesel is still unavailable at gas stations and citizens can only get it on the black market at four times the price.

Around 30 percent of the country's daily fuel requirement of 8,000 tons of diesel goes to the agricultural sector, which is badly affected at a country-

wide level.

Over 90 percent of farms in Tehama depend on well water, which is pumped up from groundwater by diesel generators. Thus, the diesel shortage has affected not only cattle food; many farmers cannot not even find diesel to run their pumps for drinking water.

Livestock is a primary source of income for many farmers in Yemen, accounting for over 50 percent of their income, according to an online study published 2009 by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The agricultural sector is an asset of Yemen's economy since the sector contributes around 15 percent of the GDP and includes 55 percent of Yemen's workforce.

# Eid joy remains despite everything

By: Ismail Al-Ghabiri

When the new moon is expected to appear, people go out to mosques and parks in order to have a glimpse of it. When a definite sighting is made, Eid Al-Fitr is declared, and children happily go out singing in the streets. It is easy to see happiness in children's eyes when the are taken by their parents to buy clothes and toys for the Eid.

Every one of us has special fond memories about Eid, not only about buying new clothes, but also about waiting for the first day of Eid to wear these clothes. It is as if an intimate meeting will take place between the children and their new clothes. Some of us remember how he or she sued to open his cupboard to look at these beautiful new things.

They are eager to wear these clothes and appear in front of their friends and relatives. Memory also holds the most beautiful moments of waiting for the happiness of wearing the new clothes which fades a few hours after taking them off. So the Eid starts before its date by a short time.

The Eid traditions are almost the same on the public and personal levels. In all nights of the Eid, people stay up late until the early hours of the following day. In all Islamic areas, everything starts at the dawn of the first Eid day. Children and adults go to the mosque to the Eid prayers. Everybody comes out of the mosque before sunrise to exchange the traditional greetings and felicitations - "kul aam wa antum bikhair" or many happy returns.

At the mosque, calls of Allahu Akbar or God is great rise to heaven. The faithful would feel his voice coming from deep within his soul and that he has an unlimited energy of light and ability to communicate with God. God's wisdom manifests itself not only in presenting the power of Muslims in their congregation, but also in creating the feeling that



The occasion of Eid is a chance to highlight the cultural, social and religious significance of the celebration, especially in Yemen.

a person acquires more strength of conscience by being beside another Muslim praying to God.

A Muslim person may not even know the name of the other Muslim beside him or her, but knows that he or she is also honestly and spontaneously praying to God and calling Allahu Akbar.

This great meeting of Muslims during the first few hours of the Eid is a major celebration of this sacred occasion. These rituals have been known since the time of the Prophet Mohammed (P) when they were characterized by simplicity and solemnity, and were done in a quiet manner. With the passage of time, however, these rituals acquired a lot of variety and color.

Religious occasions during the time of the Abbasid dynasty saw many social features. Men in the Caliph's entourage stayed with him throughout the night of the Eid until dawn broke. They then went to the mosque headed by the Caliph riding on a white horse and surrounded by his soldiers. People chanted in the street praising God and the Caliph who prayed in the mosque in front

of other men and later delivered the Eid sermon. Upon the return of the Caliph's procession to the palace, banquets are held and poets recited their poems eulogizing the Caliph.

The first hours of the first morning of Eid are similar in all Muslim towns and cities. After the dawn prayers and the exchange of felicitations, people start doing their own special traditions which differ from one country to another. Many people visit their relatives and friends to exchange greetings. Some people nowadays use the telephone for this purpose. Eid is truly a happy occasion for all Muslims. For this reason new habits have appeared in many Muslim societies. Children in particular engage in many festive activities. The first thing a child looks forwards to is the "Eidia" or the gift money given by the child's senior relatives. The amount of money given varies according to the seniority and closeness of that relative. This Eidia is seen as a huge fortune by the little children who use it to buy sweets or go to parks and fun fairs.

Thus, Eid is an opportunity of chil-

dren to become grownups for a short period of time. They start to behave as if they are an economic establishment. They save their money and divide the expenditure over the Eid days. It is very joyful to see children in their bright colored clothes playing in parks and enjoying themselves.

There is no doubt that Eid belongs to children immediately after its early hours. Some children accompany their parents, while, others prefer to be independent and go together with their friends to the place they themselves choose. So Eid is a good opportunity for a little child to feel his or her independence for the first time. Some of us may remember those moments when we felt that we didn't want to ask the older people for Eidia because we felt that we had become adults and were far removed from the world of childhood.

During the last few years, new habits have entered our lives that became gradually connected with Eid. Radio, TV, and now satellite TV are competing with each other to bring happiness to the people during Eid. Various programs, happy songs, comedy plays, films and other activities are presented during Eid.

As long as people stay at home then Eid is connected with food. Each Eid has its own special types of food. Eid is celebrated by the artists and ordinary people alike who find a lot of opportunity to express themselves. The main Eid celebrations, though, are performing its religious rituals when people are united by the words "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is His Prophet". These awe-inspiring words arouse feelings of reverence among the faithful. The hearts of all Muslim people look forward to the next Ramadhan.

## 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.

## Simple strength training tips

If you've never lifted weights in your life — and many people haven't — why should you start now? The answer is simple: Muscle tissue, bone density, and strength all dwindle over the years. So, too, does muscle power. These changes open the door to accidents and injuries that can compromise your ability to lead an independent, active life. Strength training is the most effective way to slow and possibly reverse much of this decline.

Having smaller, weaker muscles doesn't just change the way people look or move. Muscle loss affects the body in many ways. Strong muscles pluck oxygen and nutrients from the blood much more efficiently than weak ones. That means any activity requires less cardiac work and puts less strain on your heart. Strong muscles are better at sopping up sugar in the blood and helping the body stay sensitive to insulin (which helps cells remove sugar from the blood). In these ways, strong muscles can help keep blood sugar levels in check, which in turn helps prevent or control type 2 diabetes and is good for the heart. Strong muscles also enhance weight control.

On the other hand, weak muscles hasten the loss of independence as everyday activities — such as walking, cleaning, shopping, and even dressing — become more difficult. They also make it harder to balance your body properly when moving or even standing still, or to catch yourself if you trip. The loss of power compounds this. Perhaps it's not so surprising that, by age 65, one in three people reports falls. Because bones also weaken over time, one out of every 20 of these falls ends in fracture, usually of the hip, wrist, or leg. The good news is that the risk of these problems can be reduced by an exercise and fitness routine that includes strength training.

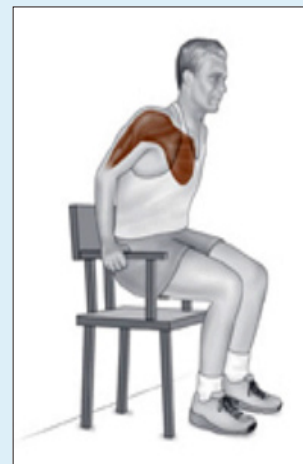
### Beginner's simple strength boosting exercises

A sturdy chair with armrests and athletic shoes with non-skid soles are all you need for these simple strength building exercises.



### Seated bridge

Sit slightly forward in a chair with your hands on the armrests. Your feet should be flat on the floor and slightly apart, and your upper body should be upright (don't lean forward). Using your arms for balance only, slowly raise your buttocks off the chair until nearly standing with your knees bent. Pause. Slowly sit back down. Aim for 8–12 repetitions. Rest and repeat the set.



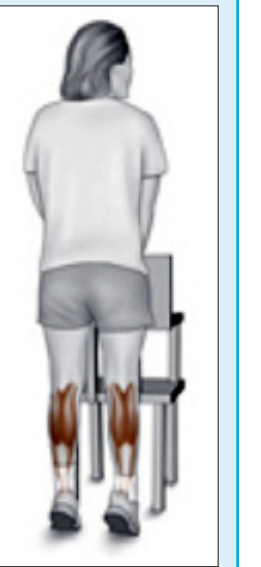
### Triceps dip

Put a chair with armrests up against a wall. Sit in the chair and put your feet together flat on the floor. Lean forward a bit while keeping your shoulders and back straight. Bend your elbows and place your hands on the armrests of the chair, so they are in line with your torso. Pressing downward on your hands, try to lift yourself up a few inches by straightening out your arms. Raise your upper body and thighs, but keep your feet in contact with the floor. Pause. Slowly release until you're sitting back down again. Aim for 8–12 repetitions. Rest and repeat the set.

### Standing calf raise

Stand with your feet flat on the floor. Hold onto the back of your chair for balance. Raise yourself up on tiptoe, as high as possible. Hold briefly, and then lower yourself. Aim for 8–12 repetitions. Rest and repeat the set.

(Source: Harvard Medical School)



## Continued from page 1

## A power vacuum is enabling Yemen's southerners to do what they like

Some of these groups have ties to radical tribal leaders and intelligence officials who are veterans not only of the war against the Russians in Afghanistan but who also took part in what they deemed to be a jihad against the supposedly godless socialist south in the war for unity in 1994, which the north in effect won. But as the state unravels the allegiances of such people are likely to prove fickle.

The American administration has been quick to accuse these groups of being a front for al-Qaeda, thereby

justifying the use of drones to attack them. But most southerners deny such links. Many of the gunmen, they say, are northern tribesmen and seminary students let loose by Mr Saleh (and in his absence by his friends) to persuade gullible Western governments to go on backing the regime in Sana'a. They may sympathise with al-Qaeda. But it is unclear that they have any direct attachment to it. Whatever the truth, the south is a dangerous mess where the writ of the government in Sana'a now barely runs.







**QADAS FLY**

AN IATA APPROVED TRAVEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY

**OFFERS**

**INTERNATIONAL & DOMESTIC TICKETS**

**HONEYMOON PACKAGE**

**HOTELS WORLDWIDE**

**MEDICAL TOURISM PACKAGE**

**HOLIDAY PACKAGES**

PHONES: +967-1-280777 / 274897 / 8 FAX: +967-1-280555

EMAIL: holidays@qadasfly.com



## Faces from Yemen's revolution



By: Shatha Al-Harazi

Walid Al-Qadasi, a 23 years old protester, can always be found walking around Change Square where the

anti-government protests have taken place since February and spreading positivity, hope and awareness. Walid has big smile on his face no matter what happens, and one can always find comfort chatting to Walid about the peaceful

revolution. He is a very confident character; humble when arguing and giving his point of view and enthusiastic when planning for activities within the revolution. He is the bee of the square. Walid was born in al-Omal city in Al-Hodida governorate, where he studied until he graduated from high school, before moving to the capital, Sana'a, to study civil engineering at Sana'a University where the revolution was born by Walid and his colleagues.

### Inspired by Egypt

He was part of the revolution from the first days. "We were following all the news on the Egyptian revolution at that time dreaming of a Yemeni one, we had a strong belief that Yemen would be next," said Walid. Back then the Yemeni University students started to dedicate two hours of their day to protest, hoping that one day they would become what Change Square is today. Walid, who is also a poet, doesn't belong to any political party - not because of pride about his political independency but because he does not have the time for the political commitment that would be required from him. However, since the revolution his beliefs have changed; he now

feels that political engagement is possible even though he is still a student and dependent on his family. Unlike other independent youth who think that opposition political parties are playing the same role as the regime, Walid thinks they are important partners in this revolution to victory - and that the youth have to accept this. "Political parties are important and we [independent youth] must recognize their political history and their resistance against the regime practices," said Walid. As the country is going through a critical and sensitive period, defection between different components of the revolution is not good at all, he added. They should stand with each other against one enemy: the regime. "We are in a democratic country so we should not waste this advantage [democracy]. Instead we should develop it by working together to achieve one goal," said Walid. Walid accused the regime of spreading the idea that the opposition political parties take advantage of the youth to gain power. "The regime works hard to make a gap between the youth and the political parties as they

know that the two by working together we will win for sure, so the regime will eventually withdraw for sure" he added. Everyone knows the youth were the ones to spark the revolution and that the opposition political parties joined them after three weeks, said Walid. Still, at some point the political parties forgot role of the youth in this revolution. While many youths complain they are not represented fairly in the National Council, Walid thinks that they still have a role to play. "The youth role is still active but there is so many scenarios happening now on a political level, which confuses them," he explained adding that there is little political awareness among the youth. "We need more political awareness to help us to understand our country and serve it in the best ways," he added. Walid seems to be confident about the aim of the revolution. "We want to establish a fair state; we need to share the same values as southerners and northerners as we all belong to one country.

"What we hope to achieve through this revolution is also to learn more about some concepts such as citizenship and identity - by seeking equal citizenship we need hope to get rid of the extremism the regime founded in Yemen - we want Yemen to become a modern civil state." Walid faced some obstacles starting the revolution with his friends. "The main obstacle we faced was 'illiteracy'," he explained. He added that the regime did not bet on anything to survive but illiteracy. "The regime didn't bet on the country's economy because they knew how damaged it was, they did not bet on military defection, nor on the country's institutes; they were counting on illiteracy and a lack of awareness among Yemenis." Walid said that the revolution took longer than expected but helped to changed awareness, which is a key step to bring about real change in any revolution. "Lots of people now have a clear image of the Houthis cause and how the war started in Sa'da, they knew more about the south's cause."

**شركة أمان للتأمين**  
**AMAN INSURANCE CO.**

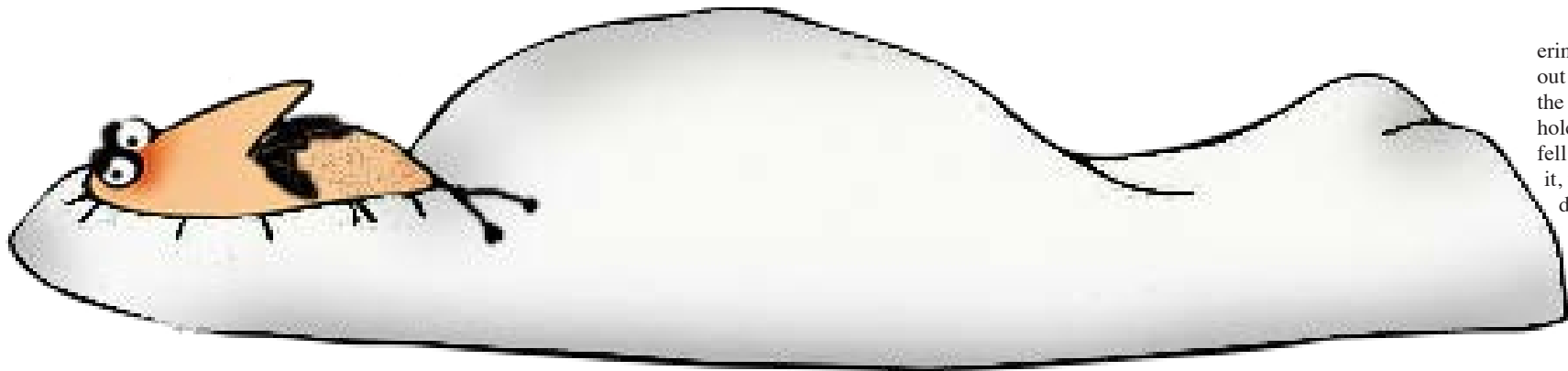
Marine Insurance  
Automobile Insurance  
Life Insurance  
Engineering Insurance  
Liability Insurance  
Medical Insurance  
Power Insurance  
Travel Insurance  
Property Insurance  
Others

تأمين نقل بضائع  
تأمين السيارات  
تأمين الحياة الجماعي والفردية  
تأمين اضرار  
التأمين القانوني  
تأمين التكاليف  
تأمين الطائرات  
تأمين السفر  
تأمين الممتلكات  
تأمينات اخرى

**New offices are available for rent**  
**For call: 735870015**

Head Office: AMAN Tower - Zabaira street  
Tel. + 967 1 469721/23/4, Fax. + 967 1 217251, 209452  
Branches: Sana'a: Taiz Street. Tel. + 967 1 624971, Fax. + 967 1 625714  
Hodeidah: Tel. + 967 3 201110, Fax. + 967 3 201107, Taiz: Tel. + 967 4 251454, Fax. + 967 4 250832  
Aden: Tel. + 967 2 244295, Fax. + 967 2 245237, Mukalla: Tel. + 967 5 350997, Fax. + 967 5 350829.

## The traditional pajamas of Yemenis in the old days



By: Mohammed bin Sallam  
Translated by Shihab Al-Ezzi

The Yemeni markets are filled today with all types of pajamas ranging from one piece to six pieces (mostly for women). However, a fact that is not known much is that until recently, perhaps thirty years ago many Yemenis especially in the rural areas used to wear a specially locally designed multi-purposes night wear which is a large human size sack! Before the revolution Yemenis were very isolated from the rest of the world and the high illiteracy rate where only very few people knew how to read and write deprived most Yemenis from learning and adapting to practices in other countries. Another reason why Yemenis local traditions stuck on for a long time is the difficult transportation facilities. The first commercial airline was introduced

to Yemen as late as the eighties and cars and buses where not so common also until then. Many Yemenis used to travel days on donkeys or camels in order to reach their destinations. This difficulty did not allow Yemenis who travelled to work in other more developed regions such as Aden (under the British colonization), Ethiopia or Saudi Arabia. **The sleeping sack** In Taiz they call it "Al-Shokka" or "Al-Kees". It was usually made of white cloth sewn like a pillow case with strings on the opening so that a person would get inside (after removing the clothes) and then pull the strings to close the opening leaving the face uncovered, but some would also cover the face so the whole person would be inside the sack something like a gift bag but only with a naked human being inside! There are sizes to include mar-

ried couples and ones for children. According to old Yemenis the colors did not matter much and they usually came in white, however the fabric was very important because it was supposed to keep the person warm in the same time breath easily. A sleeping sack was usually made of cotton and it also protected the sleeping person from mosquito bites and all vermin insects. Qwaitway is a blogger from Dhamar who commented on this. He says that historically Yemenis in many areas used to wear the sleeping sack; "The insects were the main reason why this sack was most convenient especially since Yemenis then lived in airy spaces and many lived with their animals in the same house although in the basement or a separate room for the poorer families." The sack was also documented in history books and novels such as that

of Yemeni novelist Abdulkarim Al-Razihi who dedicated an entire story called "Al-Kees" on the sleeping bag. Al-Kees talks in the first person about the experience of a young boy who used to wet his "sleeping bag" until the age of ten. A paragraph from the story reads: "I stayed inside my wet sleeping sack. My mother's attempts to get me out failed and I remained there filled with shame and hatred, cursing the saints for not curing me of my disability." It was also used in the folklore as Dhamar Ali a Yemeni man remembers a joke about this bag he says: "Before the revolution in the sixties, Yemenis used to sleep in sacks called kees. Once there were travelers who wanted to play a prank on their friend so while they were preparing to sleep they made holes in their friend's sack so the bugs would get inside and bite him at night. During the night after discov-

ering their prank the hard way, he came out and cut the lips of their donkeys. In the morning he asked them who made holes in my sack? They replied: stars fell from the skies and made holes in it, then he replied: so that is why your donkeys are laughing." Disclaimer: No donkey was hurt either during the prank it is just a joke. The sleeping sack was mostly found in the mountain and valley regions. Because of the heat, Yemenis of coastal areas such as Tihama on the Red Sea, did not even use covers when they slept at night. The family would usually go to the roof if they had one or outside the house and sleep on hammocks or beds made of straw in

as few clothes as possible. In the short winter season they would use a "shimla" which was made of camel hair but it was more like a blanket than a sack which one hid inside. A couple's sleeping bag was also useful for poor families with children. Because they could not afford to have separate rooms for the parents from the children, the married couple would usually use the relative privacy of their sleeping bag at night for their marital business. Fortunately for them, the children in the old days would usually leave the house by the age of 15 either to find a job and earn a living for boys or to be married off and start her own family for the girls.

أجمل التهاني والتبريكات ذرفها  
للككتور / صلاح / (عمر محمد حجازي)  
بمناسبة إرتقاء المولود البكر  
الذي اسماء  
مجد الدين  
جعل الله فرقه حين لو الورد

المهنئون  
والدك د/ أحمد محمد عثمان  
أخوك اسماء