

Saleh: The decision for political pluralism in 1990 was a big mistake



An enthusiastic Saleh on TV while talking to around 100 members of Parliament and the Shoura Council on Saturday Oct. 9, 2011. "I am not afraid of death. I already was dead for 15 days after the attempted assassination."

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SANA'A, Oct. 9 — President Saleh's latest speech stirred debate on the intent of his words and whether he is serious this time about letting go of power. "I reject authority, I will reject it. I have no interest in it," said an enthusiastic Saleh on TV while talking to around 100 members of Parliament and the Shoura Council on Saturday Oct. 9, 2011. "I am not afraid of death. I already was dead for 15 days after the attempted assassination," said Saleh.

However, traditional and general opposition agreed that this is yet another attempt at stalling and diverting attention from real issues.

Perhaps the most alarming statement made by Saleh was that having political pluralism and a multi-party system - established in the unity government of 1990 - was a big mistake. "This decision has caused us problems internally and externally. And there is a huge conspiracy against Yemen," said Saleh.

Tareq Al-Shami, official spokesperson of the ruling GPC party, adjusted this statement, saying that it was misunderstood. He claimed that Saleh meant the regime adopted democracy, but that the political parties only accept democracy if it is in their favor; if it is against them, then they reject it. Al-Shami added that the Yemeni system is based on democracy and a multi-party system.

"This man was never serious in any of his claims to leave power.

He just does this as a means to confuse the international community. Most Yemenis don't have electricity and did not watch his speech," said Mohammed Al-Sabri, the official spokesperson of the opposition's National Dialogue Preparatory Committee.

In his meeting with the MPs and Shoura Council members, Saleh appeared tired and could not shake hands with any of them, instead delegating greeting responsibilities to Vice President Abdu Rabu Hadi, who was also present for the meeting.

Sinan Al-Ajji, a member of parliament present among attendees of the meeting, congratulated the president on his safe return from Saudi Arabia. "On behalf of all the men with fixed convictions and who don't change their loyalties based on personal interests, I am telling you, Mr. President, that we are with you forever," said the MP. "For better or for worse, we will always be your men."

Al-Shami also attempted to correct an understanding of the president's promise to leave office, saying that Saleh does not mean to say he will leave power as soon as understood. "He will not surrender power unless through elections, ballot boxes. He said soon, but soon does not mean the next few days: it means in the near future."

This also explains what President Saleh meant when he said there are capable civilian and military men who are going to run the country ef-

ficiently after he surrenders power. Saleh added that there are 25 million Yemenis who are standing on equal ground with his relatives and family, and that it is not true that only his family is running the country.

His accusations against the opposition and the international community spilled over to include revolutionary activist Tawakul Karman and her Nobel Peace Prize win. Deputy Minister of Information Abdu Al-Janadi congratulated her and called on her to act as a peace messenger and not to incite violence. However, other comments from the regime and its loyalists reflected a notion that Karman's honor is part of a conspiracy against Yemen's regime. Other comments expressed the idea that Karman won the award as a result of Saleh having installed an environment of democracy and freedom of expression, whereby she was able to gain visibility.

Yemen: From Al-Qaeda spotlights to Nobel Peace Prize

Following the death of AQAP leader Anwar Al-Awlaki, worldwide media focused its attention on Yemen. Just one week later, the story of Yemen's activist-turned-Nobel Peace Prize winner has given the international community reason to see Yemen in a new light.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Oct. 9 — She has been living in a 2x2 meter plastic tent for the last eight months. "Welcome to my castle," joked Tawakul Karman the day before she was announced as the Noble Prize 2011 winner. "Once the revolution is over I will rent it as a tourist spot or maybe as a summer resort."

She squatted on the hard floor, joined by her husband and two protestors for a simple meal that her mother had made for her and sent off with someone to Change Square. Her mother has been taking care of Tawakul's three children who visit her occasionally in the Square since she can't move about the city. There is a bounty on her head and she tries to be careful about her movements.

"We have come a long way," she said. "I no longer belong to myself or my family. I belong to the revolution and all these protestors," she said with a wave of her hand signaling the hundreds of tents erected in Change Square.

But Tawakul takes some educated risks and does move around whenever she can. She had just travelled around 800 kilometers by road - under disguise - to meet with revolutionaries in Hadramout south east of Sana'a. She wanted to lobby support for the revolution which she started years ago through peaceful demonstrations every Tuesday, long before the Arab Spring started.

What she does is not easy and she knows that. There are many sacrifices and although she has become an international figure today, when you meet her, she greets you with such simplicity and modesty that if you did not know her before you would think you were in the wrong place.

Today Tawakul shares a Nobel Prize for peace with another two Liberian freedom fighters. "Although it has my name on it, this prize is dedicated to all the freedom fighters in Yemen especially those who al-



Today Tawakul shares a Nobel Prize for peace with another two Liberian freedom fighters. "Although it has my name on it, this prize is dedicated to all the freedom fighters in Yemen especially those who already gave their lives for the sake of the peaceful revolution."

ready gave their lives for the sake of the peaceful revolution," she said.

Being a Nobel laureate will not change much of her life, at least not today said Tawakul. There is much work to be done and no time to be wasted. "It does however gratify me and my colleagues because it shows there is an international recognition that we are peaceful protestors who demand change for the better," she said.

Tawakul's story is surprising because she comes from a very conservative, male dominated society. Not

only is she a symbol for freedom and the revolution in Yemen, she is also living proof that Yemeni women are strong and capable of creating miracles.

Tawakul's story broke all stereotypes regarding Yemeni women and the Yemeni armed tribal society.

Life for Yemenis, especially female activists, will never be the same because of Tawakul Karman. And in Yemen's history her Nobel Prize will not only be a milestone and a personal achievement for Tawakul but one for all Yemeni women.

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Yemenis literally powerless

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, Oct. 8 — Only minutes after the Public Electricity Corporation concluded repairs, the power supply lines in Nehm, 30km north of Sana'a, were attacked again last week, according to Mohammed Al-Shibani, the department head responsible for power supply lines for Yemen.

"We don't know who attacked the lines," Al-Shibani told the Yemen Times. He declined to give further details.

Since the beginning of Yemen's revolution, the power supply lines in Marib governorate and several tribal areas have been attacked, causing widespread power cuts.

Ammar Ebraheem, 25, works for a Yemeni telecommunication company. He is preparing for his wedding amid repeated power cuts. "I face difficulty preparing for my wedding in such circumstances," he said. "I've already bought a lot of

candles to avoid darkness after my marriage."

Members of the government and revolutionary opposition parties usually level accusations at one another after any attack.

Yemen's Public Electricity Corporation does not attribute blame to any particular group for what it calls "anonymous attacks," whereas the government accuses some elements in the opposition parties outright. Many Yemenis, on the other hand, claim that the government deliberately causes the power failures with the aim of blaming opposition parties.

For his part, last Saturday President Saleh accused the opposition of causing the power cuts. He also accused them of destroying oil pipes and blocking roads.

Nowadays, owners of shops and supermarkets suffer from frequent power cuts that cause many foods to rot. Internet cafes and telecommunications shops are also exposed to

heavy losses due to frequent power outages.

Sheikh Naji Arada, a tribal leader from Marib, told the Yemen Times that the reason behind the power outages is the fierce shelling between the Republican Guard and armed tribesmen.

"Some military camps in Nehm district have caused the power failures with their indiscriminate shelling of the power supply lines," said Arada.

He indicated that tribal leaders in Marib governorate are keen on protecting all facilities and refute the government's allegation that tribal leaders and opposition bodies are responsible for the attacks. "It would be unreasonable to attack the public services that provide us with our needs. We harm ourselves when we attack these public services."

Arada criticized several regime officials who accuse the opposition parties of damaging the power supply lines. "They blame the op-



position parties and peaceful revolutionaries for their own economic, political and educational failures.

"The tribal leaders play a major role in protecting the public services. We also protect engineers who are repairing the damage to power

supply lines. Tribal leaders are just a few of the victims of the government's stupidity," he said.

Arada called for embattled President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his government to come to terms with reality and relinquish power.

Regime supporters, opposition engaged in electronic war

By: Shatha AL-Harazi

SANA'A, Oct. 9 — Electronic wars between supporters of the regime and its opponents was launched with proficiency and skillful techniques. Different groups on Facebook named "The Yemeni Electronic Military" teach their followers how to hack a website belongs to the regime. Over 12,000 people follow this group.

These groups display a democratic approach equipped with transparency when dealing with the followers. The use Facebook as a tool to survey

whether their practices are ethical and just in their methods. They also ask if the followers would or would not want the hacking of their opponents websites.

The anti-regime's groups on Facebook list the "thugs" websites to be attacked or reported and deactivated. It also shows the followers the steps along with illustration that aims to explain how to hack the website or report it. The attacks target the most effective websites or group that advocate one sided views or spread rumors.



Yemeni electronic army Facebook page which helps Yemeni revolutionaries bring their struggle against the regime into cyber space.

"Dear Heroes of the Yemeni Electronic Military: Our attacks will expand from Facebook groups to Youtube channels. It hurts us as revolutionaries to see the videos of assault against the revolution. Therefore we hope you will all get ready for the Youtube cleaning campaign," posted the military group.

Attack this page!!

The followers of these groups post the link of the other groups they want to attack saying "Attack this page". If the creators maintain that the page should be reported, more people have to sign the report (like a petition) than those who have "liked" the page. This has given birth to an electronic war and is a tool to fight the regime and seek more followers and thus supporters to their cause.

The attackers have hacked the official page of the Sheba state-run TV channel, Omran press, and the hawrni ana Yemeni group which is the most prominent websites that

is against the revolution. Once a website is hacked the founder of the group then posts in other groups; he warns the followers so as to not share their information on the hacked page. There have been cases where the hacked geeks find another group instead of reviving the hacked one. The war is about maintaining moment and not losing time; it is also about keeping the enemy busy. Adding people to the group is more important for them than attacking websites in order to enact revenge.

Unifying the Yemeni-Syrian revolution efforts

There is a strong threat that binds together the Yemeni protesters and the Syrians' on the streets and this support is espoused on the groups. Two weeks ago the name of the Friday was the same for both Yemeni and Syrian revolutionaries; the activists thus called it "our Yemen and Syria Friday". The aim behind this was to show show the world that both

countries suffer from the current regimes. The unification efforts are also seen on the electronic level in these groups. A group that is called "The Syrian Electronic Military" exchanges advice with the Yemeni one. Sometimes they help each other determine the targets.

"As we promised you a surprise, we proudly tell you today that we hacked three facebook pages and one Youtube channel of the Syrian thugs in solidarity with Syrian revolution" the military group posted.

Who is operating the attacks?

These groups act methodically and seriously to help the revolution and this often means the recruitment of qualified hackers by posting the "vacancy" on their pages and websites.

"The Yemeni Electronic Military announce their need to hire volunteers who are qualified in: hacking websites and devices, Photoshop and design, security and protection, video Montage, please email us to get the chance to serve the revolution especially for those who are away from freedom and dignity squares" reads the vacancy announcement post.

Hackers come to know their opponents after launching campaigns against each other, however these hackers are not the malicious kind as they show good ethical judgement in treating their opponent with high morals. They tend to leave their political disagreement aside.

"Despite our disagreement and different directions, we as people of one country and for the great morals we have as revolutionaries obligate us to condolence our opponent for his father death, there for we ask all the members to stop our attacks, comments and reports against the thugs for 24 hours, and we encourage you to give your condolence in their websites"

Melhan local authority declines to change education center director

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, Oct. 9 — The local authority in Mahwit has refused to reassign the education office director in Melhan district, despite the demands of teachers who went on strike for over one week late last month.

"They [the teachers] want to select the manager of the education center themselves," said Mohamed Yahya Abdo, secretary general of Melhan's local council. "This is impossible."

The district's 700 teachers are distributed throughout 70 public schools and teach over 15,000 students. They have recently accused the newly appointed education office director of corruption and mismanagement during his previous two-year service in the same office from 2008 to 2010.

The manager, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Quzhi has denied the teachers'

accusations, saying that the district has not enjoyed good education except during the years of his service.

"I was appointed again in this remote area because they could not find a capable person to run the office," said Al-Quzhi in a telephone call with the Yemen Times while the teachers were still on strike.

The teachers suspended the strike at the beginning of this month after their salaries were not paid on time. The governorate usually pays them on the 29 of each month.

"We have suspended the strike after some leaders of the local governorate council promised us to change the director. If they do not meet their word, we will go back to the strike," said Abd Al-Fateh Dah-an, head of the Educational Professions Union branch in the district.

However, Ahmed Al-Fateh, the principal of a girls' school in the district, told the Yemen Times on

Sunday that the local administration has not paid any attention to the strike "and therefore the director Al-Quzhi has detained teachers' salaries for last month. They were supposed to be paid on Sept. 29 and now it is Oct. 9, and we have not received any rial."

"All the district's state employees in other sectors—including the health sector—were paid except teachers," he said. "Al-Quzhi, the director that they want to change, has detained teachers' salaries because they suspended teaching to change him."

However Ali Al-Zaikm, secretary general of the local authority in Mahwit denied the suspension of teachers' salaries, saying "no employees in the district, including teachers, have been paid yet." He spoke to the Yemen Times during a telephone call on Sunday.

He also accused the tribal leaders in Melhan of hindering educa-

The Latest Buzz

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

Yemen welcomes and recognizes formally the Republic of South Sudan as an independent state.

Saudi Arabia decided to halt the education of its sponsored Saudi students in Yemen until further notice. This came after its citizen, university student Mohammed Al-Kathiri was killed due to a stray bullet in Sana'a. KSA has also withdrawn 200 Saudi teachers from Yemen.

Pakistani Security Officials announced on Friday that Islamabad contacted Yemeni and Saudi governments in order to arrange for the extraction and return of Osama bin Laden's three widows.

Chief of Hashed Tribe Sheikh Sadeq Al-Ahmar said that his goal is to "save Yemen from what Ali Abdullah Saleh aims at which is to either rule the country or destroy it." He said this in an interview with France 24 Channel broadcasted on Friday accusing Saleh of holding on to lies and control the country only through radio, TV and Sabeen Square.

British ambassador Jonathan Wilks said in an interview with Asharq Al-Awsat that Yemen needs a quick and peaceful solution, that change is a given in Yemen and it has become convinced that he must sign the gulf initiative.

A timed bomb exploded on Saturday morning in Al-Qalaa Police Station. The reasons behind the explosion are still not known although many soldiers were injured in the explosion including two in critical conditions.

Minister of Higher Education Saleh Basurra said on Thursday in his speech at the Exceptional Periodic Meeting of the Islam World Higher Education ministers in Riyadh that the Yemeni opposition is using educational institutions as a political card in the current uprise.

The security apparatuses revealed the identity of the man behind the recent explosion in the oil pipes of Mareb governorate. His name is Hassan Mohammed Al-Dhamin and he has a criminal record for similar activities sabotaging the Mareb power plant and crude oil pipes.

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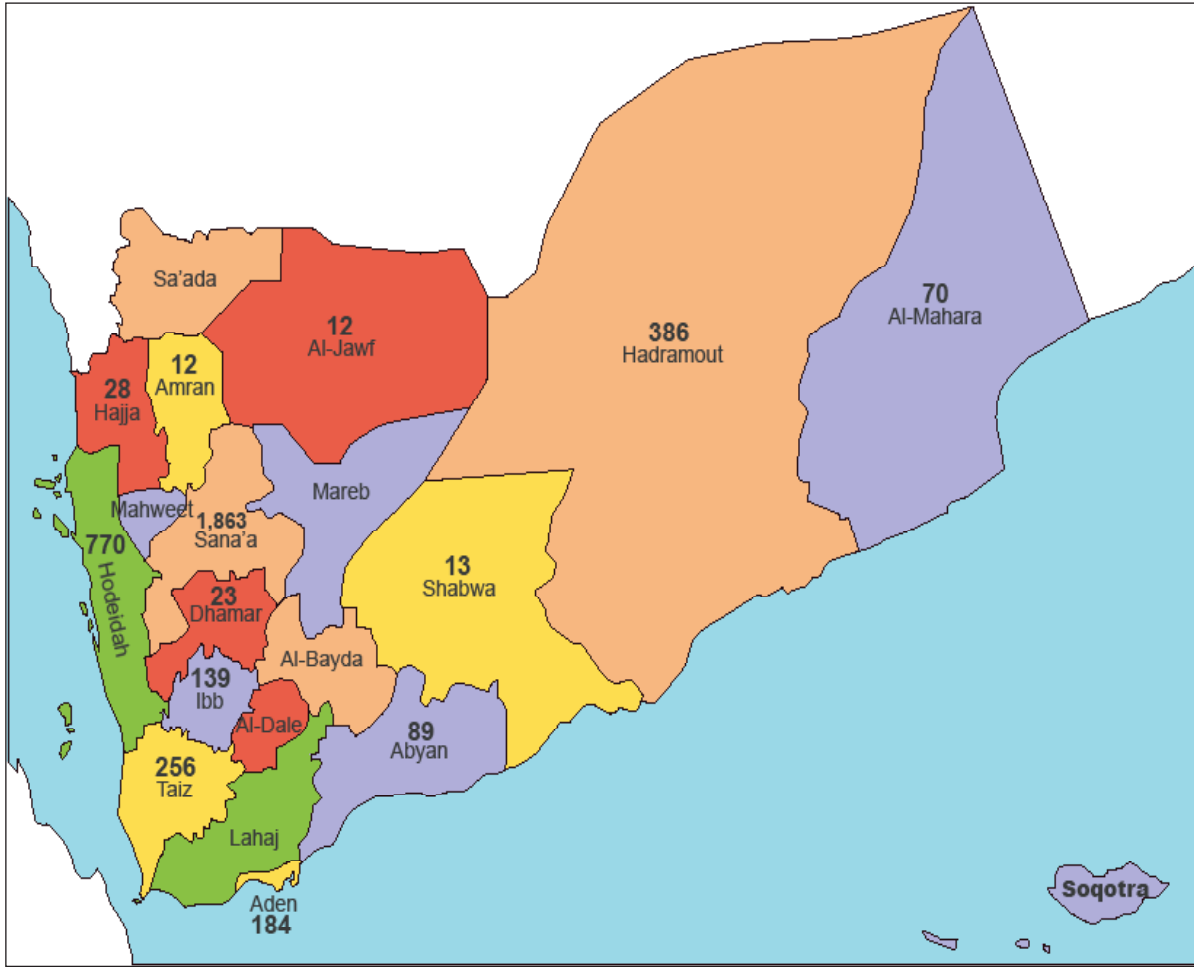
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163 registered projects waiting to be implemented



Jobs for 3845 unemployed Yemenis are pending because of bureaucracy and instability.

By: Malak Shaher

SANA'A, Oct. 9 — It is now commonplace and a known fact that the political crisis Yemen, now in its eight month, has affected the financial situation and the economy adversely. The result is that many projects continue to remain suspended until the conflict is resolved.

The Arabian Trading Company had a project involving the production of glass in Nahm, 30 kilometers away from Sana'a. It stopped working on the project in February. The reason was attributed to the uncertain political climate.

Nageeb Hailan from the company said that the start of protests resulted in German experts -- who were working with the company -- left country as they feared uncertainty in the months to come.

The investment in Yemen too has been affected by the crisis. However, the registration of new projects did not stop. By the end of September 2011, 163 projects have been registered at the General Investment Authority. These however are on hold as the concerned are waiting for the political situation to smoothen until they renew the contracts with the authority.

"The current political situation closed many projects that were in an active phase in Yemen prior to the uprising," said Mohammed Hussein, head of the promotion sector in the authority.

"However, the registration rate of projects has increased this year during the uprising as adventurous investors did not have contestants," he said.

Hussein added that the time span for the registered projects is two years in which the investors can renew their business at any time.

According to the records published by the authority, the num-

ber of registered projects in Yemen in the first quarter of 2011 has increased by 114 per cent when compared to the number registered in the first quarter of 2010.

At least 96 per cent of the investors that have registered their projects are Kuwaiti. Other investors are Chinese, Emiratis and Uzbeks. At least 39 of the planned projects will be in the fisheries sector of which 61 per cent will be in the coastal city of Al-Hodaïda.

It was expected that the investment seen in this quarter would offer jobs to 1,454 people.

When the political crisis ended, these registered investors would have the chance to renew their contracts with the authority. It would be less expensive for them to implement the projects they have already registered when there were no contestants, according to Hussein.

The registered investment projects in this quarter were distributed in 11 governorates in which most of the projects were shrimp farming, steel melting plant and construction work. Other investments were focused in the capital in the air cargo, auto gas filling stations and tourism suites fields.

The registered projects in the second quarter of this year were mainly focused in tower construction and

Contaminated medication confiscated in Sana'a

By: Malak Shaher

SANA'A, Oct. 9 — At least four tons of contaminated medicine was confiscated in the Al-Safia district of Sana'a on Saturday, according to Muhsen Mayas, the head of the district's health office.

There were 37 types of medication in the truck, one type which had expired in 2007, the remaining 36 having expired two years ago. According to Mayas, the medicine belonged to a well-known business. He said that the owner was intending to get rid

of the medicine, but that "he was too late."

According to Yemeni law, the medicine should have been sent to officials authorized to dispense with expired medication.

The medication was burned in Al-Azraqeen area, where Sana'a's main garbage dump is located, and the owner fined YR 100,000 in addition to transport expenses.

The issue of contaminated medication in Yemen is not a new one. A recent case in the news raised the issue of dangerous medications available

for sale throughout the country. The anti-fungal medication Nizoral, sold in tablet form, has been reported to have serious side effects on the liver, yet was easily found in pharmacies in Yemen.

Arguments between the Yemeni Society for Consumer Protection and the Supreme Board of Drugs and Medical Appliances have been held regarding the sale of Nizoral. The YSCP called on the board to ban the medication. As soon as eight months ago, the medication was on the market and sold for YR 2,900 or USD 12.

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OUR OPINION

What lies beneath the GPC's initiative

As Yemenis cling onto their TV screens or freeze in front of their computers trying to find news on their country's fate, there are a lot of discussions happening behind closed doors that are not conveyed to the public. What citizens hear are conflicting rumors and nothing really helps understand what is going on. These days, there is a rumor that political parties are almost in agreement around an initiative proposed by the ruling party; the GPC and backed up by the Americans and the Brits.

The initiative talks about a different version of the Gulf Initiative, one that does not include the president resigning or the restructuring of the army.

This agreement says that two weeks upon signing, President Saleh calls for the creation of a coalition government headed by the opposition with 50% GPC (ruling party) and 50% JMP (opposition coalition). It is up to either side to include youth or women or any other political entities as they choose.

Then 30 days after the signing president Saleh calls for early presidential elections but they will be sort of artificial elections because both sides have the same candidate which is Vice President Hadi.

The point from these elections is to allow Saleh as he came through elections to leave through elections. So basically there is no ousting of him or toppling the regime. It also means that Hadi instead of being nominated or being delegated presidential authorities, he will in a way be a legitimately elected president.

It takes 60 days after the call for elections for the actual presidential elections to take place. This means President Saleh stays in power for three months after signing this agreement, after which he goes to mind his health elsewhere leaving the country to both his family and his rivals to run together.

The coalition government will continue for around two years or so handling very critical issues such as deciding on the new constitution, new political and electoral systems and the grievances of the south as well as other long standing problems.

Although it might sound like a good plan, there are several critical points that prove something like this won't work. One issue is that the main aim of the uprising is to topple the regime not to have it share power with the opposition.

The other problem is regarding the oath taking before the president; opposition leaders are saying they don't acknowledge that he is any more a legitimate president for Yemen, so how can they recognize him as the point of authority.

Third issue is regarding the president's role in the three months prior to elections. The opposition has a problem with him calling for elections and overseeing the process. It says Saleh and his family in key decision making positions will be able to use their influence to manipulate the elections through money or otherwise.

The fourth issue is the status of Saleh's son and nephews and them presiding over significant military institutions throughout the transition phase. This contradicts the uprising's key demand of restructuring the army and takes a lot from the opposition's credibility in front of their supporters especially since it was those army commanders who killed hundreds of unarmed protestors throughout the uprising.

Finally there is the functionality of the coalition government made up of not only political foes but also personal enemies. A previous experience in 1992 and 93 of a coalition government with almost the same composition proved dysfunctional. So how can we expect the same rivals with much more bad blood between them to manage not just operation of a government, but important national issues such as the constitution and the south or houthis, etc?

The regime thinks that if such a proposal is publicized the silent majority would put pressure on the various leaders to forget their differences and seal the deal. However, I think this sort of initiative is not in the best interest of Yemen.

First of all there is a lot of mistrust between the various parties which is evident through the visible presence of armed men from both sides and security alertness on both sides. For example, the 1st Armed Division lead by defected Gen. Major Ali Muhsin Al-Ahmar is creating a new field hospital in the Commerce College of Sana'a University. This means that there is an expectation of new bloodshed that could only come from armed conflict.

Even the news that military of both sides was withdrawn is actually half the truth. They were pulled out of the main streets but are still present in the smaller lanes and there is supposedly neutral military presence in their place.

Lessons learned from history (92 & 93) shows that such coalitions will definitely lead to war just as they did in 1994, because this initiative deals with the symptoms and not the underlying problems.

Having Yemen's file referred to the Security Council could go either way of two directions. They council could come up with a resolution forcing Saleh to sign the former Gulf Initiative and surrender power, or the council could impose sanctions on Yemen regardless of the initiative and take him and other commanders to the International Criminal Court to be tried as war criminals.

The first direction is definitely better for Saleh not only because it gives him a way out, but it also provides him with UN and international guarantees that if he signs and lets go, there will be no prosecution. This is a one step better than if he had signed the gulf initiative when the guarantees were only provided to him by the Gulf countries alone.

However, the other direction is very bad for him and his family and many members of his regime because it means payment for all that 33 years of power. This is the direction supported by the protestors in the many freedom squares in Yemen and by international human rights organizations.

Initially, the regime was backing on the support of permanent members China and Russia to veto any unwanted resolution. But now they seem to have become fed-up with Saleh unless Saudi Arabia put its weight behind Saleh literally buying more time for him. Moreover other countries credibility will also be put to the test such as the US on how they vote especially since the situation is Syria is not really different from Yemen. And now that Tawakul Karman has won the Nobel Prize for peace it would be a real scandal to rule against her internationally acknowledged peaceful protest.

The next few days are very crucial for Yemen's future. It depends on the strength and wisdom of the moderate people on all sides and how much more chaos they want to see in Yemen before they've had enough.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf



YT vision statement

"To make Yemen a good world citizen."

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

What can the US really do for Yemen? (Part 2/2)

Balancing counterterrorism, a tense U.S.-Saudi alliance, and Yemen's protest movement -- the longest of the Arab Spring -- is difficult, but may still be possible

By: J. Dana Stuster
www.theatlantic.com

The United States could still pursue its counterterrorism efforts; on September 13, CIA director David Petraeus reported, "counterterrorism cooperation with Yemen has, in fact, improved in the past few months." Tensions are still high between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, and the U.S. is still promoting the GCC proposal, an almost certain diplomatic dead-end. The deal is unlikely to be signed or instituted in a way that will resolve the crisis, but the U.S., it seems, doesn't want to abandon a plan, however flawed, into which it has sunk so much time and political capital. The U.S., in other words, is wasting time.

"The United States and the international community have to stop delegating the lead role in mediation

to Saudi Arabia and the GCC," Marc Lynch, director of the Institute for Middle East Studies at the George Washington University, told the BBC last week. "I think it's time for the United States and the UN and the international community to step in much more forcefully and insist on a transition."

Joshua Foust, a fellow at the American Security Project and correspondent for TheAtlantic.com, told me he agrees that the U.S. should be getting out front. "I think that Obama needs to be vocal, insistent, consistent, and on Arabic TV stations condemning Saleh's behavior, his regime, and the massacres," he wrote in an email. "And I think Obama needs to be calling for his resignation and for the creation of a constitutional convention that includes [the various and divided political and tribal] groups."

Because the U.S. is still indirectly financing some of the elite Yemeni

military units now cracking down on protesters, launching drone strikes in Yemen's south, and working through the GCC, the United States may not have enough credibility within Yemen to write its own proposal. Even with the aid of an international body like the UN, the window of opportunity to bring all the different actors in Yemen to the same table may be closing.

With all the focus on the unrest in Sanaa, Yemen has been fragmenting at its periphery. Saleh's government was never particularly effective at controlling the entire country. Wide swaths of the interior were subject to tribal law and custom, and Saleh relied heavily on a network of patronage and allegiance among Yemeni sheikhs. Beyond the limits of the government's reach, northern Houthis tribesmen and southern secessionists organized rebellions, and al-Qaeda's Gulf franchise found shelter in the mountainous regions of several provinces. Now perhaps more than ever before, the Saleh regime is turned inward, leaving non-state actors to consolidate power for

themselves. This includes Ansar al Sharia, an Islamist militia that may have ties to al-Qaeda. Ansar forces have battled government forces and defected military forces since late May, when they seized the southern town of Zinjibar.

This could create a whole new set of problems. The Saudi leadership, after supporting the Yemeni government's six-year effort to suppress the Houthis, would react poorly -- possibly violently -- if Yemen's Houthis managed to create a functionally autonomous province along its southern border. Ansar al Sharia's campaign in the south has coincided with an increase in the frequency of drone strikes against al-Qaeda targets there. Analysts such as Johnsen and Foust criticize what they consider a U.S. overemphasis on counterterrorism. Ansar al Sharia and al-Qaeda are symptoms of Yemen's larger problems, a central cause of which is the country's ineffective state. Addressing this problem starts with a transition to a new government, and soon, before Yemen falls apart completely.

Time for political transition in Yemen

A political settlement remains elusive in the impoverished state on the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, as tens of thousands of demonstrators continue to take to the streets across Yemen calling for President Saleh to step down.

Editorial
Voice of America

After more than three months in Saudi Arabia, President Ali Abdullah Saleh returned to Yemen September 23rd.

But a political settlement remains elusive in the impoverished state on the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, as tens of thousands of demonstrators continue to take to the streets across Yemen calling for President Saleh to step down. More than 140 have been killed in the past two weeks in fighting between government forces and fighters loyal to the opposition. Yemen has been the site of Arab Spring's longest popular uprising where protesters have camped in tent cities and attended mass rallies every Friday for eight months.

The United States remains deeply concerned about the situation in Yemen. All parties should cease violence and exercise maximum restraint. The U.S. supports the Gulf Cooperation Council's call for the formation of a committee to investigate events that resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians. Too many Yemenis have lost their lives and each day that passes without a peaceful and orderly transition is another day that the Yemeni people are forced to live in an unstable environment that threatens their security and livelihood.

perity, and security.

A political solution is the best way to avoid further bloodshed. Gulf Cooperation Council members and Yemeni officials are trying to revive a long-stalled transition plan under which President Saleh would hand over power. President Saleh has agreed to the Gulf Cooperation Council proposal on three separate occasions, only to refuse subsequently to sign the agreement each time.

The United States again urges

President Saleh to initiate a full transfer of power without delay and arrange for presidential elections to be held before the end of the year within the framework of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative. The Yemeni people have suffered enough and deserve a path toward a unified, stable, secure, and democratic Yemen. The United States will continue to work with the Gulf Cooperation Council and others in the international community to support the Yemeni people's aspirations.

SKETCHED OPINION

By Hajjaj



Yemeni activist Tawakul Karman wins the Nobel Prize for Peace

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India is where it is today because of true democracy

In an ever competitive and challenging world the Indian subcontinent has proven its strength. Not only is it home to millions of top level specialists in every field especially science, but is a growing industry and a world economic power. India is also the largest growing media market in the world. There is a reason why this is the case, explained Indian Ambassador Dr. Ausaf Sayeed; it is true democracy that has enabled the citizens to be part of their country's decision making through an intricate yet efficient system. One that the world especially the developing one could learn from. Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Dr. Sayeed to talk about these issues and more.

When Dr. Ausaf Sayeed was appointed as ambassador to Yemen in September 2010, little did he know that his host country would go through almost a year-long turmoil of unrest. "I was very excited about coming to Yemen, not only because of my interest in history and the wealth of what Yemen has to offer this way, but also because originally my great grandfather and my grandfather had been Yemenis. I felt in a way I was coming home," said Sayeed. He is by the way the first Indian ambassador of Yemeni origin specifically from Mukalla in Hadramout to be posted in Yemen. When he presented his credentials the president congratulated him twice: on his posting and on being a Yemeni. "The president told me: You have come to your home," he said. This is why since the first day of his arrival he has been trying to contribute to Yemen's development and he believes that there are so many unexplored opportunities for Yemen as a country and the Yemenis as people that they could benefit from.

However, many of the projects that he had initiated had to come almost to a complete stop because of the instability that gripped the country.

At first, Sayeed thought like most people inside and outside Yemen that the Yemeni uprising was somewhat an extension of the Arab Spring in Yemen spreading from Tunisia and Egypt. "But it has expanded to almost nine months and the political situation seems at a stand-still with no agreement from both sides," he said. However, driven by his will to make the best out of a difficult situation and even though he personally had concerns for his life when ten stray bullets - which he has kept as a souvenir from these interesting times - found its way to his house, to his own bedroom. He decided not to close the embassy unlike many other embassies.

This policy is not new to the Indian diplomats because similarly in the civil war of 1994 the Indian embassy was one of very few that did

not close. "Even today we feel the criticality of the situation and it has been difficult for us to even move about as individuals. There is also the cost of fuel to operate power generators in the absence of electricity. But we decided to try and get done whatever could be done and until now we are still conducting diplomatic activities as much as possible and issuing visas and so on," he explained. When it comes to visas the Indian embassy is issuing even in the difficult circumstances of today a record breaking number of around 40 visas per day, for students, tourists, businessmen and officials.

Being a diplomat and abiding by his government's guidelines Sayeed declined to comment on Yemeni politics or the current conflict. "All I can say is that we believe in Yemen being a strong united country. And that the solution has to be found by the people and through negotiations," he said. "Better sense should prevail on both sides in the best interest of the country."

The Indian government policy of its foreign representatives does not allow them to comment or get involved in the internal affairs of the country they are posted in. Even though India held the periodic chair of the Security Council in

September and presided over discussions that took place in the UN headquarters in New York including sessions on Yemen. India is also for years 2011 and 2012 one of the 15 members of the Council as one of the non-permanent members who issued the last statement on Yemen urging the end of attacks against protesters and encouraging a peaceful orderly transfer of power. But there are concerns for Yemen. There are concerns over the deteriorating economy, the increased threat of Al-Qaeda and terrorist groups as well as piracy, being an active participant in the international alliance dedicated to fighting piracy in the Gulf of Aden.

“When it comes to visas the Indian embassy is issuing even in the difficult circumstances of today a record breaking number of around 40 visas per day, for students, tourists, businessmen and officials.”

The makings of a true democracy There are different levels of democracy, and according to the ambassador Yemen does have a level of democracy that cannot be ignored. "You have elections, a multi-party system and relative freedom of speech," explained Sayeed. The Indian democracy which is in a relatively advanced stage today is a result of years of continuous progress since its evolution in 1947. "The key to a true democracy is establishing strong democratic institutions," he said. These institutions include an independent and fair judiciary, strong free press, a dynamic accountability mechanism driven by the people, a respected powerful parliament and so on.

To achieve this India has created a number of monitoring independent institutions whose jobs is to keep relevant state bodies and officials in check. Sort of watch dog, which like the parliament, hold the government accountable to the people. Moreover, the army and police forces are independent of the party in power. And there is a clear distinction between the government as an institution and the party in power. "Parties come and go, now we have a coalition of parties in the regime, and they don't control the army or manipulate government institutions as they wish," explained Sayeed.

There are other examples; India has an independent election com-

mission that monitors elections, the Central Vigilance Commission that monitors bureaucrats and there is the Right to Information Act that enables any Indian citizen to receive information from the state institutions upon demand at a very minimal fee of 15 Rupees (Less than half an American dollar).

Moreover, all bureaucrats including ministers and diplomats have to declare their movable and immovable properties every year in order to minimize corruption, and from this year, for the first time, this information is also posted on the internet. "Now anyone around the world can go to a certain website and see how much any of government employees has and can compare their wealth before and after they are in office," said Sayeed.

The empowerment of citizens and having them real partners in running the country through transparent procedures and independent institutions is why India is a strong democracy today. The various independent bodies are created through specific legal mechanisms and have to be approved by the parliament. Being independent also means that although the various bodies receive their operational budgets from the state funds, the state cannot interfere in any of their decisions or operations.

"Having a high level official write a cheque for himself or take money from the state without any accountability is unheard of," he said. "Yes I admit that the country has faced some issues of corruption but we have created institutions to fight



Formal Photo in embassy: Yemenis have treated me as a friend and a brother and I never felt a stranger in this country.

Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, born in 1963, was appointed as ambassador of India to Yemen in September 2010, one of the youngest Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers to be appointed as an ambassador. He had joined IFS in 1989. He holds a Master of Science and PhD in Geology and an advance diploma in Arabic from the American University in Cairo.

He has earlier worked in Indian Missions in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Denmark. His last assignment abroad was as Consul General of India in Jeddah. Before arriving in Yemen, he was the Director General in the Ministry of External Affairs, looking after the West African countries.

Dr Ausaf Sayeed is a connoisseur of art, culture and literature and worked tirelessly to promote India's

rich cultural heritage abroad. He was instrumental in organizing several India Festivals, cultural shows and literary events in the countries of his posting.

A gold medalist from Osmania University and a Competent Toastmaster, Dr Sayeed belongs to a literary family of Hyderabad. His father Awaz Sayeed was a renowned modern Urdu short story writer and his uncle, Prof. Mugni Tabassum, is a well-known Urdu poet and critic. He has authored three books, one on Geology and two on Indian Art and Culture -- the last two were published only this year.

He is married to Farha Sayeed who is an artist specializing in egg decoration and has three sons. He enjoys travelling, reading and is interested in internet technologies.

this, and these institutions cannot be bribed or threatened because there are other bodies that monitor their work especially the judiciary and the press."

Even normal citizens if they have a problem with a certain official they can simply file a Public Interest Litigation and take that official or institution to court. Even if the citizens are not educated or capable of doing so, there is a vibrant civil society in India that helps citizens claim their rights and exercise democracy. "Nobody is above the law," said Dr. Ausaf Sayeed with determination.

Because of its long journey towards a true democracy, India has a lot to offer developing countries

“There are different levels of democracy, and according to the ambassador Yemen does have a level of democracy that cannot be ignored.”

and many lessons to share. Now the power is largely in the hands of citizens and in many elections some parties and individuals have lost by one few votes. If people are dissatisfied by how an official or a government is operating they can exercise their franchise and take that government or person down through free and fair elections.

"We are now using electronic voting machines to minimize errors and human interference. In India we have an electorate of over 700 million and having this electronic system facilitates conducting the mammoth electoral process in a free and fair manner," said Sayeed. "If requested, we can study the possibility of helping Yemen with its electoral system based on our experience and knowledge."

Most Indians know their rights and if they don't there is the large range of free and independent media that is there to educate them.

There are many cases of simple citizens who were able, with the help of media, to undo wrong that had fallen upon them. Indian civil society is quite strong but perhaps it is the media which is the strongest civil society organ especially since India has the largest growing media market in the world.

Starting from Mahatma Gandhi and to the civil society leaders of today Indians continue their journey for freedom and democracy not taking anything for granted.

"Notwithstanding the difficulties to resolve claims, the non-violent way remains the best long standing mechanism to achieve democracy," said Sayeed.



Ausaf in Kamaran Island: During the first four months of his posting in Yemen, Dr. Ausaf Sayeed had travelled extensively in Yemen visiting Aden, Hodeida, Taiz and even Kamaran Island.

More economic opportunities So far Yemen has not benefitted from the Indian lines of credits available to Least Development Countries, although during the bilateral Joint Committee meeting held in March 2010, the Yemeni government requested assistance in two projects. One was a USD 30 million hospital and another smaller grant of USD 2.5 million dollars for establishing a science museum in Sana'a.

The first project is still pending because Yemen is yet to provide the detailed project report while the museum is in its advanced stages and was scheduled to be inaugurated by the end of this year.

There are several proposals under discussion, however, there is a clear delay in the Yemeni side probably due to the current uprise. For example, there is the unilateral Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme offered by India which only requires a Letter of Intent from the Yemeni side to become operational.

“The Indian army and police forces are independent of the party in power. And there is a clear distinction between the government as an institution and the party in power.”

The Chambers of Commerce has ventured into a form of cooperation with their Indian counterparts and there are agreements proposed in the vocational and technical sectors.

"On the bilateral side we don't have any proposals yet from the Yemeni government. We welcome them to reach out and benefit from the various opportunities offered by India and I will do my best for assisting Yemen," said Indian ambassador Dr. Ausaf Sayeed.

Sayeed added that he proposed to Yemen to sign a general trade agreement, the draft of which has already been presented to the Yemeni side but no feedback has yet been received.

"There is great eagerness among Indian businessmen to invest in Yemen. I also see that Yemeni businessmen are keen for the same. What needs to be done now is to move from intention to action and we are ready to facilitate any agreements desired," he said.

So far the trade exchange between Yemen and India has exceeded USD 2.25 billion in the fiscal year between April 2010 and March 2011. Of this, Yemen's exports to India were valued at USD 1.74 billion, while Yemen's imports from India totaled USD 514 million. The main items of Yemen's exports to India were mainly mineral fuels, mineral oils and waxes and other bituminous substances, while Yemen's imports from India included over 90 different consumer and industrial products such as cereals, edible fruits, tobacco, pharmaceuticals, cement, distilled petrochemicals, plastic materials, textiles and garments and machine tools.

Large Indian companies have obtained rights to oil exploration for seven blocks. Some private companies are undertaking mining activities in Hadramaut and there is a tentative agreement between the Yemeni and the Indian Geological Survey Authorities for joint projects which could potentially create

“Despite Yemen's economic deterioration not much has been done to benefit from the many economic opportunities that would prove beneficial not only for the government institutions but also the private sector.”

many commercial spinoffs. "The problem remains the same. There are huge potentials but they need more stability and less bureaucracy to happen. For example in the power sector, BHL, which is a large public sector company in India, has won a contract of USD 425 million for generation and transmission and it will commence its work as soon as the situation stabilizes," explained the ambassador.

He mentioned that there is another USD 1.25 billion worth investment in Bilhaf in the natural gas industry and the negotiations are still ongoing. The company could easily take its business elsewhere such as Africa if it did not find enough incentives to work in Yemen.

"In the business world it is all about win-win deals. Such companies have the potential of generating many jobs and creating revenues for Yemen but they need to enough attractions and incentives that would convince them to do their business in Yemen," he said.

Yemen & India historical and current relations

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Historically, Yemen and India had three points of contact: Through the pilgrimage route to Mecca, through the British-Indian colonization of Aden and through the Hadrami kingdoms who has close ties with Hyderabad in India.

Indian pilgrims used to stop on their way to Mecca in Aden or Kamaran Island. Both places display historical landmarks to this relation. History talks about Mogal royal ladies staying for days in Aden such as Emperor Akbar's aunt, Gulbadan Begum. Also Yemeni scholars have travelled to India to preach Islam.

The British-Indian influence in Aden was more visible on the economic side; in fact the first bank to be ever established there was the Bank of India in 1954. Even the

Indian currency was used in Aden during those times. Ironically Aden was also a sort of jail for revolutionary Indians and was the first point of contact for India outside the subcontinent.

History talks about how Mahatma Gandhi visited Aden in 1931 and gave a historical speech there on the peaceful fight for freedom. And when India gained its independence in 1947, Yemenis were ecstatic with joy and believed that the surge of independence would come to the Arab countries.

The third point of contact in Hadramout was mainly through the Kathiri and Qu'aiti kingdoms whose foundation was supported by the Nizam of Hyderabad.

These three points of contact are visible today not only through the landmarks and historical monuments but also through the more than 100,000 Indians of Yemeni

Violations against human rights

A grave violation of human rights is repeatedly taking place in a form of 21st century slavery as recruited labor from India is being abused in Yemen.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Because of the lack of official control from both Indian and Yemeni governments, the Indian workforce coming to Yemen have undergone considerable difficulties and sufferings. There are several incidents of Indian tailors or cooks who were lured into coming to Yemen under the pretext of good job opportunities but were eventually locked up and forced into working sometimes for 12 hours nonstop daily under inhuman conditions.

There are also Indian nurses working in public and private hospitals who did not receive their pay for months.

"We have proposed an agreement with the Yemeni authorities to regulate labor between Yemen and India so that we don't allow such violations to happen. But so far we have not managed to get this issue sorted out," explained Sayeed in frustration.

The embassy received complaints from some of its citizens who either managed to escape their unkind Yemeni employers or those who are still in trouble. Upon contacting the relevant authorities some of the cases were solved but others were not.

Most of these workers are lured into coming to Yemen through agents in India and are given visitors' visa which is illegal because they are brought here to work not as visitors. When they arrive their passports are taken from them and they become helpless because they did not sign contracts and they did not come through official channels.

"I have taken up the issue with several ministers and we are trying hard to see if there is a foolproof solution to this through channeling recruitment through the embassy for example," said Sayeed. "This is one of the biggest prob-



Around 130 Indian nurses working in Kuwait Hospital in Sana'a on strike mid 2010 demanding their food and other allowances and the delay in their salaries.



Sewn up ... tailors work cheaply in India. They come to Yemen hoping to improve their living conditions but many land up victims of fraud and abusive employers.

lems I am facing here and in some cases it has become a humanitarian and human rights issue. We have brought this issue to the notice of the Yemeni authorities but the problem persists."



Mataji Temple, Khusaf Valley, Aden, October 2010

Know India
Know India Program is a three-week orientation program for any youth who are of Indian origin to give them a chance to know their original motherland. Candidates must be in the age group of 18-26 years, and all their expenses will be covered by the Indian government. For more information on this program or contact the Indian embassy in Yemen or go to: <http://moia.gov.in/services.aspx?dt=42&id=m4&idp=42&mainid=23>

Indo-Yemen Friendship Society
The Indian embassy is now making serious efforts to revive the Indian Yemeni Friendship Society with a new structure which can give support to the strong relation between the two countries. All those who are interested to be part of, send an email with your contact information and why you want to be part of it to: yemenindia@eoisanaa.net

Educational Scholarships
Every year the government of India provides around 42 graduate and post graduate scholarships for Yemenis in various fields except for medicine. The scholarships are provided through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. In order to promote these scholarships the Indian embassy in Yemen organizes two events; the ITEC day and the International students' day. For more information on these opportunities visit Indian embassy website at www.eoisanaa.org

Independent journalists increasingly defamed

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

Since the start of Yemen's uprising earlier this year, some Yemeni independent journalists have displayed their dissatisfaction with the route and outcome of the revolution and the so-called 'Islamist's control over the revolution'.

These independent journalists are well-known for their vociferous criticism of the regime and some Yemeni clerics have also been a subject of their disapproval.

The protests and their outcome at the Change Squares have been slammed by these journalists; it is they would be expected to be loyal to the revolutionaries.

Some journalists who back the opposition as well as academics and revolutionaries have accused these journalists of taking money from some pro-regime figures to tarnish the reputation of the revolutionaries. The same opposition journalists, academics and revolutionaries have said that some independent websites and newspapers pretend

that they are independent and objective.

Through Facebook, the social networking site, journalists and revolutionaries have created pages to defame some independent journalists such as Naif Hassan, Jamal Amer, Nabeel Sobee, Fekry Kasem and Nabeel Al-Soofi.

Nabeel Al-Soofi, editor of the independent News Yemen website, has been accused of siding with the regime. Al-Soofi quit the opposition Islah Party in 2009 following which he started writing critical stories about the revolution and the Islah Party.

Naif Hassan, editor and publisher of the independent Al-Shari and Al-Oola newspapers has been repeatedly accused of siding with the regime and thus has face criticism from fellow journalists and academics and revolutionaries.

Speaking to the Yemen Times, Hassan described these campaigns as the settling of accounts. He also confirmed that his newspapers are objective and professional.

"Some political powers are not dissatisfied with our policy. They

want us to write following their agendas," he said. "They have accused us of treason, subjectivity and obtaining money from some members of the regime. They attack us without regard for ethics and principles."

Asked about the accusation that he receives money from figures loyal to the regime with the aim of implementing particular agendas, he said: "This is part of a dirty campaign against me and my newspapers. These are just fabrications to destroy my reputation. If they have evidence that we receive such money they should then back it up with proof."

"I challenge them to prove that the news of my newspapers is subjective. Unfortunately, when we criticize the poor performance of the revolution we have been accused of causing rifts among revolutionaries," he said. "They want to silence our voices under the pretext of protecting the revolution. However, our readers realize our professional performance."

Hassan indicated that his relationship with revolutionaries in the Change Squares is strong and solid. "I have not destroyed the reputation of the revolution as many people have said. On the contrary, I support the revolution and I've published many stories in favor of the revolutionaries."

For his part, Mohammed Al-Sharabi, a freelance journalist and one of the pro-democracy revolutionaries said that some independent newspapers deal with the news as a product that should sell.

"It's unacceptable to deal subjectively and unfairly with the news. We can express our own opinion through essays and opinion pieces but not through news items," he said. "Some independent journalists implement agendas that are against the revolution to serve the aims of the regime."



Some journalists who back the opposition as well as academics and revolutionaries have accused these journalists of taking money from some pro-regime figures to tarnish the reputation of the revolutionaries.

Al-Sharabi indicated that some newspapers publish rumors about the revolution to mislead and sway public opinion in order to serve the regime.

"They should improve their performance, especially with regard to the revolution," he said.

Journalists as bodyguards
An independent journalist Nabeel Sobee is known for his severe criticism against the regime and religious clerics such as Sheikh Abdulmajeed Al-Zandani, who joined the revolution last March.

After Yemen's revolution began earlier this year, Sobee immediately joined but later he became dissatisfied due to the control of some political powers at the Change Square in Sana'a.

His strong criticism against the revolution caused him to be at-

tacked by many revolutionaries, fellow journalists and political activists.

"I was receiving threats from the regime because of my writing about the bequeathing power to President Ali Abdullah Saleh's son. Unfortunately, I'm receiving the same attacks but from some political figures in the opposition including journalists," he told the Yemen Times.

Sobee said that his critical articles about Sheikh Hameed Al-Ahmer, a prominent tribal leader of the opposition, have sparked off outrage amongst those who support Al-Ahmer.

"They [some journalists] have been conducting the same campaigns of gagging and of oppression of our fundamental right of freedom of speech. There is no difference between the regime and this opposi-

tion," he said. "Saleh's regime has been reproduced within the opposition forces by some political powers that once used to be partners of Saleh."

"When we criticize some opposition political members they [some opposing journalists] claim that we receive money from some figures of the regime," he explained. "Some Yemeni journalists work as bodyguards to protect the reputation of some opposition politicians and tribal leaders."

In spite of his criticism against the revolution, Sobee considers Yemen's revolution as one of the greatest revolutions in Yemen's history.

"My reservation about the revolution is the absence of absolute freedom and control by some political powers over the revolution," he said.



Anonymous Facebook group named "Boycott the the youth revolution's hostile media"

Yemeni women head reluctantly into the maids market

By: Amira Al-Arasi

The news that Saudi Arabia is willing to hire maids from Yemen has sparked debate among Yemenis about whether they would allow their women to work abroad.

This debate highlights the social stigma against Yemeni women working in homes, despite the fact that more and more women are being forced into this market because of poverty.

The view in Yemen is that a maid or house hand from another country is more efficient and tidier. This is why Ethiopian or Asian maids are more in demand than Yemeni ones, especially since the later almost always refuses to be a live-in maid.

As it is, there is usually an abundance of non-Yemeni maids who come in search of a better life and know they need to prove their worth in such a highly competitive market.

However, Yemeni maids are scarce and usually come for specific jobs such as cooking during

weddings or summer house cleaning and washing rugs.

"Yemeni help take much longer to do their work and they do stick to working hours," says Badria Al-Qattab, a Yemeni woman who has an Ethiopian maid. "Also Yemenis help might talk about your secrets and tell your intimate issues to others since they belong to the same society."

She added that Ethiopian maids usually know what to do - and do it in silence without needing to be told, unlike Yemenis who pretend they don't know what to do and waste their time chatting.

Desperation-driven market

However, this perception is gradually being challenged as the number of Yemeni maids increases because of economic hardships.

"I used to live a dignified life with my husband and three daughters until he died," said Um Hanan, who has been struggling to support her children for eight years since her husband died. "His brothers made us sign papers to give up our rights to inheritance without really knowing what we were signing.

"I used to be the lady of the house, now I am serving as a maid in other people's homes so that I can provide my daughters with food and shelter," she says regretfully - though she emphasizes that she feels no shame in doing this job as it is legal and better than begging on the streets.

However, the money from serving in homes was not much and so Um Hanan could not send her daughters to school. It was only when her eldest daughter was married off at 22 that the financial burden eased a little.

Nawal Saleh works at Al-Shuhra employment agency for house help in Sana'a. She says that recently the number of Yemeni applicants has increased - they currently have 200 Yemeni women on file looking for a job as a cleaner.

"But the Yemeni women ask to only work with foreigners because they fear that someone might recognize them if they work with a Yemeni family and that would be shameful," says Saleh.

Many Yemeni women from poor families who were forced into working as maids try to hide this fact from their relatives, neighbors or even close family. This is why they refuse to be live-in maids.

"Also they don't feel safe sleeping in a house with strange men and are afraid that they might be abused," adds Saleh.

Um Hanan reflects on how her daughters feel ashamed that their mom works for others - and because of the stigma attached to working as household servant she has been forced to keep her profession a secret.

"I tell my relatives that I work in a cafeteria selling sandwiches. If my family learns about this, they might kill me because they think I bring shame to the family this way," she says, explaining that they are too poor to support her yet too arrogant to allow her to work as a



Maids of all nationalities prefer to work with foreigners because they believe the foreign employers pay more and treat house help better. Yet so far the demand for Yemeni workers is still weak even though they usually get paid less.

maid.

Maids of all nationalities prefer to work with foreigners because they believe the foreign employers pay more and treat house help better. Yet so far the demand for Yemeni workers is still weak even though they usually get paid less.

"I paid a similar rate per hour for my previous Yemeni maid as I do for my current maid who is Ethiopian," explained Al-Qattab, who chose the Ethiopian one because of the quality of her work and her good behavior.

Inequality in pay

According to employment agencies, the salaries of Yemeni help is half that of the non-Yemenis because foreigners are perceived to work harder for longer hours and are willing to stay with the family. A Yemeni maid could be given a salary of 20,000 Yemeni Rials per

month (around USD 85) for an average of two hours a day.

Zaid Hassan of Touch Stars employment agency agrees and adds that being a Yemeni is a disadvantage when it comes to household services. Not only is there a lack of demand either because of distrust in capabilities or social pressure, but also when Yemeni maids do get a job they are usually paid much less.

"The women who come for employment are usually unmarried and request anonymity," says Hassan, adding that they currently have only 150 Yemeni applicants compared to at least two thousand of other nationalities on file.

According to reports of the Women National Committee, responsible for women's development strategies in Yemen, women make up no more than 20 percent of the labor force. Most of those

women work in agriculture.

"However, there is a large percentage of women who work in the unorganized sector and whose work is not accounted for," says Murad Zafer, an economist analyst.

Because of the economic deterioration and job losses in the organized sector, many Yemenis - including women - have been pushed to join the unorganized sector, doing jobs such as housework.

"It is important to pay attention to this trend because it affects the national economic plans," says Zafer. "If we don't know how much financial input the citizens are contributing to the revenues, all the economic planning will be incorrect leading to serious problems in the future."

Regulating this sector will also protect the rights of both employers and workers and minimize violations and abuse, added Zafer.



Many Yemeni women from poor families who were forced into working as maids try to hide this fact from their relatives, neighbors or even close family. This is why they refuse to be live-in maids.



JOB OPENING

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ONLY shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

An SMS from an Exiled Woman (Part 4/4)

By: Salwa Yehia Aleryani

I closed my sore eyes. The gossip continued twirling like a dilemma. I tasted a warm salty liquid in my throat. I expected they were fleeing tears. My lips were sealed. I stood up, hardly pulling my feet to walk. I went to the young gentleman at the reception. I told him with a strong despair voice, "listen you don't understand, I don't go to work these days because of my knee. I can't walk. It hurts. I need to go back to my job because I am a widow, and it is me who earns a living. My kids have no one to feed them except me. Please allow me to enter. It won't take a minute. Just an answer, then I'll leave. Please. Please."

I felt bitter. Exactly, like I would have felt if I were a beggar. The young gentleman told me boldly that I had to wait. More serious cases will enter first. Could anything on earth be more serious than feeding children? I didn't plead more. Not because I am a human being who has dignity and should not beg for a "right" but because I lost hope that insisting to enter would make him allow me to enter. I walked back to the waiting room half dead. The women there were tired and angry. I waited for an hour then the young gentleman showed up at the door announcing, "The doctor has left back to his house. It's late now. Please come back tomorrow." We all stood up very obediently, we walked out of the clinic without mentioning a word of objection. The face which has got used to being slapped, extra slaps don't hurt it anymore. The young man closed the door with the key and rushed down. All patients went down like a spilt gelatin. We were only coins inside a piggybank. I waited until they all disappeared and sat down on the stairs. I descended by sitting on each stair. Another bug was going down with me. It was running fast. Maybe had to go and feed its

children. I spoke to it, "Hey, what's up? Didn't enter, did you?" I sighed because I didn't either. I then took a taxi and went back home. My three kids rushed to me nearly pushing me back to the floor. I hugged them with my hands on their backs. I can't hug and bend anymore. Also I had a terrible headache. I know these severe headaches. They are a sign that my blood pressure is high. I went to the kitchen to prepare something for the kids to eat. I was sad, depressed and full of desire to box or break or even scream. I didn't understand what I cooked. I didn't realize if my kids ate or not. I didn't even remember if I myself ate or not. I wasn't ok. My kids went to bed. I passed to each bed and smiled and put my palm on their wavy, black hair. I couldn't bend and kiss. I wanted to cry for a long time. I left their bedroom and headed towards the medicine at the top of my cupboard. I keep pills and medicines there because my children might eat them. I held the medicine. I looked at it. It looked at me. I laughed. I said to the pills, "You know something?? I AM GOING TO TAKE A PILL NOW!" I did. Immediately after that I sat down to type an sms. I wrote, I was breathing like I would after jogging, I wrote, (listen doctor, I took the pill a second ago. Now if it does anything harmful to me then I am praying to Allah the just now, before any harm reaches me that may Allah never forgive you. May Allah punish your children by losing their father like you made my children lose me. Regards!"

In a week I started to feel my knee becoming much better. I went out to look for a job. I found one as a cleaner in a bank. A bit insulting but I accepted. A cleaner isn't the lovely house I wanted to live in, but never mind as long as my kids will eat and drink. After a week and during my sleep, an sms was delivered to my cell phone, "Very sorry for being late! No, don't use that medicine. It

is not suitable for you. Come tomorrow to me and I will write another one instead."

I never received, nor read that sms. At that day, Allah had set me free. I no longer worried about my kids, no longer felt the pain in my knee. I never saw my kids again. I never knew what happened to them after. Who died??? Well, unfortunately it was ME!

Picture of the Week



Bhaydar Muhammed Kubaisi jumps over three camels during a practice in Beit al Faqih, in the Tehama region of Yemen. Ed Ou/Getty Images

Early divorce

By: Mohammed Mutahar

It's easy to write on the issue of divorce but for a divorce to take place, for there to be an end in a marriage complexities arise. For a divorce is not a simple matter. Many divorces tend to take place in the first year of marriage and there are several reasons for this.

First there is the issue of adjustment. Those women who are used to rich lives and lavish upbringings – such as enjoying lunches at restaurants, going to park or traveling – tend to expect that they will continue to enjoy the same lifestyle. They are perhaps under the misconception that they will continue to live the same life, bask in the same quality of life they were used at their parents' homes. But should the union between husband and wife lead to a difference in lifestyle the find it difficult to adopt to their new status. This can cause problems in the marriage.

Second are the unfulfilled expectations. Some women live as confined women, unable to visit the

park, unable to travel. Often they are under the assumption that marriage may set them free, that marriage will bring greater freedoms. But this could well be a misconception that drives a wedge between husband and wife leading to fights and bitterness and eventually divorce.

Third, there may be a tussle in the household between the women of the house. Power plays between wife's and mothers, or wife's and sister of the husband come to the fore. The husband is wedged between his loyalties to this mother and sister and his wife. Constant nagging from both corners pushed the husband to a tipping point and the man wonders: which woman should I satisfy? There have been cases of the husbands leaving the parental home and moving to an alternative accommodation, perhaps a rented one. But for some men the issue of financial stability is a deal-breaker. They cannot live without financial support from their father and thus cannot afford their own home.

Fourth are traditional Yemeni customs and the demands and ex-

pectations of the man. At first, men depend on their mother or sister to choose their wife. The wife is chosen for her capabilities such as her readiness to cook and clean. But foremost amongst the selection process is the beauty of the woman for no mother wants an attractive wife for his son. But the wedding night often shocks the man: the man is torn, this is not what he wanted and she does not fulfill his expectations. Thus some men keep the first wife as the chosen one and often take another wife. Others choose to divorce their wives altogether.

But in order to avoid the hardships and emotional trauma of divorce, husband and wife should understand each other. They should not enter disputes between the mother and the wife not should they interfere. Of utmost importance is the honesty and frankness: a man should not be shy in telling his mother what qualities he seeks in a partner. A wife is not a maid, nor is she just a pretty face. Marriage is a bond between two people, a bond of trust and should not be confused with a work contract.

Request for Proposal



Implementing the Social Cohesion Project Activities

The United Nations Development Programme in Yemen is seeking a professional NGO to implement the ISCD project activities in Lahj governorate, and hereby invites the interested NGOs to submit a proposal for the implementation of Social Cohesion Project activities, as per the Terms of Reference (TOR).

The deadline for submission is Saturday 22nd October 2011, 1.00 p.m. (Yemen Time). The offers must comprise a technical proposal as well as a financial proposal, in separate sealed envelopes. Offers should be sent to the following address:

United Nations Development Programme

Attention: Ms. Samia Mohammed

P.O. Box 551

Off sixty road, near Alawqaf complex

Sana'a, Yemen.

For further details on the RFP and to download the relevant documents, please visit our website at:

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Coffee Break

Crossword

1							
				8			
9							
10					11		
12					14		
15					18		17
18					19	20	
21							
22							
					23		

Sudoku **Easy** **Intermediate** **Difficult**

8	2	3	6	5	1			
			1					
9				1		3	2	8
5	2							
6		9	5	2	4	8	7	
					8		6	5
1	4	7		5				3
						7		
		5	7	3	1	6	4	

Chess

8	♔					♚			
7									
6									
5									
4									
3									
2									
1									
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h		

White plays and wins in the 2nd move

Solutions

Chess: Qx6+

Cross Words: Across: 1 Rustler; 4 Asides; 9 Court disaster; 10 Undress; 11 Large; 12 Inset; 14 Brain; 18 Orbit; 19 Private; 21 Start to finish; 22 Ladies; 23 Phoned.
Down: 1 Recoup; 2 Sounding board; 3 Lure; 5 Stapler; 6 Determination; 7 Surrey; 8 Rinse; 13 Entitle; 15 Morse; 16 Spool; 17 Method; 20 Irish

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Yemenia launches new electronic services



Following its continuous progress for better customer services and more efficient operations, Yemenia Airways has just launched the new electronic reservation and sales system as well as electronic cargo tracking online system.

The celebration which honored the teams behind this progress included various Yemenia staff and friends.

"Now that we have Passenger Solution Services we know that we will be able to provide our customers with better services," said Captain Abdulkhaleq Al-Qadhi the

airlines' chairman at the event. Ashraf Al-Mughales project manager of PSS described the characteristics of the new system and its working mechanism. The system was provided by the Societe Internationale Telecommunication Aeronautique company which will work with Yemenia on new projects in the future.

The staff working on the project and the force behind its success were given certificates of merits and congratulated for their hard work.

The celebration took place on Wednesday Oct. 6, 2011 at Al-Fakher Restaurant.



Egypt Embassy celebrates Military Day



Flowers were placed on the graves of Egyptian soldiers who gave their life supporting Yemeni revolutionaries in their fight for independence from the imamite rule in 1962.

This kind gesture was done by the Egyptian embassy marking October 6, Egyptian Military day as a part of celebrating this grand occasion in Yemen.

Egyptian ambassador to Yemen Ashraf Aql said that such a celebration confirms the friendly brotherly relations between Yemen and Egypt indicating that the Yemeni leadership considers October 6 a victory for Yemen not only Egypt.

"October 6 is a day of pride for the entire Arab nation because the Egyptian army was able to cross the Suez Canal and defeat the Israeli army which was until that date said to be invincible," said the ambassador. The embassy's employees as well as friends from the diplomatic and other communities attended the celebration.

Staff Colonel Khaled M. Ezz Elragal, Egyptian defense Attache agreed with this notion saying that Yemenis will never forget what the Egyptians have done for their support and likewise Egyptians will always remember how Yemenis helped them in Oct. 6 by allowing Egyptian marine to block Bab Al-Mandab Strait.



Yahia Al-Dheeb

By: Shatha AL-Harazi

The first soldier to be featured in our "Faces" series also happens to be the very first soldier to defect from president Ali Abdullah Saleh's armed forces to join Yemen's peaceful revolution. Major Yahia al-Dheeb, 26, was one of Saleh's personal guards before he made headlines for joining the revolution, bravely challenging the armed forces, and inspiring great courage in colleagues who later joined him against the regime.

He used before March, 2011 to risk his life protecting the president for no more than 26,000 YR per month. "I was a bodyguard for the president and sometimes his family as he [the president] does not trust any guard enough to keep him as a permanent bodyguard...he fears that we can learn too much about his life," said Yahia.

Yahia learned to adopt peaceful ways as a result of the revolution. Although he is a member of the armed forces, he disobeys any orders to use violence either against civilians or armed forces loyal to president Saleh.

"I refuse to hold any weapon after joining the peaceful revolution. I swear to God my hands will never hold a gun against any Yemeni. I would prefer to die peacefully than kill any Yemeni, even in self-defense" he said.

Yahia has suffered as a direct result of being the first soldier to defect. He received death threats and was chased by Saleh's thugs. He has not received his salary, which amounts to only US\$130 per month, since late last year.

His problems have continued even after key figures in Saleh's regime defected and vowed to protect the protesters.

According to Yahia, when the state stopped paying defected soldiers' salaries in March, Qatar took on that responsibility. Yahia contends that leading army defector Ali Mohsen receives direct financial support from the Gulf nation to pay soldiers' salaries.



"Even Mohsen does not pay me my salary, as some of us [the armed forces coalition in the square] defected from him as well - when we learned that he wants us to hold weapons to protect the youth, we refused his orders," said Yahia. "They told me that if you want your salary, you have to hold the weapon and kill whoever assaults the protesters. They will make us kill each others and they will not care how many of us die. Eventually Mohsen or Saleh will call the other and apologize; it's us Yemenis who die."

"We said we will not face weapons with weapons; we will face fire with our bare chests."

Yahia urges all the protesters to remain peaceful, saying that before the army defected, the youth were managing to gain more opposition-held grounds. "Before March 18, the youth reached Al-Irani Hospital; on March 18, we reached the old university without weapons and without Ali Mohsen's forces either," he said. "Now after all those deaths in marches, Ali Mohsen makes deals with the regime and surrendered Kentucky Round."

Yahia strongly feels that Mohsen is implementing Saleh's plans in Change

es. "President Saleh's picture still hangs in Ali Mohsen's office. How stupid they think Yemenis are! When Mohsen joined the revolution, he said that he would only protect the youth... today he's the only commander of the square" said Yahia angrily.

Yahia told the Yemen Times that Ali Mohsen recruits civilians into his army, calling them "revolution supporters," and that the Army loyal to Saleh is doing the same, in that case calling recruits "legitimacy supporters."

Despite his angry language when expressing how the regime benefits from Ali Mohsen's defection, Yahia is a fun person, always joking and smiling no matter what threats he receives. In particular, he is known for a trick he pulled on Yemen TV. The resulting video has been shared by many opposition Facebook groups. Yahia called Yemen TV to participate in a program against the revolution. As the program receives only receives calls from Saleh supporters, Yahia posed as one, cursing the revolution. As soon as he was put on-air, he spoke truthfully about the Republican Guard having shot protesters.

The program's host was taken aback and Yahia's call was cut, but not before he had a chance to speak his mind.

Square by controlling the square in the name of protection. "Ali Mohsen serves Ali Saleh: they both think of benefits for themselves, they have always deceived the Yemeni people. Why would they stop now?" said Yahia. "We [the revolutionaries] achieved a lot in our efforts to topple Ali Saleh before Ali Mohsen joined us, and today we hardly move forwards."

Yahia's is an honest voice. He speaks his mind, highlighting issues, with little concern for the consequenc-

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