

## Shortage of gas, increase in anger

By: Malak Shafer

SANA'A, Nov. 2 — The price of cooking gas has increased twofold in Sana'a, leaving thousands of families wondering how they will cook during the upcoming Eid vacation.

The increase in price for cooking gas cylinders varies from one governorate to another. In Sana'a, the price of a cylinder of increased from YR 1,600 to YR 3,400, or USD 15. In Hodeida governorate, home to the poorest segment of Yemen's population, the price of one cylinder is YR 2,500, or USD 10.

"We can no more afford the price of cooking gas, which increased two days ago and is now YR 2,500," said Um Khaled Mohammad, mother of five children, of Hodeida.

She said that gas cylinders are available but that she prefers to use wood to prepare meals rather than

face the "very expensive" price that she cannot pay.

Providing that the sellers of cooking gas cylinders are not cheating their customers, a typical cylinder for a family of five usually lasts 20 days.

Mazen Hassan of Sana'a said that he had tried "to play smart" and bought gas cylinders from peddlers, as they were cheaper than in the gas market in Sana'a's Old City. He discovered later that the cylinders bought from peddlers were only half full.

The cylinder Mazen bought from a peddler lasted for only a week. This week, according to Mazen, the price for a single cylinder of gas increased to YR 4,000, or USD 17.

Since the uprising in Yemen started in February, the price of the gas cylinder increased from USD 4 to be sometimes USD 20. The average Yemeni earns a salary

of nearly USD 160, with the value of the Yemeni riyal constantly decreasing.

Meanwhile, prices for cooking gas in Aden have not increased, according to Anis Mansoor, a journalist from Aden. He added that cylinders of gas bought from stores cost YR 1,600, as opposed to YR 1,600 when purchased from peddlers.

Before the uprising in Yemen started in February, Yemen usually witnessed gas shortages before Ramadan or the two Eids, Islamic occasions, gas distributors have a monopoly on gas due to the rise in demand on gas on such occasions.

The shortage of gas cylinders can be ascribed to problems that occur on the Marib-Sana'a road, when the gas is brought from Marib, and is due to a monopoly, according to Mohammad Al-Absi, a Yemeni activist.

He said that gas distributors sometimes 'hold' the cylinders during "important occasions, as the demand for gas is then at a climax."

"Yemeni citizens consume more than 20,000 barrels daily, according to SAFER, Yemen's national oil company," said Al-Absi.

Despite the fact that, after Qatar, it produces the second largest amount of natural gas in the Arab world, Yemen's government paid for six cooking gas shipments from Oman. One barrel went for USD 32, according to Al-Absi.

Al-Absi, who also serves as the head of a committee combating the Yemeni government - Liquid Natural Gas agreement, said that the nearly 15,000 barrels of gas goes towards Total and Liquid Natural Gas, two French gas companies, every day.

He said that the agreement was made in 2005, and that the amount of 13,000 barrels was allocated for domestic use.



Kids waiting with their parents for their turn to get a cooking gas cylinder in Sana'a. Before Eid vacations and Ramadan, the prices of cylinders increase as some distributors have a monopoly on them.

He said that the International Trade Court had canceled the agreement as a result of its being "unjust" to Yemeni citizens. The agreement, however, remains in place to this day.

## Eleven killed, 40 injured in Taiz

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

TAIZ, Nov. 2 — The city of Taiz has witnessed another week of intense armed conflict between state security forces and armed opposition members. Eleven men died as a result of the violence, with an additional 40 injured.

Dr. Sadeq Al-Shuja', manager of the field hospital on Taiz's opposition-held grounds, said that he is expecting the number of dead to increase as many of the injured are in critical condition.

"We need all the help we can get, and we need blood donations and doctors to come to the rescue," he said.

The conflict was most intense on Wednesday morning, when Republican Guard and National Security forces, as well as the 33rd military division, all launched

strikes against armed opposition members in residential areas of Taiz.

This most recent conflict started when supporters of the ongoing revolution prevented quantities of ammunition from entering the education office, located in the city's center. The education office was converted into a state military station months ago.

General Abdullah Qiran, director of security for Taiz, had recently held an emergency meeting with city military leaders last week in the governor's absence. The meeting resulted in a decree that all directors for state radio and other forms of media, as well as the director of the Office of Culture, be changed on the pretext that they are not following instructions and conveying what is really happening in the city. State media outlets

criticized the decision, saying that while it will be implemented, Qiran is not authorized to make such a decision.

Taiz governor Hamoud Khaled Al-Sofi, commenting on the decision, said that "Qiran is stepping outside of his jurisdiction. If the change [of media directors] does happen, we will deal with it when it happens."

Several areas stuck in the middle of the recent conflict have been under siege for the last few weeks and many families have been forced to flee their homes. Locals have also complained that military planes hovering at a low altitude have frightened women and children.

Ahmed Mohammed, a citizen of Taiz, said that he has been staying in his basement with his family the whole time. "We keep hearing the shelling and bombs which shake our house."

## Political agreement to transfer power in Yemen

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANAA, Nov. 2 — A political agreement appears to be approaching between President Saleh and the opposition parties to ease the handing of power to his vice president.

However, since March, the Gulf nations, the European Union, the USA and most recently the UN Security Council have been trying to push for Saleh to step down, which he has not yet done.

President Saleh said on Sunday that he would delegate power to his deputy, Abd Al-Rabu Mansuer

Hadi, who is currently on a health trip to the US, allowing him more authority — including the power to call an early election.

According to the information minister deputy Abdo Al-Jandai, Hadi will be back on Thursday.

"They are supposed to sign the initiative on Friday," said a political analyst who wished to remain anonymous. He added that the GCC secretary general who worked on developing the dialogue between Saleh and the JMP refused to come to Yemen this time unless Saleh gave guarantees that he was serious.

The mechanism of the Gulf

Cooperation Council Initiative in its last form calls for a national coalition government headed by the JMP, among other military reforms.

However, it also states the transitional period will last for two years and be ruled by Hadi as he is the default candidate, since the conflicting political parties could not agree on an alternative.

The opposition Joint Meeting Parties, who accuse Saleh of hindering any peaceful attempt of power transition in Yemen, agreed on going ahead on the initiative after rejecting the three-day deadline Saleh set for them to join talks.

"We had no problems with the mechanism Bin Omar [UN envoy] came with, but the other party was not serious in implementing it and still there are no indications that they will be this time" said Mohammed Al-Sabri, a JMP leader.

Al-Sabri pointed out that the violence in Taiz, which left over 10 civilians dead on Wednesday, is an indication that Saleh is not serious in applying any peaceful means to transfer power.



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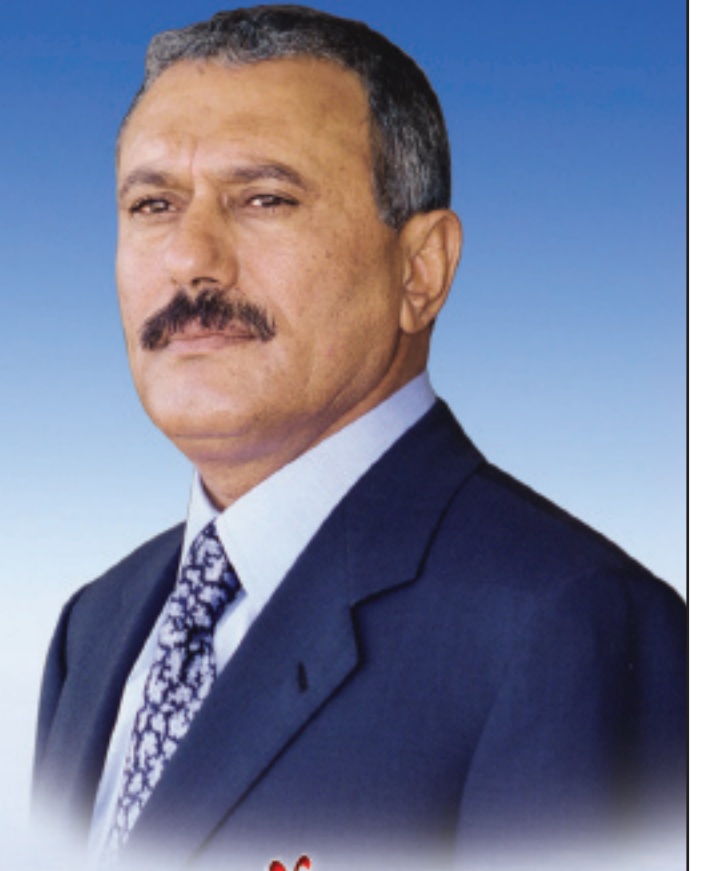
*Ali Abdullah Saleh*

And to all our great Yemeni people  
on the occasion the Holy Eid al-Adhha  
with wishes of  
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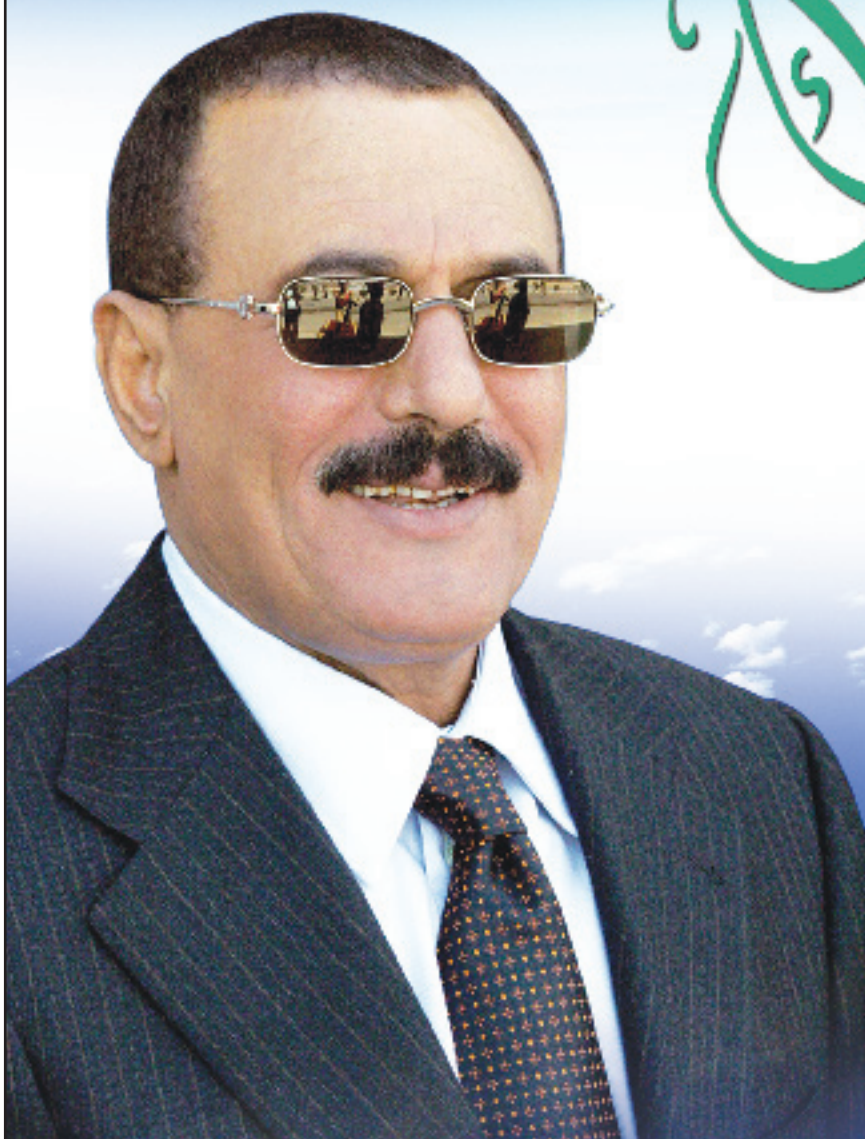
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The Latest Buzz

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

- ▶ A peace agreement was created this week between the conflicting Shiite and Salafi groups in Sa'ada. The agreement included avoiding media campaigns and slander.
- ▶ The bodies of eight Syrian avian trainers were seen off on Tuesday at Sana'a airport. They had come last week to support the Yemeni air force in maintenance and technical training when their plane crashed at Al-Anad military runway.
- ▶ The pro-revolution army unit accused president Saleh of preparing for large-scale military action in Sana'a and Taiz. The unit said there are new trenches and military camps being created in the two cities.
- ▶ The revenues from fish and marine life has increased in the last 10 months to over USD 226 million compared to around USD 200 million last year in 2010.
- ▶ Seven armed men who stole a European Union mission vehicle on Monday in Sana'a had an accident and the car turned over with them in it before they fled the scene.
- ▶ Three men were killed in Lahj district in Al-Habeelain district and another was injured after a violent confrontation between armed men and the local police.
- ▶ Sources in Aden airport said that USD 700 million and half a billion Saudi Rials arrived at the airport with official documentation to be transferred via Yemenia airlines to a gulf country.

EU: political impasse behind humanitarian and economic deterioration

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, Nov 2 – The party that “hinders the political solution and encourages the impasse” must be held accountable for the worsening economic and humanitarian situation, said Michele Cervone d’Urso, ambassador and head of the European Delegation to Yemen, in a press conference on Tuesday.

Yemenis have been suffering a worsening economic and humanitarian situation since May when embattled president Saleh declined to sign a power transition deal brokered by the GCC, despite internal and external pressures on him to hand control to his deputy Abd Rabo Hadi.

Thousands of Yemeni workers were laid off from their jobs after hundreds of plants and small businesses were shut down due to a chronic lack of power and diesel needed to maintain operations. This has left tens of thousands of households with no source of income.

The price of cooking gas has also been volatile. Now only sold on the black market, the cost of one cylinder went up to over YR 3,000 (USD 14) this week. Fuel has also been sold at twice the price – with no parliamentary endorsement – since July with deliberate shortages of diesel amidst 20-hour long electricity outages.

“We hope that the opposing political sides can come to a political solution, so Yemenis can get out of this crisis and celebrate the good news this Eid. Yemenis can no longer afford more delays,” he said.

d’Urso explained that Yemenis have paid a high price for the transition towards democracy and a functioning state and “the EU is fully supporting the aspirations of the Yemeni people.”

But he warned Yemen’s politi-

cians that there could be no more delays since the Security Council issued its 2014 resolution on Yemen and in two weeks a report will be submitted to the Council on the implementation progress.

“Time of promises has gone and we want to see action not words,” said d’Urso “Yemenis can’t wait any more.”

Early last month Josette Sheeran, UN World Food Program (WFP) executive director, said “rising food prices and political instability had left millions of people in Yemen hungry and vulnerable.”

D’Urso added: “All international actors have been speaking about the humanitarian situation without taking action.”

“We are watching the situation carefully. We are not blind and anyone that stops the negotiable political solution will be reported to the Security Council,” he said.

However violence has escalated more since the UN Security Resolution was issued, causing hundreds of deaths and thousands of injured people, according to the field hospital in the capital Sana’a. In areas such as north Sana’a, Taiz and Arhab, where tribesmen loyal to the opposition have been in fierce battles with Saleh’s forces, civilians sleep and wake to the sounds of shells exploding and artillery firing. Stray mortars have even fallen on Sana’a’s old city – a UNESCO world heritage site.

President Saleh has promised to step down many times, but each time he has stepped back saying the only way for him to leave is through elections. The GCC initiative, which was proposed in April and went through several changes according to Saleh’s demands, stipulates early presidential elections.

A pro-democracy activist told the Yemen Times that “all international pressures will be fruitless without sanctions on the political party that maneuvers and procrastinates”.

Yemen’s population: a milestone and a challenge

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, Oct. 31— Years from now, as the world’s population likely continues to grow, a Yemeni child will be informed that her birth was itself an historic milestone.

The United Nations Population Fund’s Sana’a office held a press conference on the occasion of the world’s population reaching seven billion. A Yemeni girl was officially recognized as the world’s seven billionth child, prompting a visit by the UNFPA to Al-Thawra Hospital to honor the child.

Yemen is one of the world’s least developed countries and is experiencing rapid population growth and high maternal mortality, with both occurring especially in rural areas.

From the start of this year, population control activities have faced many difficulties and challenges as a result of political instability and violence. Armed men recently plundered equipment, computers and documents at the National Population Control offices.

Despite growing unrest throughout the country, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Ministry of Public Health and Population has made concerted efforts to continue holding population control activities in all of Yemen’s governorates.

“The biggest challenge that Yemen faces is the population issue,” said Dr. Jameela Al-Raebi, Yemen’s deputy minister of Public Health and Population.

“If we had dealt with the population issue seriously, we would have avoided the current problems and crises in Yemen,” said Al-Raebi. “All people should take responsibility for this issue. The population problem isn’t the responsibility of a particular official authority – it’s a responsibility for all people and all authorities.”

However, Al-Raebi did state that the fertility rate has declined in recent years. “There has been success in reducing Yemen’s high fertility rate, but such success is coming slowly.”

According to Al-Raebi, illiteracy among Yemeni women has contributed to the high fertility rate. “Yemeni women should be empowered to decide how many children they want to have.”

She added that the high fertility problem cannot be overcome with-



If high fertility continues in Yemen, population growth will continue unabated and the population will double in the coming 17 years.

out the availability of family-planning services.

Speaking about population trends in the country, Marc Vandenberghe, a UNFPA representative in Yemen, said, “Women in Yemen have an average of 5 to 6 children. In addition, the majority of Yemen’s population is young. If high fertility continues among this huge segment, population growth will continue unabated and the population of Yemen will double in the coming 17 years.”

Vandenberghe continued, “High population growth is a serious obstacle in the fight against poverty and malnutrition. It stresses existing resources, such as the provision of adequate and good quality health services for mothers and newborns, or education for children. Therefore, the high population growth will affect Yemen’s development process.”

“It is the responsibility of government authorities, the international community and civil society to provide information on reproductive health (RH) to couples as well as to afford them access to good quality RH and health services. This is especially true for young people. It is important that they have a greater awareness of reproductive health issues and rights,” he said.

Vandenberghe said that potential opportunities to constructively engage with youths include educating them and ensuring that they have more employment opportunities.

Stressing the importance of educating young girls, he said: “We have to make sure that young girls

complete their education - at least primary school and preferably high school also.”

He explained, “Giving a girl the chance to complete her education will help her to avoid childbearing at an early age. Then the girl will be prepared for motherhood and will enjoy a healthy life along with her baby. Without a doubt, an education will also give her a chance to educate herself and her family about reproductive health.”

On a larger scale, according to a UNFPA press release, “half of the 200 million women worldwide with an unmet need for contraception are Asian. Access to reproductive health care, including family planning and services, is often limited in poor communities, and each year tens of thousands of women die as a consequence.”

As stated in the press release, efforts to place a focus on reproductive issues have ranged from exhibitions and concerts to television and billboard campaigns.

UNFPA executive director Babatunde Osotimehin has stated that “Instead of asking questions like, ‘Are we too many?’ we should instead be asking, ‘What can I do to make our world better?’ or ‘What can we do to transform our growing cities into forces for sustainability?’”

“In many parts of the developing world, where population growth is outpacing economic growth, the need for reproductive health services, especially family planning, remains great,” he added.

Nexen moots Yemen pullout

By: Garnet Roach

SANA'A. Nov. 2 – Nexen Calgary, the largest oil firm currently operating in Yemen, may be forced to make an “orderly exit” if violence and uncertainty persist, putting more than 1,000 jobs at risk.

The Canadian company has been operating in Yemen since the 1980s and, according to Pierre R. Alvarez, vice president of corporate relations, currently employs more than 1,100 people, “92 percent of whom are Yemeni”.

The company has a December 17 deadline to renew its contract with the Yemeni government, but political unrest and ongoing violence has hindered negotiations.

“The political situation is making it difficult to make visible progress on an extension,” Kevin Reinhart,

Nexen’s chief financial officer, reportedly said in a conference call with analysts last Thursday.

“While we continue our efforts, we are preparing for an orderly exit if these efforts prove unsuccessful,” he added.

However, a spokesman from the company in Yemen said that only one of Nexen’s contracts was up for renewal, though he admitted that this was the largest of its projects in the country, producing 38 percent of its oil.

Nexen currently produces 56,000 boe/d (barrels of oil equivalent per day) before royalties in Yemen. The contract on Block 51, which produces around 6,000 boe/d, expires in 2023.

Nexen also offers a number of scholarships and internships, offering English language training to Yemenis

as well as study programs in Canada.

Alvarez assured the Yemen Times that even if Nexen was forced to pull out of Yemen, it would honor its commitments up to the end of each program.

“We have brought 130 Yemeni students to Canada for post-secondary education through our Yemen Scholarship Program.”

“We are currently sponsoring 39 students at various stages of their post-secondary programs at the University of Calgary, SAIT Polytechnic and Mount Royal University,” he said.

“Nexen is also sponsoring 11 students in Yemen selected in previous years that are in the process of completing their English-language training. We are committed to funding these students through to the completion of their programs.”

ADVERTORIAL

Yemen LNG successfully completes LNG performance reliability testing at Balhaf and testing of the Upstream facilities on Block 18

SANAN'A, Nov. 1 – Yemen LNG has satisfactorily completed testing the performance of the LNG plant at Balhaf and of the Upstream facilities on Block 18.

These technical tests comprised a 180 day test of the Upstream Facilities on Block 18, a 10 day test of each of the three existing cryogenic units on Block 18 and a 90 day test of the LNG plant at Balhaf.

A test of the new cryogenic unit under construction on Block 18 remains to be done in 2012.

These tests were conducted in close cooperation between Sepco, the operator of Block 18, and Yemen LNG, the operator of the LNG project. Testing constitutes a milestone under the loan agreements. A 2.8 billion dollar project financing was organized in 2008 with Yemen



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- Process local payroll and associated income taxes and social security.
- Report and communicate with HQ Finance staff as required.
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- College degree in business, accounting, finance, or a related field required.
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Final selection of the scholarships recipients will be based on passing the DELF B1/B2 exam, receiving university admission, field of study, and the secondary school results.

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2. Must be aged 28 years old or less
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4. Must have at least one year work experience in Yemen
5. Must commit to attend intensive French language training to be able to pass the DELF B1/B2 exam

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# Bilquis Fathi: Yemen's new musical export

**Bilquis Ahmed Fathi is the daughter of renowned singer Ahmed Fathi. She lives in the UAE where she has launched her singing career with the songs Masa'ala Sahla and Diwan al-She'ar as well as collaborating with some of the great voices of the Arab world.**

By Hakeem Najmaldeen

## Who is Bilquis?

My name is Bilquis Ahmed Fathi. I'm the eldest daughter of the renowned singer Ahmed Fathi and although I hold a masters degree in business administration, I am working to become a professional singer myself. I love all aspects of art and I love singing in any language.

**We know the artistic roots you have through your father; did Ahmed Fathi raise and prepare you to be an artist, or was it your own talent that pushed you to sing?**

Both. My father discovered my gift while I was young and he kept exploring my vocal tones by provoking me with his lute and playing keys that I loved and was moved by.

He trained me extensively on songs and religious chanting. He believed in me and polished my talent from my early years, but he never forced me to take a certain path. Rather, he allowed me to choose the future that I wanted for myself. I took it slow for a long time until we both decided that, after the long period of practice, I could enter the music world. So I admit that it's both my gift and the good preparation by my dad that contributed to my career.

**In recent years, we noticed that there have been many TV programs that introduce young artistic talents, some of whom succeed through sheer luck instead of real qualifications. Have you ever thought about participating in such programs that would have introduced you earlier and faster**

**to a vastly larger audience?**

There is no denying that talent programs are a dime a dozen although many of the participants vanish as soon as the program ends. I didn't have the chance to take part in any of them because I was too busy working on my bachelor, then masters, degrees and dedicating my self to those over the past few years. Such programs go through lengthy processes such as preparation, training, voting and so on so it was out of the question until I finished school.

**Is music a life career for you, or do you want to keep it as a talent alongside working in your field of study?**

When I started singing on the radio, I considered it a pastime. However, the critics' and experts' acclaim and spirit-lifting opinions of my songs made me take the matter more seriously, so I decided to try professional singing after finishing my studies. I performed two new songs that were received well and made me more determined to become a professional, rather than remaining an amateur.

**Do you feel that being Yemeni, from a somewhat reserved society, hinders or advances your music career?**

Yemeni society is conservative, not reserved. Yet Yemenis know Yemen's musical arts well. Yemen is the source of many civilizations and cultures that have given the world their arts. People in Yemen are not only conservative in their customs and traditions, but also in their selection of the music they listen to.

**We can't help but noticing our embassy's poor performance,**

**and the failure of official media, when it comes to promoting many Yemeni talents. It's just sad that you are better known in the Gulf States than in Yemen. Do you have any plans to promote yourself in Yemen?**

I wish that the publicity of Yemeni artists would improve because they are their country's ambassadors abroad. Once news of my fresh works was released, young Yemeni artists started to contact me through Facebook offering to publish the news on Yemeni websites.

Of course, I have my own promotional plans and I intend to visit Yemen when the current situation becomes more stable in order to know my audience more closely. I also plan to visit universities there and talk to students.

**Tell us about your experience with 'melodies ambassador' Mr. Faiz al-Saeed, H.E. Sheikh Hamdan (Fazza'a) and the great Abu Bakr Salem. Was this your first collaboration with outside songwriters and composers?**

It was a priceless experience that I hold with pride. I believe it has added much to my life thanks to Allah then to the support of H.E. Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum and my noble-minded friend Faiz al-Saeed.

I recorded a number of their songs early this year. Fazza'a's enthusiasm for Abu Bakr made him talk me into adding my voice to the song Diwan al-She'ar so that two Yemeni voices would join in a song with a Yemeni tune - it was a tremendous honor to sing with an icon like Abu Bakr Salem whom I consider as both a father and a teacher.

**Does it bother you when your success is and may continue to be attributed to your father Ahmed Fathi?**

Never. I take great pride in bearing my father's name. Ahmed Fathi, the human who had dedicated himself to serving art and the lute; the lov-

ing father who wants me to be my best at all levels. But there's a point overlooked by many; numerous big names depended on their great ancestors in the music world, but they did not last long because they lacked real flair. My father's name has helped me in drawing a halo of respect and sophisticated art around me, but my skills also have supported that name I hold dearly.

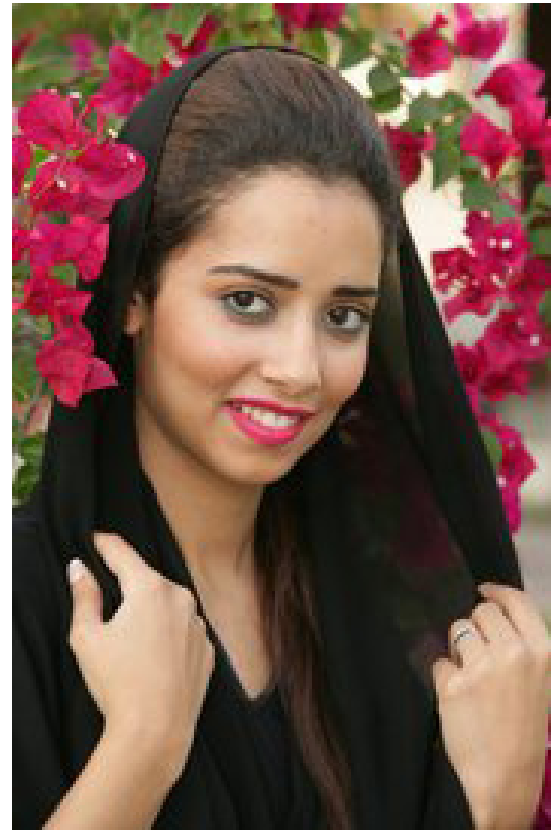
**Have you received any offers from known music companies? Or are you still waiting for your opportunity?**

Yes. Many offers have been made from major record companies, but the problem is the monopoly years; they request a minimum ten years, which I believe to be too long. So you can say that I'm waiting for the right offer from the right company. I'll keep you posted!

**It's vexing that Yemeni folk songs are both unrecognized and marginalized and their role in developing music in the Gulf is ignored. We notice that many Gulf songs claim to be "folk" without mentioning that it is Yemeni folk. What can you do to change this?**

No one can deny or ignore this matter because even the least musically cultured people understand that the word "folk" means Yemeni folk.

There is a piece of information that I'd like to share with you; there's no categorization that prefers Gulf music to Yemeni music because they both share the same



Bilquis Ahmed Fathi

accent, measures, rhythms, string instruments and even customs, traditions and colors and as I see it, there's no difference between the two schools.

**In your opinion, who is serving and promoting Yemeni music? Anyone who sings Yemeni folk songs serves the genre, especially famous musicians in the Arab world.**

**Several Yemeni singers abroad have dedicated their works to the Gulf style ignoring the necessity to revive Yemeni folk music, while Arab artists have sung Yemeni songs and made a splash. What do you think?**

It's not possible to generalize. But if we scrutinize, we will find that the music employed is a mixture of Yemeni and Gulf styles. The artists

who have sung Yemeni songs include Mohammed Abdu (an artist of all Arabs), Abdul Majeed Abdullah and Abu Bakr Salem.

**Do you believe that Yemeni songs could be introduced as world-class music?**

Any type of music can be world-class after the melodies are treated and recomposed. Speaking of which, I was enchanted a couple of days ago by a UAE band performing Ayyala folk music. Members of the band were old men who both sang and danced. The black-and-white video clip dates back to the mid-seventies, but it was processed and a symphony was added in harmony with the dancers' movements. The effect was astonishing! We can apply the same to Yemeni classic music, something that I intend to do soon.

**There's a fixed negative mental image of Yemen and Yemenis in the world. Can we expect you to prepare an international work that deals with this problem, which affects all Yemenis abroad?**

Life has its positive and negative sides, that is for sure. It's the negative that usually paint a reputation, but Yemenis also have a good reputation abroad as well. I aspire to perform international and humanitarian art works that do not side with any country or people in particular, because the message that we hold should be general, not specific. I'm planning to perform a piece of art that would prove to the world that Arabs, not only Yemenis, are not what many keep imagining them to be.

**What do you say to Yemen?**

Yemen now is in a phase of awakening and it has the desire for change at all levels. We are certain that all the difficulties Yemenis suffer will change for the better so that Arabia Felix will be happier than ever before. I promise to visit soon and celebrate with my audience in a way that Yemen has never witnessed before.

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*‘All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood’.*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,  
article 1

يولد جميع الناس أحراراً  
متساوين في الكرامة  
والحقوق، وقد وهبوا عقلاً  
وضميراً وعليهم أن يعامل  
بعضهم بعضاً بروح الإخاء.

'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.'

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 1

## USAID: 50 Years of Support to the Yemeni People

By: Gerald Feierstein  
U.S. Ambassador to Yemen

November 3rd marks the 50th anniversary of U.S. President John F. Kennedy's creation of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the 50th year of United States development and humanitarian assistance to Yemen. Whether it is vaccinating children against preventable diseases, improving crop yields, or responding to disasters, USAID has been a quiet force for progress not only in Yemen, but in 100 other countries, fostering a more peaceful world.

When the United States began providing assistance through USAID in 1961, that assistance was focused on basic education, maternal and child health, and agriculture. In 2009, amidst the growing instability in Yemen, USAID developed a strategy to address new challenges in partnership with local communities, civil society, and the private sector. Under that new strategy, USAID is now supporting rapid response projects designed to meet the most urgent needs of the Yemeni people, including agricultural infrastructure and skills, business skills and management training for small entrepreneurs, developing local capacity for health and education services, support for the engagement of government with civil society, business, women's and youth organizations, and emergency relief for displaced and conflict-affected persons.

Youth capacity, participation and



A lantern in the darkness (نور في الظلمة)

leadership are key themes for USAID assistance, with training and small grants that empower youth to play a broader role in society, the economy, and public policy. USAID increases access to basic education in underserved communities and provides training for educators, administrators, literacy specialists, and parent council members. In 2011 alone, 30,427 students benefited from USAID support to primary schools.

Today, we stand at an important turning point in Yemen's history. In partnership with the Yemeni people, USAID is transforming itself from a traditional aid agency into a modern development enterprise that is unleashing a new spirit in Yemen of innovation and results-based development.

Recently, a USAID youth project sponsored a photography training and competition in Aden. The day of the photo exhibition, a nearby

police station was bombed. While the organizers thought of canceling the event, the peer review committee made up of respected community and religious leaders insisted on going ahead with the exhibition. At the end of the competition, the winning photo showed a Yemeni girl holding a glowing lamp in the dark. The United States stands with the Yemeni people and with their vision and determination for a brighter future so poignantly captured in that photograph and in the courageous response of that community in the face of violence.

On behalf of the people of the United States, I would like to thank the Yemeni people for your partnership and friendship. As we have in the previous 50 years, the United States will continue to support your aspirations for peace, progress, and a more prosperous future for your country.

## Yemen... A league of corruption!

By: The Independents' Alliance (Youth & Patriots of the Revolution of Change in Yemen)

We feel uneasy belittling this great nation by suggesting the above title...

Perhaps what made us settle on this harsh heading was what seemed to be a non-ending struggle to win our just human rights amid a very strange fusion of realities.

In – what may sound – a slightly sarcastic manner, we will try to demonstrate a few facts which may portray how we see this “Yemeni Spring”.

### Let's see what we have:

The revolution we all longed for was immediately mutilated by crippled political parties, religious fanatics, corrupt politicians and, a suspicious merger of a military-faction whose “defected” General is still receiving his regular supplies of ammunition, fuel, food and salaries from... none other than the embattled president himself!

We have an autocrat who overconfidently continues to defy all domestic and international demands to step down peacefully after a 33-year long absolute rule.

Next, a nation claimed to be “a modern nation of civil national institutions” is amazingly reduced to a family-run army with no sign whatsoever of the other institutions!

Moreover, we're looking at a suspicious lenient approach by the 2 major regional and international powers towards the president's continuous audacity and intimidation.

This is topped by a trivial UN Security Council resolution which seems to be conveniently interpreted by each rival as being supportive to its cause and conduct.

The so called Elite or “Inner Circle” enfolding the president has broken into two destructive blocs: One of the sly, corrupt and resourceful family members and celebrities (which is free-offhandedly running all the current chaos and provoking the daily bloodshed); and the other bloc, encompassing less-harmful yet influential figures, who decided to step aside observing silently when they could have done so much to stop this deteriorating situation.

Then we have the moderate outspoken political figures and advisers to the president who have also decided to watch silently from a distance, not realizing that their silence cannot be justifiable anymore, particularly at this phase of the crisis.

On the other hand, there's the Vice President who is totally lost and clueless! Well... most people never expected much from him anyway, but maybe this shows us the sort of characters our Arab rulers prefer to have as their lawful deputies!

Regionally, our neighboring “sister”, Saudi, continues to finance both rivals of this disaster: the president and the Ahmar Brothers (as it has been doing for the past few decades). It took a while for many to realize this devious role our influential neighbor continues to play to make sure Yemen stays under its mercy and that no positive change can be achieved in Yemen beyond its control or blessing. However, if good change is an absolute neces-

sity in Yemen, then it should only be within permissible limits.

It is puzzling, though, how Yemenis manage to adapt themselves to almost any situation: Without electricity, fuel, cooking gas, security or even jobs, they miraculously manage to survive ... silently! Similar punishments, if sanctioned by governments in any other country, could have sparked multiple revolutions!

And recently, we've seen a disgraceful act by the country's leader who refrained from congratulating the first Yemeni (and the world's first Arab woman) to win the Nobel Prize. Instead, official media dared to attribute this to the president as being one of his achievements!

Finally, the “Silent” majority of Yemenis is desperate for change but confused or maybe lacks the courage and confidence to reveal its real power.

For how much longer can such confusions and intimidation go on?

Poor Yemenis... They seem to be doomed to fight on so many fronts at the same time: The regime, the opposition, the Saudi domination, while trying to remind the rest of the world that Yemen is not just a potential base for AQAP, but a nation whose women, men and even children have decided to say “no” to oppression and will never stop doing so until their dreams of a brighter future become a reality.

Some may say: “Enough of this; let's look at the brighter side of things”. We couldn't agree more. Let's all join hands to build a better Yemen for us and for our children.

Be confident; each one of you can, and will, make a difference.

## SKETCHED OPINION

By Hajjaj



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## الطاحون بُر مطحون

الغذاء المضمون... في الطاحون

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ناعم

غني بالألياف والمعادن

الشركة اليمنية للمطاحن وصوامع الغلال

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Around seven million Yemenis were food-insecure in March 2010, according to the WFP. Today, political insecurity has displaced even more people and driven them into hunger.

## Political insecurity drives Yemenis into displacement and hunger

By: Ali Saeed

**D**eliberate food shortages and price hikes as a result of nine months of ongoing conflict have driven millions more Yemenis into poverty and food insecurity, according to the UN World Food Program (WFP).

"I know several households in my area who were in a good food situation and are now unable to afford lunch," said Um Khaled, a housewife in Hodeida, 200km west the capital Sana'a.

The number of families forced to beg is on rise with food prices and regular incomes falling. The problem is intensified by the lack of jobs in the private sector job market due to the regular power outages and short supply of diesel.

"More families now knock our door everyday looking for money to buy food," said Khaled.

"Rising food prices and political instability have left millions of people in Yemen hungry and vulnerable," the AFP quoted Josette Sheeran, WFP executive director, as saying.

The average cost of Yemen's main food commodities has increased by 46 percent since January 2011 and it is expected that food insecurity will markedly expand, according to the WFP.

The months of violence and instability have pushed the already stressed Yemeni economy to the brink of collapse and forced millions of families further into poverty.

The WFP's last nationwide Comprehensive Food Security Survey, which was published in March 2010, indicated that some 6.8 million Yemenis, 13.5 percent of the population, are food-insecure.

And within this group, 2.5 million (11.8 percent) are severely food-insecure. Moreover, 9.2 percent of children between one and five are acutely malnourished, according to the WFP survey.

But figures from the 2010 survey are now far higher after thousands of Yemeni workers were laid off from their jobs as hundreds of plants and small-to-medium-sized businesses shut down.

"Tens of thousands of Yemeni workers were laid off their jobs and others were given vacations without salaries," said Mostafa Nasr, economist and chairman at the Economic Studies and Media Center. "This is

dangerous because this means new households have entered the poverty line as most workers are the main breadwinners for their families."

The 2010 WFP food security survey said that most food-insecure governorates in Yemen are Al-Dhale, Ibb, Amran and Raymah. However the recent unrest and violence have added new vulnerable areas.

"Workers whose salaries are between YR 30,000 (USD 150) and YR 45,000 (USD 200) were food-secure households, but with rising and volatile prices and unemployment they are now in the insecure category," said Mahbob Hadi, a social activist in Hodeida.

"I know many households in my area who were having three meals a day and now they only have two because the price of food is increasing," said Hadi.

The WFP is now planning a follow-up to the 2010 food security survey, scheduled to commence in November 2011. For the first time, this will also include the Sa'ada governorate, according to the WFP.

### Vulnerable groups

Before the popular uprising began in Yemen in February there were already conflict zones in the north and the south, which caused huge waves of human displacement. By the beginning of 2010, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said that the war in Sa'ada, parts of Amran and areas of Hajja in north Yemen had created around 300,000 internally displaced people (IDPs).

Amidst the popular uprising across Yemen, peace has relatively returned to Sa'ada and some displaced people were able to return home. However, new violent zones in the north and south have appeared in Arhab and Nihm with

“

**Tens of thousands of Yemeni workers were laid off their jobs and others were given vacations without salaries.**

between tribal forces loyal to the youth revolution and the Republican Guards, commanded by president Saleh's son.

The violent areas between the conflicting forces have expanded since late May to include Al-Hasaba district, in the north of the capital Sana'a. The area has seen armed clashes between the government and the tribal leader of the Hashid confederation, Sadeq Al-Ahmer, who joined the opposition's demand to oust president Saleh. The fighting has been active since May with fragile ceasefires.

And the fighting in both Arhab and Al-Hasaba has led to increased displacement as hundreds of families left their homes to return to ancestral villages. Others moved in with relatives in Sana'a but out of the conflict zone.

The largest human displacement was in Abyan, south Yemen where 80,000 people fled their homes to Aden after fierce battles between the Yemeni army and armed Islamists, who took control of governorate's capital Zunjar late last May.

### WFP operations in Yemen

The WFP currently runs five operations in Yemen, which target some 3.5 million people. These include: "Emergency Food Assistance to Conflict-Affected Persons in Northern Yemen": An emergency operation that assists some 416,800 IDPs and war-affected people in Yemen's northern areas with food distributions and nutritional support. It is offered to children aged over six months and under five years, with their mothers, according to the WFP.

Another WFP operation is the "Emergency Food Assistance and Nutrition Support to Vulnerable Populations in Yemen", which is assisting some 2.1 million food-insecure Yemenis living in 14 governorates during the country's hunger season (May - October) as well as nutritional support, "Food-for-Work" initiatives and government capacity building.

As of June 2011, this operation also began to provide full food rations to all Abyan IDPs who fled their homes Aden, numbering some 80,000 at present.

The WFP also offer food assistance to over 100,000 Somali refugees living in the Kharaz refugee camp and the urban area of Al-Basateen in Aden. This operation has been running since 1992 and it

is WFP's oldest in the country.

"Food for Girls' Education" aims to assist 802,000 food-insecure people with general food distributions. These are conducted at rural schools, where family-sized food rations are provided to attendant schoolgirls. The aim of the operation is to use food distributions as a means of promoting girls' education in rural Yemen.

And to keep running all the above operations and other partners' intervention, the WFP has introduced a special operation that arranges chartered flights between Sana'a and Sa'ada for the entire humanitarian community in Yemen.

As of July 2011, this operation also began to procure and distribute fuel to other humanitarian agencies, so that their activities would not be compromised by the ongoing fuel crisis.

### Challenges and more intervention needed

Two key challenges for implementation and intervention remain security and funding, according to a WFP official who requested anonymity.

"There are many parts of the country that are currently inaccessible to WFP and its cooperating partners," he said. "The WFP has not been able to access any part of Al-Jawf governorate since January 2011."

And shortfalls have forced the WFP to occasionally downsize the scale of its operations. For example, it was only able to conduct one of its three planned distributions for the "Food for Girls' Education" operation in 2011, according to the WFP official.

"This is because the operation was suffering from a 65 percent funding shortfall as of October 2011," he said. "Yemen is in the midst of an increasingly complex, fully-fledged humanitarian crisis," he added.

"If current levels of conflict persist throughout the country - alongside rapid hikes in food prices where the average cost of Yemen's main food commodities has increased by 46 percent since January 2011, it may be expected that food insecurity will markedly expand," he warned.

"The political insecurity has resulted in violent urban clashes between government forces and anti-government tribal elements, leading to massive and protracted displacements nationwide. These are all new shocks to an already critically food-insecure country."

## 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.

## Irritable Bowel Syndrome

**L**ast week, Mohammed had to go to Sana'a for some urgent official work. The very thought of going to Sana'a made him sick. On that day, he visited the toilet several times. He developed diarrhea, cramps and bloating of the abdomen. This was not the first time he had these problems. He had a similar experience when his daughter was sick and admitted in the hospital sometime ago. Whenever he is anxious, he has to make several trips to the bathroom. He does not know exactly what causes it. Even his doctor could not make a definitive diagnosis, but suggested that this could be due to Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).

IBS is a functional bowel disorder, and not a disease. It doesn't cause any permanent damage or progress to serious illness. The symptoms can come and go, or bother sufferers for months or years.

Our intestines are lined with muscles that contract and relax in waves called peristalsis, which push the food you eat through the system. Along the way, nutrients are absorbed, and the residue is eventually eliminated in feces. In people with IBS, normal rhythmic waves are disrupted because the nervous system is not communicating effectively with the muscles that control the gut. This results in the pain, discomfort, and embarrassing inconvenience of symptoms, which include diarrhea or constipation, cramping, bloating, excess gas, and mucus in the stool. Sometimes, the bowel contracts too much or too forcefully, so food moves through the intestines too quickly, resulting in diarrhea. Other times, the intestinal muscles contract but don't relax again, or they contract very slowly, resulting in constipation. These crazy muscle movements are behind the pain of IBS. In addition, the intestinal nerves of people with IBS are highly sensitive. Even minor bloating can cause severe pain. There is no test for messed-up intestinal waves.

IBS can be managed with appropriate diet and lifestyle changes and sometimes medications or behavioral therapy. It's important to remember that although IBS can be uncomfortable, it won't progress into anything more serious. Thanks to some new medications, the condition is less disabling than ever before.

### Triggers

There are some triggers for IBS. Food and stress are very big trigger issues. Stress can make food-triggered IBS symptoms worse. Some doctors even talk about an IBS personality, one that is noticeably tense and anxious. The first time I saw Mohammed, I was struck by his rigid body language - every move he made told me that he was a very controlled person. Mohammed was always on the run doing things during work or at home. Mohammed seldom sat down to eat his food. He never cared for hygiene - he ate wherever food was available be it home, restaurants or street vendors.

On a very basic level, eating quickly is risky because you are more likely to swallow air, which can directly lead to bloating and distention. And stress can also stimulate spasms in the gastrointestinal tract.

### Identifying trigger foods

Identifying your particular trigger foods can be difficult. Even people without IBS will have a gastrointestinal reaction to certain foods once in a while. A sensitive stomach should be treated like a fussy baby - you have to put it on a regular feeding schedule, keep it calm, and protect it from potential irritants.

Maintaining a Food Diary is the best way to identify a trigger. An elimination diet - a meal plan that avoids all potential offending foods for five days and then slowly reintroducing the same foods one by one is rewarding. Keep track of reactions to foods you are reintroducing in a food diary. Any new food has to be tried with caution.

When you have an IBS attack, consult your food diary to see which foods you ate in the previous 24 hours and start a list of your potential triggers. Keep eating normally, always noting which foods you ate in the 24 hours prior to an attack and adding new items to your potential trigger list.

### Good foods to choose

The best foods for IBS health are those that are gentle on the digestive system and encourage "smooth passage" through the intestines. Vegetables, fruit, and whole grains should be limited until your symptoms subside and you identify foods that are problematic for you.

**Soluble Fiber:** During digestion, soluble fiber dissolves in water and turns into a kind of gooey, gummy consistency just like oatmeal after it sits in a pot of water for a time. Soluble fiber, promotes gentle regularity, regardless of the type of IBS you have. Most foods high in soluble fiber are considered safe, and even beneficial, for people with IBS.

**Insoluble fiber** is tougher. It doesn't dissolve and pretty much keeps its form and hence, can be hard on the intestines of people with IBS. Insoluble fiber food moves quickly through the colon causing diarrhea.

Raw vegetables - whether rich in soluble or insoluble fiber - tend to be difficult for IBS sufferers to digest. They can often trigger diarrhea, gas, and bloating. When you're ready to introduce vegetables into your diet, better stick to cooked vegetables. You can slowly experiment by adding small amounts of raw vegetables to your diet at different times.

**IBS-friendly foods for soluble fiber:** "Koosa", turnips, sweet potatoes, green peas, "bamiya", eggplant, barley, oats, oranges, grapefruit, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, bananas, white potatoes, avocado, cooked carrots, cooked green beans, cooked "sabhana", cooked cabbage, ground flaxseed (yelsee).

Apples, peaches, plums, nectarines, pears, mango, apricots are acceptable fruits for IBS.

**Liquids:** All people with IBS should strive to drink water regularly throughout the day. If constipation is your problem, water will help keep your stools moist so they pass more easily; the soluble fiber in your diet will help too. If diarrhea is your problem, you'll need to replenish the water you lose through loose stools. Plain water and decaffeinated tea should be your first choices. Carbonated beverages are not advised because the gas from the carbonation can get trapped in your intestines, amplifying discomfort.

A few mealtime guidelines that can make your life easier:

1. Try to eat meals at approximately the same time each day to get your body used to a schedule.
2. Eat smaller, more frequent meals so you don't overload your gut at any one time.
3. Slow down - sit, relax, and take time to thoroughly chew your food. Think of it as time invested in training your digestive system to behave.





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## Sabah Hatam

By: Amira Al-Arasi

**S**abah Hatam says she has suffered a lot in order to provide herself and her children with the basic needs in life. So when she heard that the youths in Change Square had been attacked in March, she left her house to join the revolution.

Hatam is one of the female doctors working at a government hospital. She is married and has three children, aged 15, 12 and 7.

"One Saturday my sister, who also works as a nurse, phoned me and told me that there had been aggression in Change Square against youths," she said.

So Hatam went to the hospital where she works, gathered her co-workers and went to the square with a huge number of physicians, nurses and pharmacists filling four buses.

"When we arrived at the square the youths gave us a warm welcome and we began treating the wounded people." But Hatam didn't know she was pregnant at the time and the air, filled with suffocating gas, made her lose her baby and left her sick at home for a month.

She added that along with one of her co-workers, gathered unneeded medicine her hospital to bring to the field hospital in Change Square. "But when one of the national security officers discovered us, he arrested us and kept us inside one of the hospital rooms for three hours". He threatened her, saying: "If you get out of here, it will be over my dead body."

Hatam does not know who helped them but they were released. Initially they were suspended and their salaries seized, but following the involvement of their syndicate this was cut to 50% and now 20% as a punishment because of her humanitarian work.

She has also faced problems in her local neighborhood, where many people are loyal to the Yemeni president. She says that someone has been appointed to watch her; and people put garbage in front of her house, telling some women to talk behind her back, though she never responds. She has even been forced to change her children's school because of the problems they face from neighbors. Despite her difficult financial situation, so has taken them to study in a private school so they do not miss out on their education.

## Sabri Ali Omais

By: Amira Al-Arasi

**M**arried with two children, Sabri Ali Omais, is one of the volunteer nurses at the field hospital in Change Square. Omais joined the demonstrations right from the beginning, but was also an activist long before the revolution. Originally from Yafae in the south, Omais joined many protests against the post-unification marginalization of southern Yemenis.

On the Friday of Dignity, just after his midday prayer, Omais saw on television that security forces were heavily attacking Change Square. Feeling compelled to help in some way, he ignored his wife's anxious concerns for his safety and made his way to the square.

There Omais found tens of the dead and injured and hundreds more suffering heavily from the effects of tear gas. "I felt so angry," he says, "about what was happening to my people and my homeland and I just needed to do whatever I could to help."

Today, Omais still feels that same sense of responsibility to do whatever he can



Sabri Ali Omais felt compelled to help in some way

for Yemen. To fulfill what he considers to be a duty to the nation, Amees works in a government hospital and still volunteers at the square's field hospital. He is also

part of an emergency medical team that accompanies marches in case of attacks. He says: "Doing these things makes me feel happy and lucky."

## Arabish: Arabic chat language

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

**I**n order to compensate for some Arabic language sounds that are not available in the English script, Arabs have invented alternative symbols to overcome the problem. When there were no Arabic keyboards but we needed to communicate in Arabic, people devised a way of writing in Arabic using the Latin alphabet with additional symbols to replace the missing letters.

This trend began only a few years ago and spread across the internet. No one knows who invented it or who agreed that these numbers would hold the sounds they do.

But the word Arabish comes from the merging of Arabic and English. The world Arabish has already been the online Urban Dictionary and even has its own Wikipedia page.

Arabish symbols:

2 - the Hamza in the Arabic alphabet, which is the sudden A sound as in Suzaal [Su'aal] which means *question*.

3 - this represents Aiyin, the 18th letter of the Arabic alphabet, as used in assalam zaliikum [alaikum] - the Islamic greeting *peace be upon you*.

'3 - the 19th letter of the Arabic alphabet, as in '3abbi [ghabbi], which means *stupid*.

5 - represents the seventh letter of the Arabic alphabet used, in 5air [khair], meaning *good*.

6 - the 16th letter of the Arabic alphabet such as in 6aiyeb [taiyeb], which means *kind or fine*.

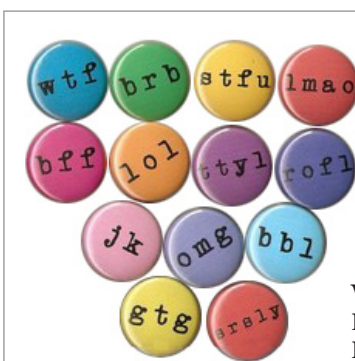
'6 - used in place of the 17th letter of the Arabic alphabet, as in '6areef [thareef or dhareef], which means *cute*.

7 - the sixth letter of the Arabic alphabet as in 7abibi [habibi], which means *my beloved*.

8 - the 21st letter of the Arabic alphabet as in 8ubla [qubla] which means *kiss*.

9 - used in place of the 14th letter of the Arabic alphabet as in 9awt [sawot], which means *sound or voice*.

'9 - the 15th letter of the Arabic alphabet as in Rama'9an [Ramadhan or Ramathan], the month when Muslims fast.



**Web chat:**

- LOL - laugh out loud
- BRB - be right back
- BTW - by the way
- BFF - best friends forever
- JK - just kidding
- OMG - oh my god

A similar, yet older trend, worked in reverse. There are two letters in the Latin alphabet that are not available in Arabic: P and V. In order to compensate for these missing letters, Arabs altered their closest letters to reflect the newcomers. P was usually replaced with the letter پ in Arabic, which is pronounced as B, but then the new character پ was incorporated to reflect P.

The same goes for V; so instead of just using ف which sounds like F, the letter ف / v was created to reflect the sound.

Although not as common, the letter ج was created to reflect the G used in George instead of in gem where the letter J would be sufficient. It is said that these letters were imported from the Persian alphabet to compensate for the missing sounds.

But the computer age hasn't just spawned Arabic abbreviations; international terms such as LOL, BRB and OMG have entered the mainstream, with the most common terms such as "laugh out loud" even being included in the latest Oxford Dictionary.

Surprisingly, terms such as "laugh out loud" and "be right back" were not coined by today's web-hungry youth. They originated in the late 80s when hackers and other techies began creating their own shorthand. But it was only in recently years, with the help of mobile phones and texting, that these terms boomed and became the everyday language of teenagers worldwide.

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