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Corruption blamed for cement factory closure

By: Imad Al-Sakkaf

TAIZ, Jan. 15 — Officials from two cement plants in Hodeida and Amran took money from a cement plant in Taiz to cover their companies' financial obligations to the Tax Authority and the Ministry of Finance, according to an official document released by the Al-Barh Cement factory in Taiz.

The document was created last April by Al-Barh manager Hussein Al-Mala'asi, and reveals that the resulting loss of revenues led to the plant's shutdown earlier this month.

"This confirms that the National Cement Department's inclination was to weaken Al-Barh's status and to prevent it from fulfilling commitments both to its workers and with the payment of foreign loans," reads a portion of the document.

According to the document, around YR eleven billion (\$50 million) was taken from revenues of the Al-Barh factory by two cement national companies, with about YR seven billion (\$32 million) going to the Amran Cement Plant and about YR four billion (\$18 million) going to the Bajil Factory. The money was reportedly used to cover financial obligations to the Tax Authority and

Ministry of Finance.

The Al-Barh cement plant was a prominent state-owned national company, which made significant contributions to the national budget.

"Regulations for national state-run companies allow any state-run firm to take revenues from other firms for their accounts on condition that the amount be paid back with interest to the firm, and this is what didn't happen," a lawyer from the Al-Barh factory told the Yemen Times.

"This is corruption, as the delay in paying back the money caused the plant's shutdown," he said.

Another document, from December 26 and issued by the manager of Al-Barh Cement Plant, criticized the department's control of factory assets, with salaries being the only exception. He accused the corporation of violating the law and said, "This is a serious development that may lead to chaos and a suspension of work at the factory."

It turned out to be an accurate forecast, as the factory completely shut down on January 4 after it was unable to meet its financial obligations, including being unable to pay employee salaries and make payments for fuel necessary to run

the plant.

The plant, established in 1990 and located 25km west of Taiz, was one of Yemen's largest public factories and had an annual output of 500,000 tons of cement and employed over 700 individuals.

In early January, about 350 workers, some of whom performed a sit-in in front of the Industry and Commerce Office, went on strike to demand the removal of factory management at the Yemen Public Cement Corporation, the government department responsible for managing national cement plants nationwide.

The demonstrating workers claimed that management had prevented them from receiving the same benefits as other workers in public factories.

They also claimed that management had intentionally pushed the factory towards failure.

Their demands included the provision of crude materials, a lack of which caused the suspension of operations at the factory several times last year.

Engineer Jalal Abu Nwaiser, head of the recently-started workers' union committee, told the Yemen Times that the factory's closure came

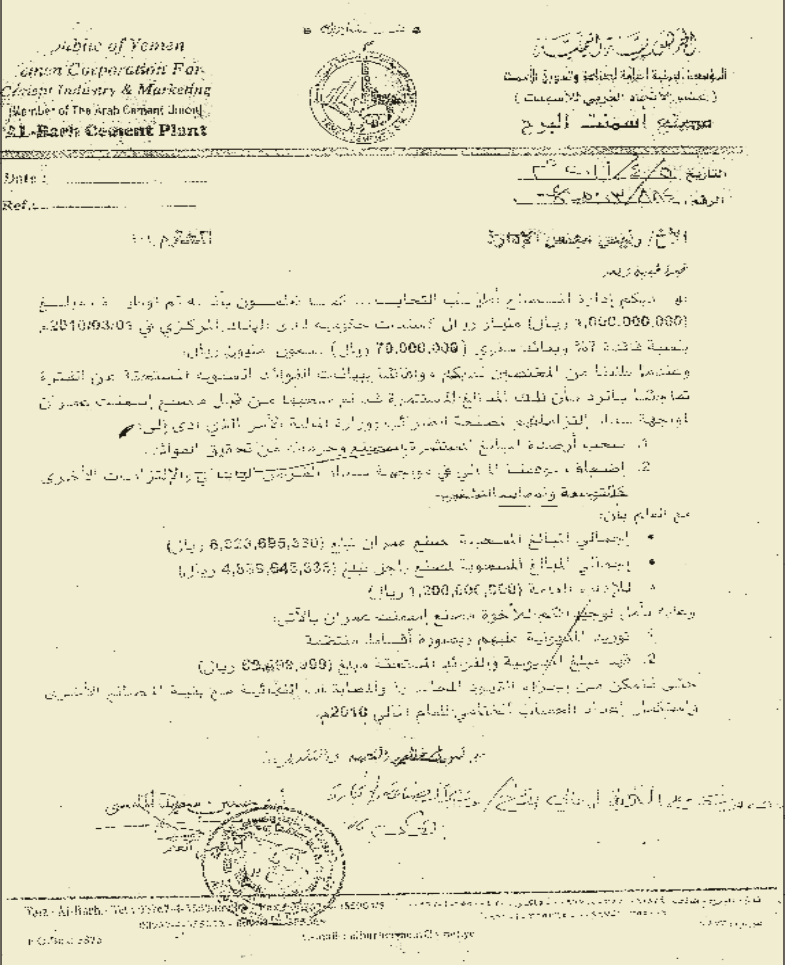
as a result of their strike and the shortage of crude materials, which were unavailable for a period of ten months.

"The workers are also protesting the interventions of influential persons running the factory," explained Nwaiser. "The manager for National Transportation and a sheikh in the area, both impacted by the strike, cut off electricity to the laborers' town, thereby exploiting the absence of factory management," Abu Nwaiser claimed.

Another source at the factory said that previous suspensions of factory operations came as a result of shortages of gas, oil and diesel, only compounded by increases in prices.

"As for the present demands of the workers, they are requesting that extra allowances be granted to their peers in other cement factories. The workers prevented the deputy manager from carrying out his own duties and thus escalated the problem," said the factory source.

He concluded by asking: "How can these workers request that the plant resume operations when they are on strike, obstructing vehicles and preventing clients from entering the place?"



The document revealing how Al-Barh Cement Plant in Taiz had to shut down after funds were taken by two other state-owned cement plants and not returned.

Al-Qaeda enters Al-Baidah's Rada' capital

By: Malak Shaher

SANA'A, Jan. 15 — At least 80 militants believed to be from Al-Qaeda entered Rada', the capital of Al-Baidah, 170 km south-east the capital Sana'a, on Saturday, according to Yahya Al-Nusairi, head of the governorate's Architecture Office.

Al-Nusairi told the Yemen Times that they first entered the Al-Ameria Mosque at 3 p.m., and proceeded to perform the afternoon prayer.

"They performed two prayers there and then delivered a lecture. After that, they seized Al-Ameria Castle," said Al-Nusairi. He added that people cannot stop anyone who wishes to pray in a mosque. He said, however, that he does not "really know how they passed the checkpoints with their weapons and rocket propelled grenades".

Al-Nusairi continued: "After we asked them not to do any harm to the mosque, nor to break the branch

of a single tree, their leader, Tariq Al-Dhahab, promised to comply."

However, according to the district-based RDA Press website, the militants' number didn't exceed 20 and that they left the mosque to stay at an old fort overlooking the district.

The Al-Ameria Mosque and school was built 500 years ago in the Islamic architectural style. Al-Nusairi said that it is currently open only for prayer, but that use of the bathrooms has been suspended because of financial difficulties.

People in

groups have not prayed together there for 15 years, as it has been under renovation.

Al-Nusairi said that the militants may have been urged on by Islah Party followers from Rada'. Members of the conservative opposition party, he continued,

may have pushed the militants to help them open the mosque.

"We do not know what their intention is," he concluded.

According to Majed Karrod, a reporter from Marib Press, the militants passed through checkpoints and "soldiers might have even greeted them." He said that Tariq Al-Dhahab was accused a couple of months ago of killing seven government soldiers.

"Al-Dhahab was among the militants who seized Zinjibar, the capital of Abyan governorate, in May. He has a battalion of 400 to 500 warriors," said Karrod.

Karrod said that people of Dhamar feel happy about "opening the mosque and the school after it hasn't been used for more than five years."

He added that the government had wanted to open the school and mosque as a tourist landmark, but that locals wanted it to continue to serve as a mosque and school.



Al-Ameria mosque was established 500 years ago. It was closed for five years before Al-Qaeda members prayed there on Saturday.

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Can the GPC survive?

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

The ruling General People's Congress (GPC) was established by President Ali Abdullah Saleh in Aug. 24, 1982. It grew to become the most powerful party in Yemen's political arena, but the GPC's power is fading due to years of corruption, policies of exclusion and poor organization.

During 2011, the GPC received a severe blow as hundreds of MPs, ministers, high-ranking officials and party members resigned, protesting against the regime's violent crackdown on Yemen's peaceful protesters.

Political analysts say that the GPC will not be able to survive, pointing out that the party was under the complete control of one



person – President Saleh.

Unlike other political parties, the GPC – which commanded a high budget by using the country's resources – lacks devoted members who strongly believed in the

party's aims, values and direction.

After mass resignations from the party, some of GPC's most loyal members intensified their criticism of other political parties and pro-democracy protesters, accusing defectors of being corrupt opportunists.

A statement released by the GPC on Feb. 27, 2011, following the first round of defections, referred to the resignations as a "purification from impurities and parasites".

Talking about those who had left the party, the statement read: "Their resignations at this time have revealed their opportunism and also let us know who our honest members are."

Fresh challenges

Now, the GPC is facing different challenges, especially after the so-called "institutions revolution" that saw dozens of high-ranking corrupt officials, loyal to President Saleh and appointed by him, forced to step down.

Those who resigned from the party say that the GPC is disintegrating, yet there are still many who insist that the GPC is not in decline.

Tareq Al-Shami, the GPC's spokesman told the Yemen Times that the GPC proved during the 2011 that it is a political party with wide popularity. He asserted that any examination of the country's political parties would show that the GPC has enormous popularity among Yemenis.

Al-Shami played down the recent collective resignations from the GPC, describing them as a positive step. "The presence of those members [who resigned] would cause

trouble for the GPC and would negatively affect its role because they don't believe in its principles. These resignations didn't affect the GPC; on the contrary, they made it stronger," he said.

He added that Yemen trusts the GPC because it has no sectarian or religious ideology. "It's a liberal party that is open to all Yemenis," he said. "It does not have a policy of exclusion."

Al-Shami indicated that the GPC has a new vision for the coming years, one that includes activating the presence of community, improving organizational formations and reflecting people's aspirations.

He urged the international community to support the party because "the international community will find that the GPC is the party that guarantees fighting terrorism and extremism".

Despite the media's fierce attack on the GPC during 2011, the "honest" members of the party have proved that they are steadfast and able to confront challenges, said Al-Shami.

Asked about the defects of the GPC, he confessed: "Over the party's history, it has failed to address society's issues or help people achieve their ambitions."

For his part, Yahiya Al-Shami, former head of the observation and inspection department at the GPC told the Yemen Times that the party was not administrated by the GPC but controlled individually.

The possibility of the ruling party surviving depends on restructuring it and its coherence, according to Yahiya Al-Shami.

"The GPC exploited the country's resources and was deriving its power from the country's wealth," he explained. "If it cannot utilize these resources any more, its members will abandon it because their political convictions are not deep."

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He indicated that the GPC is rich in excellent men and brilliant ideas in principle, but added that these are not implemented and its good men are marginalized and have little role to play.

Speaking about the impact of recent resignations from the GPC, he commented: "It shook its entities and these resignations will continue if the party loses the coming presidential election [in 2014]."

A new era
Jamal Al-Mulaiki, a researcher

and political analyst, said that while the GPC has suffered over the last year, it now has a good chance to improve its performance and evolve from a family party into a real political party.

According to Al-Mulaiki, the GPC has the ability to continue successfully because it still has honest members.

"The GPC's members should forget President Saleh and rebuild their party without him," he said. "They need to realize that Saleh's era has ended."

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Three myths of Ali Saleh's immunity

By: James Gundun
hadalzone.blogspot.com

Although instrumental in drafting the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) power-sharing agreement in Yemen, including an immunity clause for Ali Abdullah Saleh's extensive family, the Obama administration has advanced the unpopular deal in determined silence. Offering limited information since mobilizing the GCC in April, the White House and State Department eventually guided a ratification process over objections from the UN's Human Rights Council and through the Security Council. October's Resolution 2014 would reaffirm the GCC's initiative in full, while adding "that all those responsible for violence, human rights violations and abuses should be held accountable."

The distance between "will be" and "should be" equals Saleh's immunity.

1. Immunity is the quickest way to end Yemen's revolution

The White House's public argument remains unchanged despite an increasing level of exposure: Saleh and dozens of relatives must be coaxed out of power to "move Yemen forward." Immunity is critical to uprooting Saleh's network and implementing the GCC's terms before the February 21 presidential election. Perhaps immunity remains the "quickest" way to end Yemen's "crisis," however this possibility isn't as indisputable as the Obama administration argues. The natural counterargument is that immunity encourages Saleh's destructive behavior, as it has since the Saudi-bankrolled GCC launched its initiative in May.

The GCC's protection is trending towards the opposite end of the White House's stated goal: "Giving these guys confidence that their era is over." Instead Saleh has been

provided with an internationally-legitimized tool to stall his exit and maintain influence afterward. Confident that his regime survived the GCC's "transition," Saleh has taken Western and GCC leniency as his cue to act as he sees fit, whether inside or outside of Yemen. The strongman invited himself to New York City, then "postponed" his trip after suspecting that he wouldn't be received as President (returning didn't appear to be an issue). Twice he has returned from Saudi Arabia, rumored as his new vacation spot, and he will almost certainly return again before February 21.

A minority of protesters remain open to Saleh's immunity and exile so long as his regime follows, but this deal is preemptively compromised by other aspects of the GCC's initiative. Saleh has already ignored a 30-day deadline to transfer executive power to his Vice President, Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi; this "power struggle" is now being sold by Western capitals as political cover. Hadi did reach a combative state with Saleh's family, primarily his son Ahmed, while filling in during Saleh's medical leave to Saudi Arabia. Yemen's 17-year VP also submitted an immunity draft covering "all those who worked with him [Saleh] during his presidency across all civilian, military and security apparatuses."

Saleh still expects to lead Hadi's campaign as a consensus candidate between his ruling General People's Congress (GPC) and the opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP). He has no intention of turning apolitical during the ensuing two-year transitional period.

The theory that Saleh will accept immunity over his loss of power commits a dangerous psychological error by appealing to reason. Washington as a whole publicly alternates between acknowledging Saleh's renowned duplicity and pleading ignorance, leaking a story about "getting played" amid conditional

approval for an American visa. His behavior suggests that he would rather be dead than powerless, a level of stubbornness mirrored in the Obama administration's refusal to let go of his regime. Western and Gulf capitals continue to minimize Yemen's revolution as a "crisis" to be resolved ASAP, demanding an end according to their time-lines and interests.

2. Immunity is necessary to combat Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

The complimentary theory to immunity centers around AQAP, now described as Al-Qaeda's most evolved branch and one of America's greatest threats. This theory contends that, by removing Saleh and his inner circle from Yemen's equation, the country can "return to normal"; counter-terrorism units can switch from killing protesters to militants in the southern governorates. This theory may be true to an extent, since Saleh grew adroit at manipulating AQAP's growth and allegedly funding proxy jihadists. The intense battle for Yemen's Abyan, Aden and Marib governorates is a byproduct of his misrule, and Saleh's own general admitted to being abandoned over the summer. Other US technology and ammunition was redeployed against Yemen's Southern Movement (SM) or shifted to the Houthis' northern front.

If a government comes into power with no need to blackmail the international community or divert military assistance away from counter-terrorism, the US could finally join a capable partner in defeating AQAP.

Unfortunately this theory isn't much tighter than Saleh's immunity, essentially weighing Yemen's military sphere above its political and social levels. The battle against AQAP is more ideological than physical, and removing Saleh through a legitimate process would inflict greater damage than cushioning his downfall. International

headlines now read "the US defends Saleh's immunity," the literal manifestation of Al-Qaeda's ideology. Only a handful of Yemenis have joined AQAP - revolutionaries want nothing to do with Al-Qaeda - but many recruits must have America's support for Saleh at the front of their minds.

3. Immunity in the name of democracy

Navi Pillay, the UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights, made modest headlines last week after warning Yemen's GCC-approved "unity government" against granting immunity for crimes against humanity. Pillay's comments may appear honest, but directing criticism at the remnants of Saleh's regime is grossly manipulative; the UNSC is guilty of violating its own "international human rights obligations." Hadi, the GPC and JMP are simply doing what the UNSC ordered them to do in October.

No aspect of the GCC's initiative is truly democratic. Organized by Saleh and his foreign allies, GCC negotiations intentionally circumvented Yemen's youth and civil movement through the unpopular JMP. Transparency is lacking across the GCC's proposal, from its extensive negotiations to Saleh's signature in Riyadh, to February's ambiguous election and oversight of Yemen's military command. No official copy of the GCC's initiative has been released, forcing protesters to guess what happens next, nor is Yemen a GCC member. All parts of the initiative, especially its power-sharing and immunity terms, are designed to confuse and divide Yemen's opposition.

Granting this immunity has nothing to do with genuine democracy, only the political expediency of external powers.

James Gundun is a political scientist and counterinsurgency analyst based in Washington D.C.

OUR OPINION

Questioning the given

One of the grave setbacks in our education system is that as students, we are told to accept the given without questioning.

This way of learning extends to the larger life as we grow and interact within our community. When there is a bright questioning mind he or she is shunned and accused of blasphemy and many other allegations.

I just discovered that there was no Bilqis Queen of Sheba! I also discovered that Queen Arwa, whom we studied in school, is actually called Saiyda; where did the name Arwa come from?

Most Yemenis would shoot me for saying this, but there is absolutely no evidence in history that there was a Queen of Sheba let alone that her name is Bilqis. In fact, there is historical evidence that this queen could have been Persian, Turkish or even Ethiopian.

These are just two examples of things we took for fact, but with some research we find that they are common myths rather than truths.

Yet, the good news is that as humans we hunger to learn and use our minds. If we break through the first barrier of resistance to questioning it becomes a delight to question and reason and argue - it is so amazing, like a child learning to read for the first time.

I have a friend who encourages this way of thinking. He is like a treasure to me and I can't imagine what life would be like without having him around. Yet, he is very selective in whom he discusses issues with because, he rightly believes, there are those who come with fixed notions and who are not looking to understand but to convince others and prove that they are right. So it becomes useless and frustrating to argue with them.

Also there are also those "show-off" people who just want to talk in big terms and throw about theories to impress. They have a gigantic ego and massive insecurity and need people's attention to feel good about themselves. These too should be avoided if you are looking for an intellectually stimulating discussion.

Not to sound condescending but especially in Yemen you rarely get the opportunity to explore beyond the givens. There are no book clubs or cultural clubs that provide people with the opportunity to learn. So outside qat sessions, you have to create your own groups.

I sincerely encourage you all to take time at least once every week for this. We need it as Yemenis and owe it to ourselves and to our country to end the intellectual stagnation that is overwhelming our society. Try it, you will be surprised how fulfilling it is - and don't forget to share your experiences.

Let the intellectually stimulating conversations begin.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

What do Arabs want?

By: Mansour Moaddel
Project Syndicate

The self-immolation a year ago of Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi triggered a wave of popular protests that spread across the Arab world, forcing out dictators in Egypt, Libya, and Yemen. Now, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, too, seems near the end of his rule.

Together, these movements for change have come to be known as the Arab Spring. But what values are driving these movements, and what kind of change do their adherents want? A series of surveys in the Arab world last summer highlights some significant shifts in public opinion.

In surveys, 84 percent of Egyptians and 66 percent of Lebanese regarded democracy and economic prosperity as the Arab Spring's goal. In both countries, only about 9 percent believed that these movements aimed to establish an Islamic government.

For Egypt, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, where trend data are available, the Arab Spring reflected a significant shift in people's values concerning national identity. In 2001, only 8 percent of Egyptians defined themselves as Egyptians above all, while 81 percent defined themselves as Muslims. In 2007, the results were roughly the same.

In the wake of the Arab Spring,

however, these numbers changed dramatically: those defining themselves as Egyptians rose to 50 percent, two percent more than those who defined themselves as Muslims. Among Iraqis, primary self-identification in national terms jumped from 23 percent of respondents in 2004 to 57 percent in 2011. Among Saudis, the figure jumped from 17 percent in 2003 to 46 percent in 2011, while the share of those claiming a primary Muslim identity dropped from 75 percent to 44 percent.

There has also been a shift toward secular politics and weakening support for sharia (Islamic religious law). Among Iraqis, the percentage of those who agreed that Iraq would be a better place if religion and politics were separated increased from 50 percent in 2004 to almost 70 percent in 2011. Similar data are not available for Egypt and Saudi Arabia, but both countries show a decline in support for sharia. In Egypt, those considering it "very important" for government to implement sharia declined from 48 percent in 2001 to 28 percent in 2011. For Saudi, the figure fell from 69 percent in 2003 to 31 percent in 2011.

Finally, an analysis of a nationally representative sample of 3,500 Egyptian adults, who rated their participation in the anti-Mubarak movement, showed that participants were more likely to be younger single males with higher socioeconomic status, users of the

Internet, newspaper readers, urban residents, and believers in modern values and free will. They did not mind having Americans, British, or French as neighbors. Religiosity did not predict participation, while religious intolerance reduced participation.

These figures seem at odds with the results of Egypt's recent parliamentary election, in which the Muslim Brothers and the Salafi fundamentalists together gained about 65 percent of the popular vote. It remains true that religion is an important factor for Egyptian voters, as 66 percent of those surveyed "strongly agree" or "agree" that it would be better if people with strong religious belief held public office; and 57 percent consider a government's implementation of sharia "very important" or "important." Nonetheless, nationalism trumps religion. Fully 78 percent agreed with the statement that it would be better if more people with a strong commitment to national interests rather than with strong religious views held public office.

How, then, to explain the inconsistency between the survey data and Egypt's election results? First, the fundamentalists benefited from years of political organizing and activism, and thus were better able to mobilize their supporters, whereas the liberals, who led the uprising against the former regime, lacked nationwide organization and had little time to translate their newly

acquired political capital into votes. Second, the liberals' priorities were misplaced. Instead of pushing their agenda forward among Egyptians, they focused on the wrong enemy, spending invaluable time organizing rallies against the army.

Finally, the election outcome is not as bad as it appears. Liberalism has been under continuous attack for decades from religious extremists and religious institutions, and liberal organizations were stifled by oppressive rules. If the Mubarak regime had fallen under the banner of political Islam, Muslim fundamentalists would have been in a much better position to advance more exclusivist claims over the revolution and the country.

But it was the liberals who delivered Egypt from authoritarianism. This, in turn, brought legitimacy to liberalism and generated the powerful feeling of nationalist awareness among Egyptians. As a result, support for sharia declined and national identity soared. Insofar as political discourse is focused on national rebuilding and freedom, Islamic fundamentalists, in Egypt and elsewhere, will face an uphill battle.

Mansour Moaddel is Professor of Sociology at Eastern Michigan University, and has been the principle investigator of several cross-national values surveys carried out in the Middle East between 2001 and 2011.

SKETCHED OPINION By Hajjaj



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\$100m boost for Yemeni food aid



Food prices went up significantly in 2011, with the cost of bread in Sana'a going up by 50 percent in just six months, says WFP.

By: Garnet Roach

The United Nations World Food Programme has allocated \$213 million towards providing food aid for Yemenis in 2012.

This is an increase of almost \$100 million from last year, which will allow the WFP to deliver 200,000 metric tons of food to 3.5 million people.

Political upheaval and mass

protests throughout 2011 pushed Yemen into a humanitarian crisis, while an influx of refugees fleeing war and famine in the Horn of Africa only increased the need for aid.

While the UN World Food Programme (WFP) is currently assessing the impact of 2011's unrest on food security in Yemen, with the results of its research to be published in March, it was noted that "price hikes are having a crippling effect on the population."

Georgia Warner, WFP reports and advocacy officer, said, "On average, the cost of the main food commodities has risen by 46 percent since January 2011. Bread costs 50 percent more in Sana'a than it did six months ago; water prices have risen between three and sevenfold.

"Furthermore, if the rial – which currently sits at approximately 239 to the US dollar in the black market – reaches 300 to the dollar, an additional 15 percent of Yemen's citizens will be living below the poverty line," she added.

The WFP will be expanding its Emergency Food Security and Nutrition Support for the Vulnerable Population Operation, launched at the start of last year, to include 1.8 million food insecure Yemenis living in the poorest 14 governorates, especially during the May-October "hunger season."

Um Lutf of Sa'wan, Sana'a, is a mother of six. Her husband works as a street cleaner and earns just YR 25,000 or \$110 a month. Following the death of her brother, his four children also live in the family's two-room house.

"Everything has become more expensive. We were not able to buy the basics before and now it is even worse," she said.

"My husband buys a sack of wheat [50 kilograms] and tries to make it last the whole month. But sometimes we run out of cooking gas," she explained. "Usually we are hungry."

Yemen is battling myriad humanitarian crises, with the organi-

zation providing assistance to families affected by conflict in the north and the south of the country. The WFP will target more than 550,000 people, including 139,000 children under five years of age, and pregnant or breastfeeding women at an estimated cost of \$110 million.

Over 120,000 people registered as internally displaced in the southern governorates of Abyan, Aden, Lahj and Shabwa as a result of fighting between the government and armed Islamists in Abyan. The WFP has expanded its food aid to 70,000 people in these areas, many of whom have been living in schools in Aden for months.

Of its \$213 million budget for 2012, \$110 million has been allocated for humanitarian relief and \$96 million to assist vulnerable populations and Somali refugees. A further \$5 million will go towards its Food for Girls' Education program and \$2 million for its UN Humanitarian Air Service, used by aid and development agencies.

It is estimated that 7.2 million Yemenis – almost a third of the population – are food insecure, with 13 percent "very insecure." Not meeting with improved conditions, some 44 percent of the population is now "poor" according to the WFP – a 25 percent increase on 2006 figures.

In a country where 80 percent of food is imported, "a substantial part of the population cannot meet their requirements due to a lack of resources," said WFP. "Yemen has been severely affected by high food prices."

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.

Minerals in our diet

It goes without saying that the best source of nutrients comes from a healthy, balanced diet. A variety of nutrients are needed in our daily diet to keep fit and healthy. A balanced diet provide the right proportions of carbohydrates, fat, protein, vitamins and minerals, water and dietary fiber. Vitamins and minerals are crucial in energy metabolism. A diet deficient in minerals can compromise our daily performance.

Minerals are the nutrients that exist in the body, and are as essential as our need for oxygen to sustain life. In the body, only five percent of the human body weight is mineral matter, which is vital to all mental and physical processes and for total well-being. They are the most important factors in maintaining all physiological processes. They are important constituents of the teeth, bones, tissues, blood, muscle, and nerve cells. Minerals can be found in varying amounts in a variety of foods such as meat, cereals (including cereal products such as bread), fish, milk and dairy foods, vegetables, fruit (especially dried fruit) and nuts.



Minerals are necessary for three main reasons:

- Building strong bones and teeth.
- Performing and maintaining all bodily processes.
- Turning the food we eat into energy.

The minerals are grouped under two categories:

- Macro minerals (we need them in large amounts)
- Trace minerals (we need them in small amounts)

Macro minerals

These include:

- **Calcium:** It is one of the most important minerals. It is used for the formation bones and teeth, for muscle movement and for burning fat. The required quantity depends on age and gender. It is usually found in large quantities in dairy products, seafood with bones, meat, chicken, soy or tofu and green leafy vegetables. A calcium deficiency may result in frequent cramps, under-developed bones etc. However, over-consumption of proteins and sugar also leads to a calcium loss from the bones. Some studies also suggest taking calcium to lose weight.
- **Sodium:** It is very important for maintaining the fluid levels and acid-base balance of the body. Perspiration, vomiting and loose motions tend to upset the acid-base balance during which this mineral comes into the picture. It is found in small quantities in most foods, the best sources being rock salt and sea salt. People with an iodine deficiency can additionally use sea kelp which is also a good source of iron. However, sodium levels need to be moderated in hypertensives.
- **Phosphorus:** Is required for the formation of genetic material (the DNA and RNA), bone formation, maintaining the acid-base balance in the body and for running the metabolism. It is found in proteins, legumes and nuts.
- **Potassium:** It is used to maintain the water balance in the body, blood pressure levels, nerve impulses etc. Some foods that are good sources of potassium are bananas, melons, potatoes, tomatoes and orange. People with kidney problems need to be very careful about their potassium levels.

Trace metals

These include:

- **Zinc:** Is responsible for fertility, healthy skin and hair and is a part of many enzymes. Mostly found in nuts, whole grains, legumes, meat and chicken.
- **Iodine:** This is needed for a healthy functioning thyroid gland, and for the production of thyroid hormones. Many hypothyroids may benefit from consuming it in its natural forms like sea kelp. It is also found in the iodized variety of salts. Many months of iodine deficiency in a person's diet may cause goiter or hypothyroidism.
- **Copper:** It is needed for production of hemoglobin and many enzymes. It is available in many foods and also by drinking water that has been stored in a copper vessel overnight.
- **Chromium:** Is increasingly becoming popular after the connection between diabetes and chromium deficiency was discovered. It is also used for peak performance by many athletes. Chromium is mostly found in brewers yeast, non-vegetarian foods, potatoes and green peppers.
- **Manganese:** It is required for brain functions, insulin production and for the production of more than twenty enzymes. It is found in many whole-grains, nuts and oilseeds.
- **Fluoride:** Essential for dental health and mostly found in water.

Although minerals are needed to work hand-in-hand with vitamins to ensure good nutrition, we must remember that consuming any mineral excessively can interfere with digestion and the absorption of other minerals, which may lead to imbalances. Also, all minerals can be toxic in large doses. Having the proper balance of minerals and vitamins in the body can make the difference between disease or sickness and optimum health.

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وَشَرُّ النَّصْلِ إِلَّا لِلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِآبَائِهِمْ كَارِهُونَ
وَأَنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَاغِبٌ

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تتقدم مؤسسة «يمن تايمز» بأحر التعازي وأصدق المواساة القلبية إلى

الاستاذ/ حسن قاسم الزبيري

لوفاة المغفور لها بإذن الله تعالى/

ابنته

نسأل الله العلي القدير أن يتغمد الفقيدة بواسع رحمته

ويسكنها فسيح جناته وأن يلهم أهلها وذوئها الصبر والسلوان...

{ إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون }

عنهم

نادية السقاف - الناشر، رئيس التحرير

خير الدين النسور - المدير التنفيذي

The hot conversation

By: Saleem Shaker

Recently I went on a short trip to Dhaher city. When I started my journey, I got on the bus quietly. There were around 16 men and one old woman in the bus.

They were quiet and relaxing in their seats. Soon the bus became full and the bus driver told one of the men to close the door. The engines started and the bus began moving and still the passengers were silent. The bus driver turned the radio on. The music was about revolution.

That is when people started talking with one another. I was reading the last issue of the Yemen Times newspaper. I joined in the conversation with some of the Yemen Times news.

The conversation started to become louder. One of passengers was talking very loudly with his friend about the regime and the president of the country.

He swore to his friend that he and youth's revolution would judge the president of Yemen. Not only that but they would kill him. Suddenly, angry voices came from the back of the bus.

Everyone quickly turned to see where the sounds were coming from. I stopped reading and put the newspaper down. Suddenly the old woman shouted loudly at the man who was talking about the regime and president.

People were surprised at her manner with that man. The man started feeling both embarrassed and angry at her behavior.

She scolded him for talking about the president. "Don't speak a word about our president," she said. "If you speak any bad words about him, I'll kill you myself. He is the president of Yemen and he'll stay forever. And you, you're a stupid man

and the son of the stupid man."

He replied: "Hey! What happened my kind mother? Why are you reproving me? All the revolution's youth say this."

The old woman loudly cried out at him again and the people started talking together about her. Where's she from? And who is she? They looked at her. The man tried to stop her, but she shouted again and stood up from her seat to fight him.

The people cried out and sat her down.

"Respect yourself and your speech. He is a killer and a thief. So we must judge and punish him for his bad acts," the man said of Saleh.

Then the old woman couldn't stop talking. She was so angry she wanted to kill that man. "You!? You want to kill him, punish him. Never will that happen. If you'll not stop talking, I'll take you to prison or I'll call the military security units to punish you," she cried.

The man stopped talking. He turned back to talk with his friend. The old woman was still talking to herself and other people on the bus, but nobody answered. She continued for minutes before she finally stopped.

Finally someone else asked her: "Why are you angry and why do you want to fight that man?"

But she scolded him too. "You just think I'm just an old woman, but I can fight, be dangerous, catch and kill you or anyone who speaks about my soul, president Ali Abdullah Saleh," she said angrily.

The trip continued with tense conversation. The old woman suddenly stopped talking. She was looking about at the people. One of the men came back to the original subject and the fighting continued.

I was glad when we reached our destination but am still surprised at the whole incident.

Picture of the Week



"My name is Fahima, it means "all-understanding", and I am eight years old. This tent has been my home for the last three years. This is my sister, she is only four, and this is the only home she remembers. But I remember our home in Khawlan, we had rooms, a proper kitchen and even a yard where we had goats. I don't know when and if we will ever return home, but I hope it will be soon." There are around 200,000 internally displaced people like Fahima who were forced out of their homes in the Sa'ada war since 2004.

Photo by Nadia Al-Sakkaf

YFSCO Extends Its National Switch Connectivity and Service Package to IBY and TIIB

Yemen Financial Services Company (YFSCO) is pleased to announce the expansion of its National Switch connectivity and respective services to include The International Bank of Yemen (IBY), Tadhman International Islamic Bank (TIIB) respectively. YFSCO, being the sole company authorized exclusively to host the National Switch (Interbank Network of Local and International Banks in Yemen), had established connections and has been operating with four other banks being the National Bank of Yemen (NBK), the Cooperative and Agricultural Credit Bank (CAC), the Yemen and Gulf Bank (YGB), the Yemen Islamic Bank (YIB). The current bouquet of services rendered to the general public and our valuable banks customers can be briefly outlined as follows:

1. Internetworked Cash withdrawal from any ATM of any Connected Bank regardless of the Bank ID.
2. Access to screen and printed accounts brief and detailed statements.

YFSCO is a company established by 12 local and international bank-members and has been successfully operating ever since June 2009.

Mr. Aref Abdul Ghani Mutahar, YFS Chairman of Board of Directors described the services being provided by the Yemen Financial Services Company as a quantum leap that would keep pace with the latest international developments in the field.



Mr. Abdul Raqib Fari'a Salim, YFS Deputy Chairman of Board of Directors, added that such services can be considered as value-added services introduced in Yemen and are meant to secure and protect institutions' confidentiality of financial information and offer further financial electronic facilitation and hasten accessibility on daily transactions locally and internationally and make life much easier for all sectors in Yemen.



Mr. Luay Ahmed Ali Awadh

YFSCO GM, also added that the YFSCO National Switch services will bring Yemen to the brinks of advanced electronic payments countries and can be considered the corner stone towards bridging other international financial networks and switches. Additionally, the YFSCO General Manager emphasized the importance of internetworking all banks into one National Switch as being the hub through which the Central Bank can introduce and provide effectively modern payment systems.



YFSCO Vertical Industry Services:

- Connecting all interbank ATM machines and points of sale with one integrated National Switch country-wide so that the banks customers can use any ATM machine or point of sale of any bank that is connected to the integrated network.
- Managing all connected banks ATM machines, debit cards and points of sale around the clock.
- Manufacturing, printing, personalizing plastic cards and issuing respective pin-mailers.



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.. أن تصدقكم

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Fax: 675885

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Alandalus University

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Coffee Break

Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8			9			
		10				
11						
						12
13				14		15
				16		
	17	18				
19						
20						21
22						23

ACROSS
1. Fail to hit (4)
3. Applauding with shouts (8)
8. Average (4)
9. Upset (8)
11. Furniture craftsman (7-5)
13. European country (6)
14. Composition (6)
17. However (12)
20. Letters (8)
21. Man's name (4)
22. Delaying (8)

23. Fewer (4)
Down
1. Nail treatment (8)
2. Copyists (7)
4. Robberies, informally (6)
5. Cricket fielding position (5,5)
6. Woman's name (5)
7. Deep wound (4)
10. Casual (10)
12. Corridors (8)
15. Woodland plant (7)
16. Scattered (6)
18. Heather genus (5)

Sudoku

Easy

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

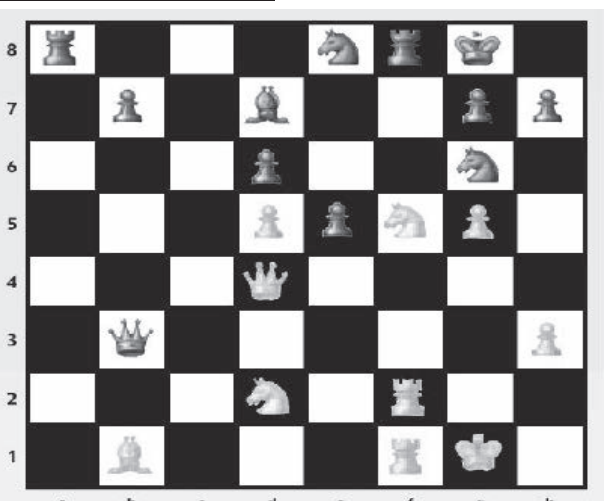
Intermediate

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

Difficult

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

Chess



Solutions

15 Anemone; 16 Stewrn; 18 Erica; 19 Lens.
Down: 1 Mantouise; 2 Schies; 4 Heists; 5 Extra cover; 6 Irene; 7 Gash; 10 Incidental; 12 Passages.
Nevertheless: 20 Epistes; 21 Doug; 22 Stalling; 23 Less.
Across: 1 Miss; 3 Cheering; 8 Norm; 9 Distress; 11 Cabinetmaker; 13 Russia; 14 Sonata; 17

Cross Words:
Chess: Ne7+
Chess: Ne7+

2	4	7	9	3	6	8	1	5	10	11	14	16	18	21
12	15	19	22	2	5	8	11	14	17	20	3	6	9	12
13	16	20	23	7	10	13	16	19	22	4	7	10	13	16
17	20	24	27	8	11	14	17	20	23	5	8	11	14	17
21	24	28	31	9	12	15	18	21	24	6	9	12	15	18
25	28	32	35	10	13	16	19	22	25	7	10	13	16	19
29	32	36	39	11	14	17	20	23	26	8	11	14	17	20
33	36	40	43	12	15	18	21	24	27	9	12	15	18	21
37	40	44	47	13	16	19	22	25	28	10	13	16	19	22
41	44	48	51	14	17	20	23	26	29	11	14	17	20	23
45	48	52	55	15	18	21	24	27	30	12	15	18	21	24
49	52	56	59	16	19	22	25	28	31	13	16	19	22	25
53	56	60	63	17	20	23	26	29	32	14	17	20	23	26
57	60	64	67	18	21	24	27	30	33	15	18	21	24	27
61	64	68	71	19	22	25	28	31	34	16	19	22	25	28
65	68	72	75	20	23	26	29	32	35	17	20	23	26	29
69	72	76	79	21	24	27	30	33	36	18	21	24	27	30
73	76	80	83	22	25	28	31	34	37	19	22	25	28	31
77	80	84	87	23	26	29	32	35	38	20	23	26	29	32
81	84	88	91	24	27	30	33	36	39	21	24	27	30	33
85	88	92	95	25	28	31	34	37	40	22	25	28	31	34
89	92	96	99	26	29	32	35	38	41	23	26	29	32	35
93	96	100	103	27	30	33	36	39	42	24	27	30	33	36

White plays and wins in the 3rd move

No Qat Day provokes debate and action

By: Nadia Hadash

The very idea behind the January 12 "No Qat Day" has left a number of Yemenis feeling inspired, resonating with those who see qat chewing as a waste of time, money and water.

The campaign started as a tweet. Hind Al-Eryani found herself increasingly annoyed when hearing others talk about Yemeni people in general – and the country's youth in particular – as representing the world's foremost qat addicts.

What developed was an idea to start a simple campaign against qat. With the help of her followers on Twitter, Al-Eryani chose January 12, a Thursday, to put her idea into action.

"I didn't select January 12 for any specific reason. But it was a Thursday and, as we know, most young Yemenis prefer to hold qat sessions on Thursdays," she said.

Her campaign received a strong response from enthusiastic youths on Twitter and she proceeded to



open an "event page" on Facebook.

Only hours later, the Facebook campaign page had garnered a large number of people – more than 3,000 – in support of the idea.

The idea soon spread throughout a number of social networks. NGOs positioned against the practice of chewing qat, such as the Organization of Generations without Qat and

Awsat Alshabaka, responded to the campaign as news.

It was at this point that Al-Eryani began to take her own idea more seriously. Arab intellectual Azmi Bishara and Yemeni Nobel Peace Prize winner Tawakul Karman were among the first supporters of the campaign. Both expressed their strong support for and belief in the campaign on their social networking pages.

Journalist Khaled Al-Hamadi wrote on the campaign's Facebook page that "this campaign proves that the new generation is able to make political and social changes."

Today is "EID"

"We should be responsible enough to control ourselves and follow the right path. Improving and developing our country starts with such good ideas. I totally support the January 12 campaign – let Yemen be without Qat forever," wrote Facebook user Abu Amjad.

Said another Facebook user, Basem Al-Shebani, "Although it's my special day, I promise to commit and not chew on Thursday."

Qat chewer Abdul-Aziz Al-Slami shared with others on Facebook how he planned to spend the day without qat.

"I'm going to a wedding on Thursday evening. I won't chew, but I will keep silent; otherwise, they will kick me out if they learn that I'm supporting the campaign," said Al-Salami.

"He decided to show support and not chew qat, but someone brought

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Children denied the right to education



Entertainment for young marginalized girls in Al-Mazraq camp helps distract them and alleviate their suffering. Conflicts in Yemen have led to thousands of children being displaced.

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

Yemeni children are being denied the right to education and protection from violence, abuse and exploitation, Save the Children has warned.

Sana Johnson, the regional director of Save the Children, said in a press conference on Tuesday that the lives of children have been disrupted and psychological traumas inflicted as Yemeni children see and hear the conflict around them.

"The armed conflicts and civil unrest in several parts of the country means that children are denied their basic rights to education and protection," said Johnson.

She added that even those children who have not been directly caught in violence or had to flee their homes are being affected, as many schools remain closed.

Fatima Al-Ajel, advocacy and communications officer at Save the Children told the Yemen Times that

Yemeni children really need psychological support to alleviate their suffering.

Al-Ajel said that 2011 was the worst year in the life of Yemen's children. "I've seen many children who suffer from intractable psychological problems.

"They have seen horrible scenes. Some of them saw their parents dying in front of their eyes," she explained. "They are now frightened, unconfident and keep crying."

According to Al-Ajel, psychologically damaged children need to play to forget their traumas. "Unfortunately, those children have been abused by all parties. Their health, education and nutrition have been negatively affected because of recent violations against childhood," she said.

She added that Save the Children opened a Child Friendly Space in 70 schools hosting internally displaced people (IDPs) in Aden and Lahj in 2011.

Tens of thousands of people fled

from fierce fighting between armed men and government security in Abyan governorate this year, with many forced to live in Aden's schools.

Save the Children responded to this huge number by providing women and children with medical treatment, health education, school uniforms and other requirements.

But still, many children in Yemen have had very sporadic schooling over the past year with around 200 schools used for purposes other than education such as hosting IDPs and being used as barracks by fighters, while another 300 have been damaged in armed conflict, according to Save the Children.

Last year, UNICEF urged all parties to meet their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and international humanitarian law and take all necessary steps to protect children from the direct and indirect effects of violence.

However, fighting has yet to stop and many displaced children still cannot return homes.

him some high-quality qat. So now he's confused," quipped Facebook user Salem Ayash.

Ahmed Qhurab, a sardonic Yemeni columnist, said on the Facebook page that he bets qat sellers will tremble in their markets after hearing news of "No Qat Day."

Najah Al-Qadi commented via Twitter that "This day will be special for all Yemenis – supporters or not – because it recorded a new step towards Yemen without qat."

At the same time, other Yemeni social media users have responded negatively to the campaign.

A Facebook user named Zakaria Alrabe'a said, "I had a nightmare yesterday. It came when I thought of not chewing qat on Thursday."

"I must chew qat in order to keep my head – if I don't chew on Thursday, I may lose my temper," joked Ali Awidah on Facebook.

Yet other users questioned how else they could spend their time amid frequent power outages.

"Some friends and I will take on the challenge. I have no idea where we will spend our day since there is no electricity at home. We may move around until our feet get tired, but we are in," wrote Marwan Al-Monajee.

Anti-qat activist Ahmed Al-Nakhtha suggested that qat chewers spend the day at Sana'a's Change Square and support each other in a shared effort to abstain.

The "No Qat Day" campaign was held in both Sana'a and Taiz.

Although the campaign has not made great success since supporters of the campaign do not exceed thousands of Yemenis, the impact that the 12 January idea left will remain in minds of every Yemeni dreaming to have country free of qat.

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