

Abyan's displaced people take risk and return home

By: Fuad Mussed

ABYAN, Jan. 18 — Around 2,500 displaced people from Abyan governorate, south Yemen, have returned home to Zunjubur in a collective march of vehicles.

They had fled to Aden last May in a bid to escape fierce fighting between armed Islamists and the Yemeni army, and were forced to live in a number of the city's schools.

However, their return took place amid a worsening humanitarian and security situation, with battles continuing in several areas of Abyan between the army and Islamists — known as Ansar Al-Sharia, or Sharia Supporters, but thought to be Al-Qaeda.

Nadeer Kandh, a journalist from Abyan who accompanied the convoy, said the armed group held a welcoming festival for people returning home to Zunjubur, the capital of Abyan, 55 km east of Aden.

Abyan's internally displaced people (IDPs) attempted to return to the city two weeks ago, but the armed Islamists prevented them, forcing them back to Aden.

And while some citizens are happy that they were allowed to return this time, others do not trust the occupying men.

"I'm afraid that this is just a deception by the armed group to attract other displaced people home, so they can enforce their Islamic state," said Abdulleh Mohamed, a university student of Abyan.

The armed men are currently running two main areas of Abyan; Zunjubur, the capital of the governorate, and Ja'ar city, after taking control of both in May 2011.

The brutal battles, which erupted after the men took over the two cities, left thousands of people displaced and living in dire conditions in Aden and Lahj. Violent confrontations between the Islamists and government forces also caused huge damage to public and private buildings, particularly in the capital Zunjubur.

Local citizens told the Yemen Times that Ansar Al-Sharia has been running government institutions, including the local authority and education system.

They have been also imposing their own Islamic system on citizens. In schools for example, students now chant religious songs instead of singing the national anthem.

"The atmosphere of panic is still prevailing the city of Zunjubur due to ongoing battles and this is why the rest of the displaced people — estimated at thousands — prefer to stay in IDP camps in Aden's rather than risk return," explained Mohamed.



Around 2,500 of Abyan's displaced people have returned home amid insecurity and a humanitarian crisis in Zunjubur, though many thousands remain in Aden.

"People's homes are in a bad condition and some houses have been completely destroyed," he added.

"Zunjubur has turned into a ghost town after people fled their homes, shops were shut down and the electricity is off."

Abyan's displaced people who remained in Aden expressed their misgivings about returning due to the lack of security and what they deem an unfinished war.

Um Mohamed, one of the displaced women, lives with her children in a school room in Crater district, Aden. She said it will be difficult for her to return home since their house in Zunjubur was completely destroyed in the fighting.

"Despite the bad situation we live in here in Aden, the journey home is not yet safe," said Um Mohamed.

For his part, Khaled, also displaced in Aden, said his relatives — who returned to Zunjubur — are complaining of a lack of amenities. "Their homes have been destroyed and there is an urgent need for basic food since shops are all closed," he said.

The city is experiencing repeated power outages, no clean drinking water and no transportation in addition to the insecurity residents face.

Returnees said the armed men share dominance of Zunjubur with some units of the Yemeni army, adding that the distance between military units and armed men in some areas is no more than a few meters so clashes can easily erupt unexpectedly.

"A number of streets and neighborhoods are blocked because of

landmines that could explode at any moment," said Kandh.

However, a member of Ansar Al-Sharia played down the current situation. "Zunjubur is calm nowadays and Ansar Al-Sharia has welcomed the returnees to their homes and showed their cooperation in facilitating all the services they need," said Abu Tamam.

"[Ansar Al-Sharia] has also supplied returnees with water and promised to solve the power outages," he added. "People didn't flee Zunjubur because of mistreatment by Ansar Al-Sharia, but because their homes were destroyed by government's forces," he claimed.

Around 40,000 displaced people live in schools — often without water or electricity — in Aden and Lahj, and families complain of a shortage in the number of beds and blankets, according to the UN's Development Programme (UNDP).

The displaced people also accuse the government's Camps Executive Unit of manipulating IDP funds and relief aid, claiming that the unit receives funds and relief assistance from international and local organizations but the IDPs see only little benefit.

While he recognized that IDPs in Aden are suffering and not accessing enough food aid, Wadah Hamas, supervising officer of aid distribution in Aden, stressed that the Camps Executive Unit was not confiscating food aid.

"The response of aid organizations is slow and that is why people complain to us since we have to distribute one camp's share to many," he said.

Read more on page 3.

Al-Qaeda affiliates free prisoners

By: Abdulkareem Al-Nahari

AL-BAIDA, Jan. 18 — Some 365 prisoners in Al-Baida governorate's Rada' district were freed on Monday by a group believed to be Al-Qaeda affiliates.

According to a Republican Guard source in Al-Sawadia who requested that his name not be revealed, this group is the same as that which surrounded the Republican Guard in Yafe' in early 2011.

According to locals, the prisoners were in Rada's central prison, and 165 of them had been sentenced to death.

The group — which calls itself Ansar Al-Sharia — killed two soldiers at a checkpoint on Monday, kidnapped 11 more, and left with two military vehicles.

Persons from Rada' told the Yemen Times that security forces are still looking for the prisoners.

Some perceive that the freeing of prisoners may be part of plans to assassinate government figures.



Armed men, thought to be Al-Qaeda, have taken control of Rada' in Al-Baida and set up their own security checkpoints.

Ansar Al-Sharia said that they appointed Al-Dhahab as their leader and that they want to declare Rada' to be an Islamic emirate.

Al-Dhahab, who entered Rada' on Saturday, appeared on the BBC saying that he only wanted to stay in Al-Ameria mosque.

According to the TV interview, Al-Dhahab said that he did not seize Rada'; rather, the move was

simply about refusing injustice. He said that he had dealt with political parties in Yemen such as the Socialist, Islah and General People's Congress parties, but he did not feel there is any use for them.

Al-Dhahab is the son-in-law of Anwar Al-Awlaki, the American-born Muslim cleric and leading Al Qaeda's affiliate in Yemen.

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Ansar Al-Sharia in Yemen

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

Usually it is Al-Qaeda that comes to mind when talking about counter-terrorism in Yemen. While other relatively new and less well-known groups took advantage of Yemen's insecurity during 2011, "Ansar Al-Sharia" appears to be making the most gains.

A name that has become increasingly familiar, Ansar Al-Sharia, which translates as "Sharia Supporters", has spread through the southern part of the country, making governorates such as Shabwa and Abyan its stronghold. The group can also now be found in the southern port city of Aden.

"We can easily tell if someone belongs to Ansar Al-Sharia or not as they talk together in classic Arabic and they always mention the world 'prince' in their talks," said Salem Mohammed, a resident of Aden.

Al-Qaeda's new face

Tribal sheikhs, headed by sheikh Hussein Ben Othimeen, did not see the group itself as a threat when they gathered in May and expelled Ansar Al-Sharia from their districts, fearing instead that the region could be exposed to US drone strikes.

"Although they are nice, and distribute good books, we cannot risk exposing our area to American drone strikes because they suspect Ansar Al-Sharia of being Al-Qaeda," said Ben Othimeen.

However, Abdalrazaq Al-Jaml, who researches Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), told the Yemen Times that Ansar Al-Sharia is simply another name for the group's branch in Yemen.

"This new name comes as a result of Al-Qaeda's new strategy in the area; letting themselves be seen but also seeking dominance," said Al-Jaml. "Before, they used guerilla warfare but now they are producing a new brand by having a new name and providing services."

Al-Jaml explained that Al-Qaeda, now under the name of Ansar Al-Sharia, plans to take over governorates, such as Abyan and large areas of Shabwa, and run them as an Islamic mini-state.

"They changed the name to overcome Al-Qaeda's ruined reputation when dealing with locals," he added.

Al-Jaml also said that they chose to operate in areas where they already have Al-Qaeda branches, making their work easier.

"Many Al-Qaeda members are from Abyan, which makes it easier for them to work there now," said Al-Jaml. "And they chose Shabwa because people there have been badly affected by the use of American drone strikes that killed their sons, so could be more sympathetic."

He added that Al-Qaeda's number three, Abu Yahya Al-Laibi, talked in favor of Ansar Al-Sharia in a video posted on Facebook a month ago, indicating, at the very least, the group's support for Ansar Al-Sharia.

Questioning the government

Although the Yemeni government has been fighting the militants for eight months, questions have been raised over some of its "victories". For example, the government's 25 Mika Brigade which was under siege by Ansar Al-Sharia for four months until it was declared in September that the troops had finally been freed.

However, Al-Jaml said that reports of the victory were false; that the government had not succeeded. He says he was present in Zinjibar, Abyan's capital, the day the reports were released and saw no evidence of a government victory.

Such conflicting reports have in turn led to questions over the government, and more specifically, Saleh's role in selling terrorism.

Some analysts have begun discussing the possibility that Al-Qaeda was founded by Saleh's regime to

create a threat to the international community and gain financial support for "counter-terrorism" operations, but Al-Jaml dismissed that argument.

"Ali Abdullah Saleh exaggerated Al-Qaeda's impact in Yemen, but to some extent the danger was real," said Al-Jaml. "Saleh took advantage of their existence but he does not direct them."

Fierce fighting

As Ansar Al-Sharia's strength began to grow, the Yemeni government began taking steps to force the militants out of Abyan and Shabwa. The fighting forced tens of thousands to flee from Abyan into Aden and Lahj over the past eight months, where they lived live refugees in local schools.

According to the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), over 120,000 people are now registered as internally displaced people (IDPs) in the southern governorates of Abyan, Aden, Lahj and Shabwa.

"WFP has expanded its food assistance to around 70,000 IDPs who have fled the ongoing conflict in Abyan governorate and are now living in school buildings or with host families in Aden," it said.

After twice attempting to return home last month, some 2,000 people were recently allowed to go back to Abyan, with the permission of Ansar Al-Sharia, which had previously said it was too unsafe to do so.

Sharia law

When residents began to return, it was reported that Ansar Al-Sharia greeted them with drinks, cookies and even slaughtered a number of cows for people to eat. The group has also been providing a number of services to locals in the areas it occupies, including security on rural roads, protecting checkpoints and distributing books on Muslims behavior.

"Ansar Al-Sharia and Al-Qaeda



Some 2,500 IDPs, who fled fighting in May and were forced to seek refuge in Asen, returned to Zinjibar this month.

are not atrocious beings from some other planet," Wagdi Al-Shabi, told the Washington Post. "We found them to be people like us, of flesh and blood. What makes them better is their belief and their jihad for the victory of Islam and to help the less fortunate."

The services that Ansar Al-Sharia is providing, which should in fact be provided by the government, are helping to boost their popularity in the areas they occupy, Al-Jaml explained.

"They distribute water for free, they also distribute food, and of course these are things that the Yemeni government does not do," said Al-Jaml.

However, the Washington Post reported that Ansar Al-Sharia also imposes strict Islamic law in Abyan, citing residents who say militants have cut off the hands of people convicted of stealing, and executed some people convicted either of murder or of spying for the Yemeni army.

Al-Jaml explained that Al-Qaeda

took advantage of the Arab Spring events, with Yemen's insecurity over the last year providing the opportunity they had been waiting for.

Al-Qaeda's future in Yemen

Fares Ali, a journalist who investigated Ansar Al-Sharia, told the Yemen Times that some government figures actually attempted to reconcile with Al-Qaeda and end the fighting in the south of the country.

"Ansar Al-Sharia asked for safety in return for becoming normal citizens, but under one condition; that the locations they control are given to a neutral party [not the government]," said Ali. He claimed that each time a handover was prepared, the "neutral party" was attacked by air strikes.

Such attacks happened three times, according to Ali, leading to the deal being abandoned and the neutral party, which wished to remain anonymous, withdrawing. Ansar Al-Sharia has since accused Yemeni National Security, the former Minister of Defense and Saudi

and American intelligence of being unwilling to resolve the situation. Ali also added that when the Coast Guard Authority withdrew from Shaqra port, it became an easy hit for Al-Qaeda to take over and use to import weapons.

"It is hard to predict Al-Qaeda's future in Yemen," said Al-Jaml, "but what should be known is that the necessity of quashing them is huge and a regional and international demand." However, he added that the government must now find new ways to fight Al-Qaeda.

"Last year Al-Qaeda established a strong military presence that will be difficult to break, and that, combined with the services they provide for people, making them popular with locals, will make them even harder to fight.

"If the government wants to get rid of Al-Qaeda they will end up having to fight locals who now support them, so they must abandon the traditional ways of fighting Al-Qaeda and come up with a new strategy."



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Intense conflict is on the cards

By: PV Vivekanand
Gulf Today

The Yemeni government's endorsement of an amnesty "against legal and judicial prosecution" for the supposedly outgoing president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, and all his aides "who worked with him in all government, civil and military departments during the years of his rule" flies in the face of not only the people of Yemen but also the international community.

The move came two days after a declaration by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay that granting amnesty to Saleh and his cronies would be against international law. Ironically, the UN position is likely to strengthen the embattled strongman's apparent resolve to torpedo the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative that set the ground for a peaceful transition of power. Saleh could even use Pillay's argument as a pretext to hold onto power while he continues to harbor hopes of a comeback and attempts to crush the anti-regime

rebellion using his powerful security forces.

The draft law for amnesty, "which applies to all acts committed before it is issued," now goes to parliament for ratification, but there is no assurance that the Saleh regime would accept that its continued crackdown on protesters is not covered under the deal.

Yemenis are appalled at the all-inclusive amnesty, which Saleh has used to secure the continued loyalty of his cronies who could also face trial in its absence.

Although he signed the GCC initiative in November and agreed to transfer power to his deputy, Vice-President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, Saleh has shown every sign that he has no intention to let go of dominating control over his country.

He has only nominally stepped down, but retains all his presidential powers. Saleh's son and nephew control the strongest security forces of the country and Hadi, who has always lived under the president's shadow, is in no position to assert authority. Hadi himself has

accused Saleh of interference in the state's affairs and warned that he would leave the capital if his one-time boss continues to exercise presidential powers.

Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) is part of the coalition government sworn in by Hadi, and his close loyalists remain in key positions in government (although several of them were forced out in recent weeks in minor blows to the beleaguered autocrat).

The state media continues to refer to Saleh as president and to carry reports on his movements and decisions as head of state.

That is the status quo pending parliamentary approval of the GCC-brokered agreement that should come in 90 days from the signing of the November deal.

In her comments on Friday, Pillay pointedly noted: "International law and the UN policy are clear on the matter: amnesties are not permissible if they prevent the prosecution of individuals who may be criminally responsible for international crimes including war crimes, crimes against humanity, geno-

cide, and gross violations of human rights."

She also reminded the Yemeni parliament that an amnesty for Saleh would be in violation of Yemen's international human rights obligations.

The UN rights chief's call is unlikely to persuade the Yemeni parliament, which is dominated by the GPC, to vote against the amnesty deal. If anything, it would be passed with a strong majority since those who are anxious to see the long-time strongman out would also be voting in his favor.

The tricky part is that after the vote Saleh could try to buy more time by citing the UN position and arguing that he needs further guarantees that post-revolt Yemen will respect the amnesty deal and he and his cronies will not be prosecuted.

His challengers insist that Saleh should not be allowed to get out of the country and should be put on trial for "war crimes and crimes against humanity" at the International Criminal Court.

Obviously, the mercurial Yeme-

ni leader, who has always thrived on playing one against another throughout his 33-year reign, would turn to the GCC and the US, which supports the deal for power transition. He could even hinge his compliance with the agreement on such a guarantee that no one would be able to provide. And that would mean continued strife in the country since Saleh would certainly use everything in his power to fight off his foes while also eyeing how best he could wave the Al-Qaeda card at the US. He has always played on US concerns that his departure from power could lead to Yemen being controlled by Al-Qaeda forces who would turn the country into another Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

In fact, he ceded territory to Al-Qaeda-linked militants in the south in the second half of last year to strengthen that perception while he was in Saudi Arabia receiving medical treatment for wounds he suffered in an attack on his presidential compound in June.

Until late last month, there was an expectation that Saleh would leave for the US and could even remain

there under some arrangement made with Washington. However, the administration of President Barack Obama did not seem to be very enthusiastic over the idea of hosting a former head of state accused of killing his own people. The US State Department repeatedly said one-time ally's request for a visit for medical treatment was under review before the Yemeni leader said he had changed his mind and was not leaving the country. His aides described the decision as response to concerns that his departure could be bad for Yemen and the ruling party.

However, his foes argue that his continued grip on power is the source of instability in Yemen and Sunday's government approval of the amnesty deal would only fuel their anger. They will not allow Saleh to continue his oppressive reign, directly or by proxy, under whatever pretext.

It is difficult to see how the two positions could be reconciled. Short of a miracle or a dramatically unexpected development, an intensified conflict is on the cards for Yemen.

The Arab intellectual: The problem or the solution?

By: Mshari Al-Zaydi
Asharq Alawsat

Ever since the fragility of Arab culture and the lack of awareness regarding the concept of the civil state in Arab society became apparent following the [parliamentary] election results that brought religious currents to power, one question has continued to be raised, namely: what has happened to our centuries of efforts regarding Arab culture?

Have our efforts with regards to developing education, encouraging contact with global cultures, instilling the values of art, beauty and tolerance, and consecrating the idea of citizenship and the state, completely vanished?

Were all these efforts in vain when – for the first time and without restraint – the Arab societies

could express their real "desire" for the optimum model of righteous rule? Was it in fact their dream for the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafi Al-Nour Party in Egypt, Rached Ghannouchi in Tunisia, and the likes of Al-Zindani in Yemen, to rise to power?

Were we Arabs, over the past decades and ever since the withdrawal of the colonialists, the dawn of independence and the establishment of Arab states at different times, deluded into thinking that we would someday experience an Arab [civil] state and Arab modernity?

Where are the principles established by Jamal-Al-Din Al-Afghani, Rifa'a El-Tahtawi, Ahmed Lutfi el-Sayed, Talaat Harb, Taha Hussein and Qasim Amin in Egypt, and Khairuddin Al-Tunisi, Abd Al-'Aziz Al-Tha'alibi, Tahar Haddad, Tahir ibn Ashur, Habib Bourguiba and Hisham Ja'it in Tunisia?

Numerous "intellectuals" in Egypt, Tunisia and other Arab states were left speechless and completely bewildered when [after the recent parliamentary elections] they finally sensed the true size – or lack thereof – of their social weight and the depth of their influence in Arab societies.

They felt like a deceived husband, who after a considerable period, wakes up and finds out they have been living a lie. Some intellectuals have overtly expressed their bewilderment and grief, whereas others have attempted to soften the defeat. They tried to alleviate it either by praising democracy and describing what happened as a passing phase, or by saying that in fact the Arab societies have a great deal of awareness and are seeking to test the Islamists and refute their claim of being an eternal victim deprived of rule and authority (of course, it is

a misconception repeated by many that the Islamists have never attempted to seize power in the Arab world).

However, the stark reality is that there has been a retreat from the concept of a civil and modern state that institutionalizes and guards secular social harmony between society's different components, away from sectarian divisions, religious mobilization and patriotic fervor.

Such a concept has proven unsuccessful in the Arab world, in comparison with the discourse of historical, religious nostalgia. We have seen examples ranging from the Taliban in Afghanistan to Hamas in Gaza, Al-Bashir in Sudan, and Ahmadinejad and Khamenei in Iran, all with slight differences, here and there. As for Erdogan in Turkey, his is a special case that has no parallel, and furthermore it is still an open experiment yet to reach a decisive conclusion.

In any case, the argument has now been revived once again about the role of Arab intellectuals, in the past as well as in the future, what is required of them, and how exactly do we define them?

In November 2009, I remember when Prince Khaled Al-Faisal, Chairman of the Arab Thought Foundation, alongside other Arab intellectuals whom he met during the Foundation's conference held in Beirut, came to the conclusion that there was a dire need for an Arab cultural summit, along the lines of an economic summit. This was because "the cultural crisis is no less dangerous to Arab society [than the economic crisis], with different manifestations and various effects and implications", according to the speech Prince Khaled delivered in front of the then Secretary-General of the Arab League Amr Moussa.

Perhaps this call may seem extremely optimistic about the Arab states' actual desire to promote their cultural sphere, develop Arab culture, and address its problems. Besides, the call also seems to take for granted that Arab states care about cultural issues to an extent that necessitates a summit to be held for this purpose.

It is indisputable that the issue of culture is highly significant, and that the current state of Arab culture is deplorable, exposed to sufferings and abuse. This is apart from the considerable controversy and elaborate discussions regarding the terminology and frameworks for the definition of culture and the intellectual, discussions and even quarrels about the Arab intellectual's role in public affairs, and the nature of his relationship to power.

The controversy relates to the intellectual's role as someone who creates or spreads political arguments and concepts, and to what extent the intellectual is a reason behind the Arab nations' current problems and deplorable conditions. This is because Arab culture's main proponents in the past, and perhaps in the present as well, were Arab nationalists, those on the left-wing, and Islamist intellectuals. In fact these all served as intellectual and publicity support for Arab nationalist officers, or those from the left-wing or Islamist groups (i.e. in Libya, Sudan and South Yemen), in order for them to rise to power and curb genuine development. This lack of development has now prompted Arab intellectuals to meet in Beirut and demand that Arab heads of states hold a separate summit to address cultural problems!

It is those intellectuals who caused the problem in the first place, and they are now meeting to complain about it. In fact, Michel Aflaq, Zaki Al-Arsuzi, Akram Al-Hawrani, Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, Sati' Al-Husri, Azmi Bishara and Antun Saadeh are all examples of intellectuals who engineered politics in the Arab world, alongside other Arab cultural elites who nurtured the political awareness upon which Arab ruling regimes are propped up.

These are the intellectuals of Arab politics, and the question here is: Is the Arab intellectual the solution, or is he the problem?

We have mastered the powerful rhetoric of resistance [to Israel], and the defiance of the Muslim nation, and we excel at revealing the plots and tricks of other nations that are designed to undermine us.

However, only a few of our Arab intellectuals have tried to rectify the defects of Arab societies themselves, fight the battle of religious enlightenment, remedy genuine social ills, and adopt stances to expose underdevelopment, just as Taha Hussein, Qasim Amin and Abd Al-Rahman Al-Kawakibi did in the past. Some intellectuals have engaged in battles against Arab regimes, either in alliance with local popular trends or from their exile in the West, but only a few, like Riyad Al-Turk in Syria, have fought a fierce battle against the regime from within the walls of its repression. These positions are worthy of praise and deserve much of our moral admiration.

However, the question becomes more pressing when we look for those who have led the battle against the mentality and characteristics of backwardness, from within Arab societies themselves. Those who fought for the issues of women, against sectarianism, the total separation between authorities, the modernization of jurisprudence to fit the requirements of our age, and even upgrading discourse itself, as our predecessors did with great courage.

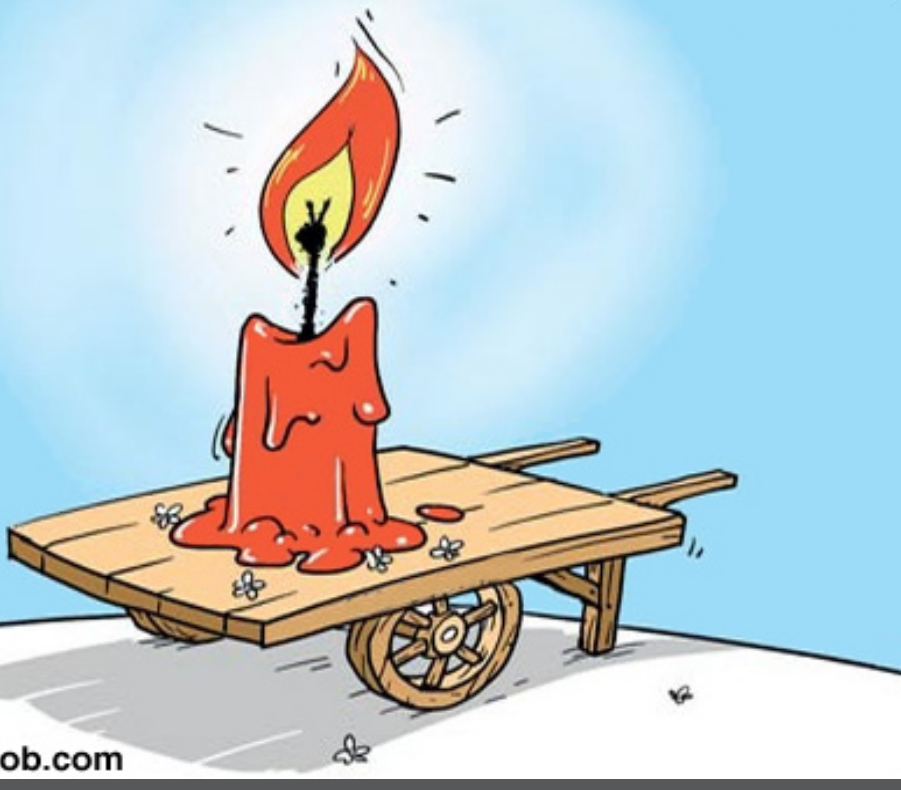
Only a handful of names have dared to confront the enormous Arab ego that has formed our collective Arab awareness.

On the contrary, we find that numerous Arab intellectual stars today are somewhat elusive, especially following the results of the Arab Spring, trying to circumvent crucial turning-points and aiming to avoid the furnace that has been placed below them by the public. The public has instead been mobilized by those who played on the strings of their religious conscience.

It is for this reason that the role of the so-called intellectual in our Arab world has now become superficial; the intellectual has become a flavorsome food with no real impact when placed upon a larger dining table. An Arab intellectual who fails to engage in the battle for awareness, or who declines to delve deep into culture or the layers of the public mind, is a bland color; a loud but insignificant voice.

SKETCHED OPINION

Tunisia lights the first revolution's candle



www.mahjoob.com

By Hajjaj

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Do dreams really come true?

In the time of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), the call for prayer was introduced after it appeared in two of his companions' dreams. However, hundreds of years before that, Joseph interpreted dreams for the Pharaoh of Egypt and his people. The pharaoh dreamt that seven skinny cows ate seven fat cows. Joseph told him that Egypt would bear witness to seven good years, a time when people would grow vegetables and fruits. After these seven years, the next seven years would be hard, with people forced to eat what they had saved during the previous seven years. Ever since, dream interpretation has taken up a great portion of people's time. Yemenis are no exception to this. They try to find meaning in their dreams, and attempt to use them to predict the future and even to dictate their actions.

By: Malak Shaher

Bakr Al-Junaid is a dream interpreter. A woman called on him to ask that he find meaning in her dreams. The dream the woman had became true two days later, when the mosque where the president and a number of ministers were praying was bombed.

"She said she saw that a number of moons and a planet were hovering in the air when a mosque minaret fell down on them," said Al-Junaid.

As she went on to describe the details of her dream, she said she had seen an ambulance waiting outside the mosque.

Al-Junaid interpreted the dream and said that a mosque would be attacked and that the president and some ministers would be injured. But the presence of an ambulance meant they would survive.

According to Al-Junaid, who has been interpreting dreams for more than 15 years, the moon indicates a minister or somebody in a higher position, while the planet represents the president.

After this dream, Sabafon and MTN, two telecommunications companies in Yemen, started dream interpretation services. Al-Junaid became popular in his field, inter-

preting dreams for a fee when people dial 1902.

According to Al-Junaid, there are two types of dreams: those that reveal one's previous experiences, and dreams known in Arabic as Ro'a, or visions, which reveal events that may happen in the future.

According to Muslim dream interpreters, one dream can be read in a number of different ways, depending on the person who actually had the dream. So two people might have had similar dreams but receive totally different interpretations.

One day in the Islamic era, two men went to a dream interpreter. Each said he had dreamt about the call for prayer. The imam told one of the men that he would go for pilgrimage and the other that he was a thief.

When his companions asked him why he gave two different interpretations for the same dream he said, "I read their faces. The first person had a face of a good man while the other was bad and I interpreted according to verses in the Quran."

As the popularity of dream interpretation grew in the Arab world, a number of TV shows cropped up to capitalize on people's interest in the subject. People watch the shows carefully so that they may apply the interpretations to their own dreams.

In March 2011, Ahmad dreamt

that he was on his way to perform the Friday prayer, when Muslims gather to pray together at the mosques. He was surprised that he was the only one in the mosque. He saw an imam bathed in light, who told him:

"After 20, 20 will fall down, 20 will die and 20 will survive and you will be the only witness." Ahmad asked the imam to make himself clear and he explained that 20 towers will fall, 20 important persons will die, 20 states will interfere for reconciliation, and that Ahmad would be the only witness. Ahmad saw the names of the 20 and said that among them were famous people.

"Please I really cannot stop thinking about it...I need that dream to be explained," he told the interpreter.

A dream interpreter named Abu Hafs told him it meant that the year 2011 would witness drastic changes in the Arab world. He said that some of the changes would lead to chaos; that is, until states stepped in to solve the problems – as has since happened in Yemen. However, skeptics might say that by the time Ahmad's dream was interpreted, the Arab Spring was already in full swing, with both Tunisia's Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak forced out of office and with mass protests already taking place in Yemen.

According to the website dream-



research.net, most people over the age of ten dream at least four to six times a night during a stage of sleep called Rapid Eye Movement – which is itself a distinguishing characteristic of this stage of sleep. During this stage, the brain becomes as active as is when a person walks, though not all parts of the brain are active.

According to the same website, people actually forget 95-99 percent of their dreams.

Sigmund Freud, known as the father of psychoanalysis, claimed that unfulfilled urges and impulses – which, one way or another, must be released – surface in disguised forms as dreams.

Even though most dreams are simply reflections of experiences they've already had, many people nonetheless look for interpretations – perhaps even going so far as to make decisions based on such read-

ings, leaving their waking relationships and actions affected.

Ahlam Mohammad, 16, said that she barely tell what her dreams are about as she "doesn't care and doesn't want to know about interpretations of them".

"I dreamed that my younger brother was flying away and he was not looking nice. I felt scared and I simply could not talk to him for a week."



International Relief & Development
Improving Lives. Building Livelihoods.

International Relief and Development, (IRD) Inc., is a non-profit organization specializing in international development and humanitarian assistance in over 40 countries and has been working in Yemen for over two years. IRD works with a wide range of partners to design and implement, and provide technical assistance in the areas of health, economic development, relief, infrastructure, civil society and food security.

IRD is seeking to fill the following volunteer positions to implement its programs in Yemen:

OUTREACH VOLUNTEER (35 positions)

Education Requirements: High School

Language Requirements:

Fluent (reading and writing) in either English or Arabic **AND** one or more of the following languages: Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya, Tigray, Afar

Illustrative Activities:

- Conduct daily home visits to the households in their communities;
- Disseminate information on refugee affairs, government and donor policy, services, etc;
- Encourage refugees to register with the Government of Yemen or UNHCR;
- Identify and report any protection issues in refugee communities;
- Identify new arrivals for vulnerability assessments;
- Establish and maintain relations with local communities;
- Report regularly to the Outreach team and attend weekly coordination meetings.

Other Requirements: Outreach Applicants must live in one of the following areas: Safia, Khafji, Hassaba, Hayel, Da'iry, Khowlan, Madbah, Shumaila, Taiz Street.

OUTREACH VOLUNTEER SUPERVISOR (4 positions)

Education Requirements: High School

Language Requirements:

Fluent (speaking and writing) in either English or Arabic **AND** one or more of the following languages: Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya, Tigray, Afar

Illustrative Activities:

- Supervise the activities of a team of up to 10 Outreach Volunteers;
- Prepare and oversee the execution of weekly work plans for outreach volunteers;
- Ensure accuracy of home visit data collection and coordinate with database team;
- Conduct home visits with outreach volunteer;

- Report regularly to the Outreach Coordinator;
- Regularly meet with community officials to discuss concerns and refine work plans;
- Ensure that the team adheres to UNHCR and IRD Codes of Conduct;
- Work with the Project Management team to ensure effective completion of project goals.

Other Requirements: Outreach Applicants **must** have leadership experience and live in one of the following areas: Safia, Khafji, Hassaba, Hayel, Da'iry, Khowlan, Madbah, Shumaila, Taiz Street.

DATA ENTRY VOLUNTEER (8 positions)

Education Requirement: High School

Language Requirement:

Fluent (reading and writing) in English **AND** Arabic; Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya, Afar language skills are desirable

Illustrative Activities:

- Input data from Vulnerability and Skills assessments into database;
- Follow up with Outreach Volunteers and/or beneficiaries to collect additional information and ensure accuracy of information;
- Assist in the production of analytical reports and other products;
- Store completed documents in appropriate locations

COMMUNITY CENTER VOLUNTEERS (10 positions)

Education Requirements: High School

Language Requirements:

Fluent (reading and writing) in one or more of the following

languages: Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya, Afar

Illustrative Activities:

- Responding to protection and community services issues as they arise at the community centers;
- Mobilize refugee communities into providing community based support to vulnerable cases;
- Provide support to community-based initiatives such as daycare centers for children
- Raising awareness on protection, assistance and other refugee issues;
- Organize cultural events to refugee issues from the community centers;
- Liaise with local authorities and refugee communities to ensure good relations;
- Engage in inter- and intra-community conflict resolution and mitigation where necessary
- Refer cases to relevant service providers;
- Provide urban orientation sessions to new arrivals

REFUGEE COMMUNITY CENTER ADMINISTRATOR (2 positions)

Education: High School

Languages:

Fluent (reading and writing) in either English or Arabic **AND** one or more of the following languages: Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya, Afar

Illustrative Activities:

- Manage and administrate day-to-day activities of the Refugee Community Centre.
- Manage a team of 10 Community Center Volunteers;
- Create monthly work plan of Community Center and Community Center Volunteer activities;
- Oversee the maintenance of Community Centers

Application Procedure

For all positions, applicants should send a CV and covering letter, both in English, to irdyemen@irdglobal.org with the title of the position you are applying for in the title of the email. For outreach volunteers and supervisor applicants you should also include the area of Sana'a in which you live in the subject title of the email. (e.g. Outreach Volunteer Supervisor – Safia; or, Outreach Volunteer – Khafji).

The closing date for applications is January 26th 2012.

Economic highlights of the new cabinet's two-year plan (PART 3)

In last Thursday's issue of the Yemen Times, we presented the first two installments on the economic highlights of the new National Unity Government's two-year plan. The third part of the economic plan aims to revive Yemen's economy, which came to a standstill – if not a collapse – after the 11-month, nationwide uprising and demand for the fall of Saleh's 33-year regime. The new cabinet was formed on December 7 as part of an interim government which includes both Saleh's party and the traditional opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP). The following is the third installment on the economic plan.

By: Ali Saeed

International cooperation

In November 2006, donor countries pledged to grant Yemen \$5.7 billion to be disbursed towards development projects and poverty reduction programs over the four-year period of 2007-2010.

However, no more than \$1 billion was actually received by Yemen's government due to mismanagement, Ali Al-Wafi, a Yemeni economist, told the Yemen Times.

"Because there were no economic feasibility studies for the projects, at times the Yemen's government did not pay its financial share for a project or, in some cases, construction companies for the project are not qualified enough to receive the

grant and start up the project," said Al-Wafi.

In the end, around \$4.7 billion of the pledged aid was not granted to Yemen.

To allow this money channel to development projects and poverty reduction programs in Yemen, the National Unity Government said in its two-year economic plan that it will work at revising Yemen's capacity for external loans and grants pledged to Yemen during the past period to utilize the aid.

It will also enhance the capacity to accommodate and carry out externally-funded projects, this in accordance with the two-year economic plan.

Ease of doing business

In the Ease of Doing Business World Index 2012, Yemen ranked 99 out of 183 economies.

The index sheds light on how easy or difficult it is for a local entrepreneur to open and run a small to medium-size business when complying with relevant regulations.

It measures and tracks changes in regulations affecting ten areas in the life cycle of a business: starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency.

In addition to obstructive regulations for doing business in Yemen, the political unrest of the past two years has created a negative environment not only for new investors, but also for established businesses.

In March 2011, the joint-funded Yemeni-Qatari Al-Rayyan Hills, the largest residential construction project in Sana'a, was suspended due to the political crisis.

And in December 2011, the Canadian oil company Nexen, the largest such company which has also operated in Yemen since the 1980s, had to leave the country due to the deteriorated security situation.

The government said that it will encourage investment and increase its contribution to the national gross domestic product (GDP). This will require the cabinet to ensure an attractive investment environment to

stimulate entrepreneurs to start new businesses.

In this regard, the government also said it will utilize Aden's strategic geographic position to play a role in the coming economic transition.

To achieve this, there will be a specific economic plan for Aden which includes increasing arrivals to Aden Airport, expanding the city's harbor, the building of a new harbor for un-registered goods and modernizing services at Aden's port.

Adel Al-Ashtal, former director of the General Investment Authority office in Aden, told the Yemen Times that, "This plan for investment is good, but security and political stability at the moment are the first priorities for both foreign and local investors."

"If good investments laws are enacted without political stability, they will mean nothing to investors," Al-Ashtal said.

He explained that "the positive result if the peaceful revolution succeeds will be the control of corruption and the enforcement of transparency."

Agriculture

Agriculture is one of the main sectors of Yemen's economy, since it represents a main source of income for 70 percent of the population and accommodates 54 percent of Yemen's workforce.

It contributes between five to 10 percent of the GDP, according to Yemen's National Information Center.

The government said in its two-year economic plan that agriculture somewhat reduces internal migration from rural to urban areas.

Further, the government promised to boost agricultural production to attain a higher level of food security by way of an increased reliance on



Agriculture accommodates 54 percent of Yemen's workforce.

domestic agricultural production.

The Ministry of Agriculture will be responsible of providing veterinarian services for livestock, which would include national campaigns to combat animal epidemics and promote the treatment of diseases in animals.

The cabinet said that it will activate the agricultural fund, which is intended to provide farmers with finances with which to carry out farming projects to enhance their production, such as with modern irrigation networks.

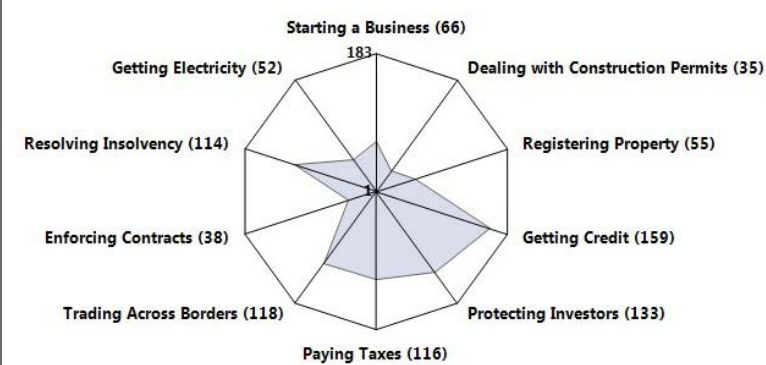
Since July 2011, Yemen's farms have experienced severe damage caused at least in part by deliber-

ate diesel and fuel shortages. Huge quantities of potatoes, tomatoes, bananas and other food crops were lost after farmers couldn't find diesel at gas stations with which to operate their water pumps.

"I have to struggle for two months to get 200 liters of diesel just to keep my farm running; otherwise, the farm will be damaged," Hassan Jailan, a farmer in Hodeida, told the Yemen Times.

"Because there's no diesel for fair prices at gas stations, I had to stop farming several food crops, including tomatoes, lady fingers and eggplants," the farmer said.

How Yemen, Rep. ranks on Doing Business topics



Source: Doing Business Report 2012/IFC



Seerah Towers In The historical Aden City.



Mountain view



Sea view

Project:

With a finance from the International Bank of Yemen (IBY), OCEAN BREEZE for Investment & Development Ltd. - a Yemeni Company - is developing a large high standing real estate project that stand tall upon the shores of Seerah in the historical Aden City in Yemen: the "Seerah Towers".

The complex is conceived according to international standards with a state of the art design scaled to the divergent tastes. It suits the traditional Yemeni yet it caters to modern style living with its flexible

Ocean Breeze offers 216 high standing apartments with different types of apartments with different sizes bespoke to variable household types where no single item has been overlooked to make it an ideal living.



Club House

And a Health & Sports Club: an upscale health and sports club, for private and public recreation, is distributed over 1080 m2 of built up area, equipped with the latest machines for the health addicts, with an outdoor swimming pool and play pool for the children.



Restaurant

The restaurant is a 2 floors gourmet restaurant in a separate building with a separate access for the public for privacy purposes. The restaurant caters up to 464 persons indoor and up to an additional number of 272 seats is arranged outside.



For more information, Please Contact Tel: 01-407000

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مدرسة منارات

سفريات

قدس فلاي
سكاي للسفريات والسياحة
العالمية للسفريات والسياحة

مطاعم

مطعم ومخبزة الشيباني (باسم محمد عبده الشيباني)
تلفون: ٠٥٧٣٦٦٢ - ١٠٠٩٢٥٠٥ - فاكس: ٩١٦٧٦٢

M&M Logistics & Aviation Services
العالمية للشحن - صنعاء

مستشفيات

مستشفى الثورة
مستشفى الجمهوري
المستشفى الالمانى الحديث
المستشفى الاهلي الحديث
مستشفى العلوم والتكنولوجيا
مستشفى الكويت

شركات طيران

طيران اليمنية
فرع تعز: ١/٢١٧١٢٦
فرع عدن: ٢/٢٥٣٤٥٦
فرع الحديدة: ٣/٢٠١٤٧٤

السعيدة

الإماراتية
الاثيوبية
الامانية (لوفتهانزا)
التركية
السعودية
القطرية
طيران الخليج
طيران الأردنية - صنعاء

فنادق

فندق ميركيور صنعاء
فندق شمر
فندق موفبيك
فندق لازوردي

البنك القطري الدولي
بنك اليمنى للانشاء والتعمير
بنك سبا الاسلامي
بنك كاليون
يوناييتد بنك ليميتد
بنك كاك الاسلامي
بنك اليمن للتجارة والانشاءات

تأجير سيارات

زاوية (Budget)
يورب كار
هيرتز لتأجير السيارات

مراكز تدريب وتعليم الكمبيوتر

NIIT لتعليم الكمبيوتر
البريد السريع

شحن وتوصيل

صنعاء
عدن
الحديدة
تعز
اب
المكلا
شبهه
سيهون
بلحاف
سقري

شحن وتوصيل

صنعاء
عدن
الحديدة
تعز
اب
المكلا
شبهه
سيهون
بلحاف
سقري

وزارة الشؤون القانونية
وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان
وزارة الشباب والرياضة
وزارة الصناعة والتجارة
وزارة العدل
وزارة السياحة
وزارة المقربين
وزارة النفط والمعادن
وزارة شئون الداخلية
وزارة النقل
وزارة حقوق الانسان
وزارة الاتصالات وتقنية المعلومات
وزارة الادارة المحلية
وزارة الاعلام
وزارة التخطيط والتعاون الدولي
وزارة التربية والتعليم
وزارة الخارجية
وزارة الداخلية
وزارة المالية
وزارة المواصلا
وزارة المياه والبيئة
وزارة الكهرباء

البنوك

بنك اليمن والخليج
بنك التضامن الإسلامي
البنك التجاري
مصرف اليمن الجديري الشامل
بنك اليمن الدولي
البنك العربي
بنك التسليف الزراعي
البنك المركزي
بنك الامل

البنوك

بنك اليمن والخليج
بنك التضامن الإسلامي
البنك التجاري
مصرف اليمن الجديري الشامل
بنك اليمن الدولي
البنك العربي
بنك التسليف الزراعي
البنك المركزي
بنك الامل

ارقام مهمة

١٧٧	طوارئ الكهرباء
١٧١	طوارئ المياه
١٩٩	طوارئ الشرطة
١١٨	الاستعلامات
١٩١	الإطفاء
١٩٤	حوادث (المرور)
٠١/٣٥٢٧٠١/٧	الشؤون الداخلية
٠١/٢٠٣٥٤٤/٧	الشؤون الخارجية
٠١/٢٥٠٧٦١/٣	الهجرة
٠١/٣٣٢٠٠١/٢	التلفزيون
٠١/٢٠٣٣١/٣	الصليب الاحمر
٠١/٢٧٢٠٦١	الإذاعة

الوزارات

٠١/٢٩٠٢٠٠	رئاسة الجمهورية
٠١/٤٩٠٨٠٠	رئاسة الوزراء
٠١/٥٤٥١٢٢	وزارة الاشغال العامة والطرق
٠١/٣٧٤٤٣٩	وزارة الاوقاف والارشاد
٠١/٥٣٥٠٣١	وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
٠١/٣٦٨٥٨٣	وزارة الثورة السمكية
٠١/٣٧٤٤٤٠	وزارة الثقافة
٠١/٣٩٤٥٧٩	وزارة الخدمة المدنية والتأمينات
٠١/٣٧٦٤٠٤	وزارة الدفاع
٠١/٣٨٩٦٦٣	وزارة الزراعة والري
٠١/٣٦٨٠٠٩	وزارة الشؤون الاجتماعية والعمل

كلمات متقاطعة

- انقبي
- 1- فيلم من بطولة شريف رمزي وايمن سمير غانم
 - 2- مخترع الهاتف (م)
 - 3- متشابهة - من مشتقات الحليب - للتتمزج - حك وازال (م)
 - 4- لواء، - ممثلة مصرية (م)
 - 5- ضهير الغالب - غم وحزن - دواء - ارشد (م)
 - 6- بسطها - ملاكة طيب - ظفر
 - 7- التجريد والفنجان - تمكا - اترك
 - 8- مرحبا بالانجليزي (م) - في الفم - تقوية (م)
 - 9- حرف اجنبي (م) - بصحة - آلة موسيقية - كتب (م)
 - 10- ولد (م) - تزيد الكلام بلجاجة - ابتها الصغيرة
 - 11- مجلة عربية - عاصمة ليبيا
 - 12- لا تعرف (م) - صغير الحصان - متأنسة
 - 13- علم مؤنث (م) - عانة قلقة - مناسبة سنوية
 - 14- ممثلة سوري (م) - حيا (م)
 - 15- قلقة فضائية - حرف اجنبي

الكلمة المفقودة

3	لوحة	الترايم
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تاج	5	روح الصبا
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رعد	الجرو	البنفسجية
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لقب	مجتهد	10
ليت	6	الحب الجميل
ليث	الحلال	أيتها الريح
4	الخيفا	11
البر	؟؟؟؟؟؟	شجاعة الفريق
السر	7	مخبات الصدور
بايل	الامثال	12
بصيص	الزيارة	ما وراء الرءاء
جاهل	8	هل اضحك ام ابكي

استراحة العدد

أعواد الشطاب

حرك عود ثقاب واحد لتصبح المعادلة الرياضية صحيحة

عجائب وغرائب

امرأة فرنسية تواجه عقوبة السجن لأنها قبلت لوحة في معرض لشدة إعجابها بها ، فتكرت عليها آثار حمرة شفاه . قديمة اللوحة مليونيا يورو ، وهي للفنان الأمريكي « سي تومبيلي » .

حكمة العدد

عندما يمدح الناس شخصا ، قليلون يصدقون ذلك وعندما يذمون فجميع يصدقون .

نكتة العدد

ان العقرب يتمكن من الصوم لمدة 3 سنوات متتالية

الحلول بالمطلوب

١٦ + ٦٤ = ٥٨١
 ح: ١٦١٦
 ح: ١٦١٦٦٦

Carving out a place for Yemeni women

Yemeni women still have a chance to make a place for themselves in the world of politics, especially after their significant contribution to the making of the revolution. However, without better preparation, women run the risk of being left out of Yemen's transitional process. Halima Gellman, an analyst and researcher in politics and gender, doing her thesis at New York University on "Yemeni women in the revolution: Building a women's agenda," has some thoughts on the lessons learned for Yemeni women.



Halima Gellman



"Democracy is about representing the people, how can you have real democracy when half of the population is being excluded?"

Interview by Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Halima Gellman is a researcher on a mission. After working and living in several countries in the Middle East region she has developed a keen interest in the Arab uprising and more specifically, women's role in creating change. Her research includes studying the experience of women during revolutions across the years, starting from the Algerian revolution against the French in 1830, the Iranian revolution in 1979, and the 2011 Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen.

The core principle driving her research is that no revolution with the aim of democratic change is a complete revolution if it does not include the political participation of women.

Key suggestions for Yemeni women

- Building a national strategy for women in the transition period, including finding ways to ensure that women are part of the constitutional process.
- Working to fill the ministries with more women.
- Building alliances across political parties and increasing collaboration between women's organizations and activists.
- Engaging Islah on women's issues.

"There is no genuine democracy without gender equality," said Gellman.

Her findings show that although women throughout the Arab Spring played an integral role, and were a driving force behind the revolutions, they are now largely being sidelined in each country's transitional process.

"Take Tunisia for example," explains Gellman. "They have one of the strongest women's movements in the Arab world yet only two women were appointed to the 19-member provisional government. If it wasn't for the Tunisian women's ability to quickly organize and work together across political and ideological divides, women would be in a very different situation than they are now."

Despite the fact that Islamists have become the dominant political voice in Tunisia, a revolutionary gender parity law was passed. This law required equal numbers of men and women to be listed as candidates in the Constituent Assembly elections. In a sense this law has guaranteed a 50 percent female political participation. This fact is little known to Yemeni women and should be used as an inspiration, just as the Tunisian revolution was.

In Egypt, the situation is not so positive as there were no women in the constitutional review committee and in the current elections women have not yet even been able to secure 10 out of the roughly 500 seats in parliament. This is much less than under Mubarak's government.

"Women have been the biggest losers of the Egyptian elections, which are supposed to be the most fair and free elections in Egypt's history," said

Gellman. Even going back in history to older revolutions such as in Iran and Algeria, where women contributed heavily to the overthrow of old regimes, they ended up being excluded in the power and decision making positions.

In Libya, out of the 40-member transitional government, only two are women, and in the new president's inaugural speech he raised a lot of red flags for women, including declaring sharia to be the law of the new country. The problem for many female Libyan activists is not sharia in itself, but the president's seemingly narrow and monolithic interpretation of Islamic law.

Lessons learned for Yemeni women

Yemeni women should be working out strategies on how their rights and newfound political space can be preserved in a new Yemen.

"When I talk to young women from Change Square, they say they are not worried about their rights being taken away," said Gellman. "They say: 'We worked so hard for the revolution and they [the new leaders] cannot exclude us, because we have affirmed our place in society and in the political sphere and they cannot take it away from us in the new Yemen'. Unfortunately, we can see from history that this has not been the case," she explained.

"As for the more experienced civil society activists, when I ask about the three female ministers out of 35 in the new government many women said they are happy," she said.

"I heard them say 'excellent!' exclaimed Gellman. "Not all women say that but enough to worry me."

Her concern is that this attitude exists after a revolution that was supposed to create a more just society. "To hear these women say this is a step forward was really concerning to me," she said.

Some Yemeni women and men claim that there are no leading political women because there simply are not enough qualified women to fill in the seats.



"This is a critical time, we are in transition and if Yemeni women do not mobilize themselves and their communities we could lose many opportunities for advancing women's rights."



Women have played a crucial role in protests, pioneering the role of women in the future of Yemeni society and politics.

But Gellman says she has heard this before and does not believe it is a valid argument.

"I have met many amazing Yemeni women who are extremely intelligent and outspoken. You cannot say that there aren't enough women to choose from," she said. "Although obviously Yemen needs to continue focusing on building the capacity of both men and women and decreasing the educational gender gap."

Yemeni reactions

A late draft of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) deal had a 20 percent quota in the new cabinet but the final one only included vague supportive wordings of women's inclusion. Gellman believes it is important to figure out

why this quota was taken out, since it could have made a huge difference in the current political landscape. In addition, she highlights how vital it is for Yemeni women to create pressure groups and lobby for the inclusion of women in this transitional phase.

"I am worried about the future political participation of women. All too often women's rights are used as political bargaining chips," she said.

Yet Yemeni women themselves are not taking full advantage of the transition period and using it as an opportunity to advance their rights. This is due to a number of reasons, including a lack of cooperation between women's organizations and activists and a lack of experience in building bridges across political par-

ties and ideologies.

Thus, there is currently no strategy to ensure that women will have a seat at the constitutional review committee or be part of the national dialogue.

As a part of her master's degree research, Gellman has been studying the efforts that have been made over the last nine months to bring women from different political parties together and build a women's agenda.

"Every time I ask, I am given a different example," she said. "Women are so segregated they do not know about each others' programs."

She also argued that Yemeni women need more resources to connect women in the Arab Spring, not just the top elites, and to create regional networks to allow women to share stories and advice and support each other.

Yemeni women also need to understand the political position of each party and political stakeholder. For example, when asking Yemeni women if Islah's position on women had changed since the revolution, Gellman said that few had a clear answer because no one had engaged them on the issue.

She advised Yemeni activists and political women to reach out to other, even if they are from different ideological and political backgrounds, certain they can find enough common ground to create some shared demands.

"Undoubtedly the revolution has created new political space for women. The question is - can we keep it?" she said.

In the end Gellman hopes that just as Yemeni women surprised the world with their powerful role in the revolution, they will seize the opportunity offered by the transitional period and surprise the world with their role in the new Yemen.

Congratulations

The administrative committee of the Employees Union at YLNG wishes to congratulate all YLNG staff on the establishment of the union and hope to serve their best interest with most integrity and professionalism.

The Administrative Committee:

Saleh Mohammed Al-Abidi	Union Chairman (Leader)
Munir Al-Khawi	Vice Chairman
Yaser Ahmed Noaman	Secretary-General
Issa Sabar Al-Amoudy	Finance Officer
Manal Abdul-Rahman Aqlan	Women's Department Officer
Fadeem Al-Ariqi	Labor Disputes Officer
Zaki Saad Ahmed	Culture and the Media Officer
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