

Southern Movement members plan to use force on election day



Armed men from the Southern Movement storm Freedom Square at Crater in Aden, where anti-government protesters have been camped for the past year.

By: Fuad Mussed

ADEN, Feb.12 – Two persons were killed and dozens wounded on Thursday in Dhala'a governorate when fighting broke out between gunmen from the Southern Movement (Alhikrak Aljanobi) and soldiers tasked with guarding ballot centers.

The Southern Movement gunmen were attempting to raid an election committee headquarters.

Eyewitnesses saw dozens of armed men from the Southern Movement move towards an election committee location and said they had attempted

to storm it as part of their protest activities and as a rejection of early presidential elections being held.

These events were accompanied by threats raised from Southern Movement members, made against people who intend to vote in the presidential election.

Locals told the Yemen Times that they had seen leaflets containing death threats for citizens who plan to vote distributed in Dhala'a.

On Friday, Mohammed Al-Faqeh, preacher for Dhala'a's main mosque, called on people from the Southern Movement to amend for those mem-

bers who made threats, and urged everyone to renounce violence. "Ultimately, people will abhor any parties that incite violence."

In particular, the heads and members of election committees in Dhala'a governorate have received threats from Southern Movement members.

Adnan Omairan, the head of an election committee in Dhala'a, said that armed groups attempted to assault him on Tuesday as he traveled with election process documents from the governorate's capital.

In Dhala'a's Al-Shoib district, Ali Mohammed, a leader of the Southern

Movement, said that voters would be endangered, and indicated that Southern Movement members would be forced to use their weapons or else their movement would be put at risk by the elections.

"In the event that turbulence caused by the armed men continues, and if security forces fail to protect voters, the possibility of wide participation will be limited," said a resident of Dhala'a. "In some areas completely controlled by the Southern Movement, elections would not be held."

A security source said that armed gangs and outlaws always keep an eye

on election committees, teams and ballot centers, and pointed out that security forces would assume responsibility for the successful management of the election.

"Security forces have been deployed to most ballot centers to secure election sites and protect voters," he added.

Previously, hundreds of armed men from the Southern Movement stormed the Freedom Square at Aden's Crater area and set fire to tents erected by protesters.

Eyewitnesses said Southern Movement members, with senior leaders in the lead, went to the square and attacked and confiscated the cameras of journalists attempting to take photos of the scene.

Ali Qasim, head of the organization committee for Anad Square, said all the equipment and materials at the square were looted or destroyed.

Qasim said the attack was carried out with the use of Molotov cocktails, and added that protesters and journalists were beaten by the armed men.

Five prisoners killed as attempted mass escape fails

By: Abdul-Kareem Al-Nahari

DHAMAR, Feb. 12 – Five prisoners were killed and three others were left wounded after policemen foiled a large-scale escape attempt by prisoners from Dhamar city's central prison last Wednesday and Thursday. It was the third such attempt at the prison over the past two months.

A security source at the Interior Ministry told media outlets on Thursday that a committee has been formed to investigate the violence between guards and prisoners during the escape attempts.

The committee included Attorney General Ali Nasser Al-Awash, Interior Minister Abdul-Kadir Qahtan, and Human Rights Minister Huria Mashoor.

The committee started its investigation on Friday, with the aim of identifying the circumstances surrounding the violence and plan to issue a statement making clear the reasons and circumstances which led to its outbreak.

A police source told the Yemen Times that the escape attempt was calculated, that it was of a larger scale than previous attempts, and that the police response had foiled the attempt.

He further cited that the escape attempt was carried out following protests and chaos witnessed inside the prison, and emphasized that prison management entered negotiations with prisoners and reconsidered their demands and complaints.

"The prisoners were asked to select representatives to talk on their behalf before a newly-appointed prison manager."

The source said the prisoners selected representatives to brief prison management on their demands and sufferings.

"However, one tough prisoner named Ali Al-Siadi was among those representatives and this person who was convicted of murder snatched a gun from a policeman," said the source.

"With the support of other prisoners, they apprehended grenades and personal firearms from the policemen. They went to release other inmates and threatened to shoot the policemen if they met with any resistance.

The source added that policemen were able to curb the chaos after Al-Siadi, the mastermind of the escape attempt, was killed.

The prisoners fired on ambulances which attempted to carry casualties to the hospital, leading to some of the wounded prisoners being left to bleed to death. The bodies were seized by prisoners inside the prison, and it was nearly 18 hours before a tribal media-

tion could receive the corpses.

A security source in Dhamar who requested anonymity said that security services imposed a siege on the neighborhood surrounding the prison. Anti-riot policemen were reinforced by 13 military vehicles, present at the prison following the outbreak of protests over the past two months.

Initial probes have revealed that confrontations erupted while prisoners' relatives were bringing them food. After the internal gate to the prison was opened, the prisoners seized the opportunity to procure AK-47s. However, police forces soon took control of the situation.

One prisoner told the Yemen Times via telephone that policemen used live ammunition and rubber bullets, as well as tear gas, batons and tasers against prisoners, and said that the police retreated when one prisoner threatened to throw a grenade on them.

"I saw one prisoner with two grenades and a pistol as clashes broke out with policemen, but the policemen used trucks loaded with heavy machine guns, which they randomly fired in the direction of the internal gate," he added. "I saw the brains of one prisoner scattered around us and the head of another, separated from his body."

The prisoner said that inmates seized three corpses and refused to release them until Thursday evening, when Ahmed Hatim, a tribal leader of the Anis tribe, mediated.

Another inmate alleged that prison management provided prisoners with grenades and pistols to raise chaos inside the prison, and stated that the prisoner suffer a great deal as management frequently cuts water and food provisions in addition to the electricity.

Security sources affirmed that a sub-committee was formed to tackle the situation, pointing out that it included

officials from the Interior Ministry, Human Rights Ministry, Legal Affairs Ministry, Dhamar Court of Appeals and the Prison Authority.

The source confirmed that the committee arrived in Dhamar on Friday and held meetings with security officials before embarking on Saturday morning on an investigation of the events with concerned civil society organizations in attendance.

Local sources told the Yemen Times that a tribal leader went to the main gate of prison to demand that security services promptly surrender the policemen who caused the killing of a relative, but no further details could be found.

"What are the benefits of Yemen's current revolution if it couldn't manage to obtain the release of those prisoners held," Mohammed Salah, an activist at Dhamar's Change Square, said.

"They should share in the Yemeni people's celebration of the departure of outgoing President Ali Abdullah Saleh and they should be dealt with in the same way as Rada'a's prisoners."

Prisoners in Rada'a – a town that was taken over by Al-Qaeda last month – were released when Al-Qaeda militants stormed the city's central prison.

Abdullah Al-Mashraqi, 4, said the prisoners were very glad when revolution broke out in Yemen, maintaining the hope that they would be released as happened in Egypt and other Arab which the Arab Spring swept through.

Policemen from Dhamar's Central Prison foiled two escape attempts last December when four prisoners were wounded when policemen used live ammunition on prisoners.

The prisoner who had been convicted of planning to assassinate Assistant Deputy Governor of Dhamar, Abdul-Karim Daafan last December successfully escaped from the same prison last week.

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Mobile medical team to benefit rural Yemen



USAID Assistant Administrator Mara Rudman (right), exploring the mobile medical vehicle with Dr. Jamila Al-Ra'ebi, Deputy Minister of Health and Population (left).

By: Malak Shaher

SANAA, Feb. 12 — Access to medical care is about to become easier for marginalized people and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) living on the outskirts of Sana'a, as mobile medical teams get back to work.

On Sunday, USAID said another of its mobile medical teams, run in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Population and the Yemeni Family Care Association (YFCA), would be returning to work in on the outskirts of Sana'a bringing better healthcare to the districts of Sanhan, Shoub and Bani Hareth.

The team, which will be serving marginalized residents in these

areas, is one of 15 that USAID launched over the last year.

According to Mara Rudman, USAID Assistant Administrator for the Middle East Bureau, the team will be providing health care services to 2,000 people a month.

The team will be providing health primary care, maternal and pediatric care, diagnosis, immunization and medications free of charge, added Rudman.

The clinic-on-wheels "will serve those living on the fringes of the city of Sana'a, as well as internally displaced persons who have sought refuge in the districts of Sanhan, Shoub and Bani Hareth," said Rudman.

Much of the team's work will

involve providing first aid and health care to women and children, according to Nabil Alammari, YFCA executive manager.

Yemen has the highest infant mortality rate in the Middle East, with 37 deaths per 1,000 live births, according to the UN. The maternal mortality rate is even higher at 47 out of every 1,000 mothers.

Alammari said that the team, which was unable to operate throughout 2011, is the third that USAID has supported. The previous two have been working in Hajja governorate, north of Sana'a.

The Yemen Family Care Association is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organization, already operating seven mobile medical teams across different governorates.

According to the YFCA, the seven teams have helped more than 60,000 patients since it the scheme was established in 1976.

At the relaunch of the mobile medical service, Jamila Al-Ra'ebi, Deputy Minister of Health and Population, said, "The crises Yemen has gone through last year should make us work collectively to reduce the [maternal] mortality rate."

She said that despite the fact that Yemen does not appear to be on target for its 2015 Millennium Development Goals, which include reducing infant mortality rates, improving literacy and reducing unemployment, the support it has received from international organizations such as USAID and the UN has helped women in remote, rural areas.

During 2011's political crisis, only six of the 15 mobile medical teams were operating due to logistical issues and a lack of electricity. However, USAID said that all 15 would now resume work in Yemen's remote and hard-to-reach regions.

Peace agreement between Houthis and Islah Party

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Feb. 12 — Sheikh Saleh Habra, spokesman for the Houthis, confirmed that the group has reached a peace agreement with the Islah party in Hajja governorate.

The agreement called on the two parties to cease fighting, remove all armed positions, peacefully coexist and tolerate the free practice of religion. It also called on the two parties to not resort to arms in case of disagreements.

Habra denied news reports that the agreement had failed and said that ongoing clashes in Hajja is between the Houthis and Salafis had been incited by General Ali Mohsen, commander of the First Armored Division and Saudi Arabia.

Last Saturday, state-run Al-Thawra Newspaper published news of deaths and injuries sustained by Houthis and Islah party members during attempt by the former to gain control of Ahem's Al-Mashana Mountain. The newspaper also indicated that intermittent clashes have taken place in the Kushr area of Hajja governorate.

The security administration in Hajja governorate accused the Houthis of bombing one of the

prisons in Ahem and causing a loss of about YR15 million (\$65,000).

For its part, the Islah Party announced last Thursday that it had reached an agreement with Houthis in some parts of Hajja.

The agreement was sponsored by Sheikh Ali bin Ali Al-Qaisi, Islah MP Zaid Al-Shami, and Houthi representatives Yousef Al Faishi and Ali Al-Emad.

Clashes between the Houthis and Islah party members broke out two months ago, causing the killing and wounding of hundreds of people and leading to the displacement of thousands of families.

Election boycott

The Media Office of Houthi leader Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi denied that a meeting had taken place between the Houthis and the American ambassador. The Office also stated that Houthis will not participate in the coming presidential election, denying what the American ambassador had already stated.

The Houthi statement read, "We will boycott the election because it's just a farce that is confined to specific political parties. It's not a democratic or legal election and its result is a foregone conclusion."

Taiz celebrates anniversary of Yemen's revolution



February 11 celebrations included traditional songs and arts.

By: Emad Al-Saqqaf

TAIZ, Feb. 12 — Taiz marked one year of the Yemeni revolution on Friday and Saturday — a year after daily protests began on Feb. 11, 2011.

Hundreds gathered to watch the revolution torch being lit in Jamal Street, where the call for an end to Ali Abdullah Saleh's 33-year rule began.

Fireworks lit the sky over Taiz, and the celebrations continued until late Friday night.

On Saturday, massive crowds flowed onto the streets of the city to see a carnival parade arranged by protesters to express their support for the presidential elections on February 21.

Other protesters sang an opera in praise of Yemeni's unification. The celebration also included traditional songs, arts and handicrafts.

Noria Saeed, celebrating the anniversary of Yemen's revolution, pointed out that 2011 had changed attitudes towards women after they marched and protested alongside men for months on end.

"During the celebrations, women deliberately wore rural traditional clothes costumes to make the celebration distinctive, as well as highlighting the important role played by women," she added.

Saeed also expressed support for the presidential election this month. "I call on all Yemeni people to go to the ballot boxes and exercise their rights, as elections are a significant

step for the success of Yemen's revolution.

"I demand that the interim government change the current reality of people's lives," she added. "They must improve services and create an environment that people can happily live in."

Mansour Sadq, 26, who travelled from a remote area of Taiz governorate for the celebrations, also believes the elections are a good opportunity for change, turning the page of Saleh's rule after 33 years.

However, other protesters installed a stage at Jamal Street, calling on people to boycott the upcoming election, claiming it is a coup against the revolution.

Msutafa Alsharjabi, 23, explained that Yemeni protesters took to streets to oust the regime and bring corrupt people to justice, pointing out that the country's political parties only joined the revolution at a later stage.

"They wanted to become the leaders of the revolution and then signed the [GCC] initiative to share power," he said. "We are going to stay inside the squares until all the demands of the revolution are met and those officials responsible for killing protesters are brought to justice."

"We faced the tyranny of the Islah party, who controlled protesters and we felt yet more despotism and repression of the kind used by Saleh. Some members of Islah even issued a fatwa saying that those who do not vote are not revolutionaries," he added.

The Latest Buzz

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

- ▶ The Military Committee in Taiz said it has ordered armed groups to evacuate the city and has been taking serious measures since Saturday to ensure that this happens.
- ▶ Taiz Central Security has instructed community leaders and the general public to report any men moving about the streets — whether of foot or in vehicles — carrying arms.
- ▶ The High Authority for Tender Control cancelled a deal to import equipment for the Yemeni-Korean Technical Institute and referred the matter to the corruption authority for investigation following the discovery of tender.
- ▶ A group of 25 students at Sana'a University's Commerce College have started a campaign with the name "We Can Change" to clean the college grounds and improve its general appearance.
- ▶ The Minister of Public Works, the responsible authority for the Cooperative and Agricultural Credit Bank, removed the bank's manager of 25 years and replaced him after investigating corruption and mismanagement complaints by bank staff.
- ▶ Ameen Ahmed Qasim, businessman and leading figure in the Yemeni Socialist Party, survived an assassination attempt on Wednesday evening as he was traveling home.
- ▶ Over a period of two months, 150 aspiring journalists will be trained in new media techniques in a program organized by the Economic Media Center and in cooperation with the European Union mission in Yemen.
- ▶ Three armed men were killed in Zunjubar in Abyan on Saturday following army shelling of an Al-Qaeda hideout.
- ▶ Hundreds of job seekers whose names appeared last year in the official newspapers as new recruits for government posts protested outside the governor's office in Aden to demand that they receive their promised jobs or at least receive an explanation for the delay.
- ▶ In Aden, joint efforts by the General Peoples Congress and the Joint Meeting Parties are being made to encourage voter participation in February 21's presidential election.
- ▶ Al-Musaimeer and Tour Al-Baha community leaders in Lahj held events to lobby for citizen participation in the upcoming election, and emphasized the importance of social peace in the governorate.
- ▶ Following the election, the Transitional Justice law is expected to be presented to parliament for discussion before being voted on. As part of the nation's transition, the law stands to be the foundation for a national reconciliation.
- ▶ Al-Amal Microcredit Bank reported increased operations in January of this year, with more than eight thousand beneficiaries receiving loans totaling 88 million rials, a significant improvement over last year's numbers, when most microcredit institutions closed down.
- ▶ As a result of the 2011 uprising, the nation's industry sector was the hardest hit economically. The sector's growth was set back 18.4 percent. Next in line was the service industry, set back by 17.9 percent, and the agriculture and fish at 10 percent.

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'Lack of resources or conflict is no excuse for violating human rights'

Yemenis are celebrating a year of revolution. Some chose Jan. 25, 2011, when protesters first marched to the Tunisian embassy, others celebrated February 3, while some chose February 11 – when protests began daily – to mark the anniversary.

Amnesty International tracketed the revolution from a human rights perspective: Feb. 3 2011 was the day when protests in Yemen transformed into a mass movement. On that day a broad group of mainly students and activists calling itself the Youth of February 3 (since referred to itself as Youth of the Revolution) attracted tens of thousands of people to mass protests in the capital Sana'a.

Protests had begun the previous month after the government announced draft constitutional amendments to allow President Ali Abdullah Saleh, head of state since 1978 – first as President of north Yemen and then of unified Yemen – to run for presidential elections for unlimited terms. But they were also fuelled by frustration at corruption, unemployment and repression of freedoms in the country, and partly inspired by events in Tunisia and Egypt.

The protesters called on President Ali Abdullah Saleh to dismiss the government and corrupt officials, dismiss his son as head of the Republican Guard and Special Forces, dissolve Parliament, appoint a government of national unity, return "embezzled" funds, and resign from the presidency and pledge not to run for office again.



A woman from rural Taiz travelled to the city to celebrate a year of the Yemeni revolution.

A year since protests began, how has the human rights situation changed?

2011 saw a rapid deterioration in the human rights situation in Yemen. The most shocking manifestation of this has been the brutal repression of protests. More than 200 protesters have been killed and more than 1,000 injured after security forces have repeatedly used live ammunition to break up demonstrations. Hundreds more have been killed on all sides in armed clashes.

The track record of the authorities in investigating allegations of serious human rights violations by the security forces has been very poor. Amnesty International is aware of only one judicial investigation – into the killings of protesters on Mar. 18, 2011. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, an official investigation resulted in 78 people being charged, but it is unclear whether these included members of the security forces. The authorities have offered compensation to some of the victims' families.

Armed clashes have continued to take place across the country, leaving a growing humanitarian crisis in Yemen with water, electricity and other supplies diminishing.

What is the situation now for Yemen following the signing of the Gulf Cooperation Council-brokered political deal?

Following the events of March 2011, when in the worst single incident at least 52 people were killed during a protest, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) offered President Saleh a deal which would guarantee him immunity from prosecution in return for his leaving office. In October the UN Security Council urged President Saleh to hand over power in accordance with the GCC agreement.

After a UN envoy helped the parties negotiate, President Saleh signed the deal in November, agreeing to hand some powers over to the Vice President, to the appointment of a new Prime Minister heading a "government of national reconciliation" and to the holding of presidential elections within 90 days. In return, President Saleh and his aides were to be given immunity.

A Prime Minister from the opposition has now been appointed and a new national government – to re-

main in power for an interim period of two years – is in place, representing the ruling party and members of the opposition. Ali Abdullah Saleh retains the title of President until the elections, which are expected to take place in February.

An immunity law was passed on Jan. 21, 2012 providing President Saleh with complete immunity from prosecution and all those who worked during his rule are also provided immunity from criminal prosecution in "politically motivated cases". Protests have continued, denouncing the immunity law.

Amnesty International is calling on the GCC and the international community to withdraw its support for immunity for any official in Yemen, regardless of rank or affiliation. The immunity law breaches Yemen's obligations under international law.

The fact that the UN gave support to the transition power-transfer deal when it was signed on November 23 when it was believed to have contained an immunity provision is regrettable. The UN Secretary General has previously issued a directive prohibiting brokering peace agreements which contain immunity clauses.

Why does Amnesty International oppose immunity for Yemeni leaders? Some people have argued that they will provide stability.

The passing of the immunity law has dealt a serious blow for those calling for justice for human rights violations. Amnesty International has documented serious violations in Yemen carried out by or with the complicity of state agents. It is unacceptable that victims of such crimes should be prevented from getting justice.

Impunity for perpetrators will prevent the protection and promotion of human rights for all those in Yemen, at just the moment at which there is an opportunity for change.

We do not agree that immunity will deliver stability for the people of Yemen. To prevent violations of human rights and humanitarian law being committed in the future, there must be accountability for past abuses. In contrast this, the law sends signals to future leaders of Yemen that if they commit enough abuses they may be given immunity simply to see them leave office.

The Yemeni government has said it wants to put in place "transitional justice" mechanisms to provide justice and reparation to victims of abuses and to prevent further violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. It is unclear how this could be compatible with an immunity law which provides complete impunity to President Saleh and could apply immunity to all those who were his subordinates. It is not clear after all what is meant by "politically motivated cases".

What about human rights abuses being committed by non-governmental armed groups within Yemen?

Amnesty International condemns human rights abuses however, wherever and by whomever they are committed.

Over the years non-governmental armed groups are reported to have carried out kidnappings, attacks including on civilian population. In 2011 there were two reports – which Amnesty International has not been able to confirm – of amputations by armed Islamist militants claiming to apply Sharia law.



The authorities must adequately investigate reports of massive violations committed in the past: in the context of the unrest in the south of Yemen against those seen as secessionists; in the name of countering terrorism against those accused of belonging to or supporting Al-Qaeda; and in the context of the intermittent conflict in the north between government forces and the Houthi rebel movement against suspected Houthi supporters

It is the Yemeni authorities' responsibility to protect people in Yemen from violence by armed groups and to ensure that the human rights of everyone in Yemen are respected and protected at all times.

Any solution to the security challenges in Yemen must have at its heart the protection of human rights. All measures taken against armed groups must be carried out in accordance with international standards which prohibit, among other things, extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, torture and arbitrary detention.

Yemen faces many challenges, including multiple armed clashes and loss of control over parts of its country. In this context can the Yemeni government be expected to meet such challenges by strictly adhering to international human rights standards?

Yemen does face serious challenges but, like all states, the government must deal with such challenges – whether political, security or economic – in accordance with its obligations under international human rights law.

The government bears the primary responsibility for making human rights a reality. Governments must respect peoples' rights and ensure that other people do not abuse these rights. Lack of resources or conflicts is no excuse for violating or neglecting human rights.

Unfortunately, many measures have been taken in recent years in Yemen, in the name of stability and security, without due adherence to international human rights obligations and standards.

The authorities must adequately investigate reports of massive violations committed in the past: in the context of the unrest in the south of Yemen against those seen as secessionists; in the name of countering terrorism against those accused of belonging to or supporting Al-Qaeda; and in the context of the intermittent conflict in the north between government forces and the Houthi rebel movement against suspected Houthi supporters and, more widely, the civilian population of the region.

What has the Nobel Peace Prize for Tawakul Karman meant for Yemen?

Human rights activist Tawakul Karman has been a leading figure since mass protests against the government began in February 2011. In January 2011 she was arrested by the authorities and charged with organizing an unlicensed protest, sparking outrage among other protesters.

The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Tawakul along with two other women, recognized the work of activists to defend the rights of women around the world for "their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peace-building work".

Awarding such a global prize to a Yemeni woman for her outstanding work gives hope to the millions of Yemeni girls and women living under discriminatory laws placing them at a lower status than that of men. It also is an opportunity for the Yemeni authorities to recognize the important role of women by abolishing all discriminatory laws and replacing them with others that provide girls and women legal protection from abuse as well as equality with men in family matters such as marriage, divorce and inheritance as well as in political participation.

What does Amnesty International want to see happen in Yemen in 2012?

In 2012 the new government must urgently bring about the human rights change that protesters have been calling for. In particular:

- By repealing the immunity law so as to bring to justice where there is sufficient admissible evidence anyone found responsible for such violations regardless of rank or affiliation;
- By ceasing human rights violations, in particular by reigning

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in its security forces and ending unlawful killings of peaceful demonstrators and others;

- By allowing an international, independent investigation into human rights violations; and
- By allowing access to Amnesty International and other independent human rights monitors into the country.

Amnesty International also holds the international community responsible for supporting accountability and justice in Yemen, and calls on Yemen's partners to put pressure on the government to repeal the immunity law and to call for an international, independent and impartial investigation into current and past human rights violations.

Amnesty also wants to see with regard to future arms supplies, the suspension of all types of weaponry, munitions and related equipment to the Yemeni police and security forces, which could be used for excessive or lethal force in policing pro-reform protests.

Arms supplying states should conduct a rigorous, comprehensive review of all international transfers and training support to Yemen's military, security and police forces to ensure no arms transfers are authorized where there is a substantial risk that they will be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Where necessary governments should halt the delivery of arms and revoke export licences.

In what ways is the immunity law illegal?

The immunity law breaches Yemen's obligations under international law to investigate and prosecute crimes under international law and human rights violations. Under interna-

tional law, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which Yemen is a state party, Yemen is obliged to investigate and prosecute anyone suspected of such crimes where there is sufficient admissible evidence.

In addition, as a state party to the Convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity, Yemen has recognized that if genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes are committed, the provisions of the Convention (which provides that no statute of limitation may apply to these crimes) shall apply to representatives of the State authority and private individuals who, as principals or accomplices, participate in or who directly incite others to the commission of any of those crimes, or who conspire to commit them, irrespective of the degree of completion, and to representatives of the state authority who tolerate their commission.

Although it is commonly accepted that state officials are immune in certain circumstances from the jurisdiction of foreign states with respect to ordinary crimes under national law, such immunities do not apply – either in a foreign or national court – when the official is suspected of responsibility for crimes under international law – genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture, enforced disappearance and extrajudicial executions. This position has been confirmed over the course of six decades in numerous instruments. In addition, states are increasingly providing in national legislation that claims by officials to immunity from prosecution in their courts for crimes under international law are not recognized. Source: Amnesty International

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OUR OPINION

City of garbage

On average, US garbage collectors earn double that of waiters and around \$8,000 more than a teacher's average salary. They get compensation for occupational hazards and usually work between 25 and 30 hours a week. They have strong unions to represent them and ensure they receive their rights.

Sana'a has been swimming in trash for over a week since the city's garbage collectors and truck drivers went on strike. They want better salaries and permanent contracts. They want appreciation for their work in a culture that looks down on them and a society that deliberately makes their work harder.

Garbage collectors in Yemen earn around YR 21,000 a month (about \$100) for ten hours of work a day, seven days a week, while on average a teacher receives around YR 50,000 (around \$230) for five hours a day. It is not that teachers are overcompensated; it is that garbage collectors are so disadvantaged it is appalling.

In the past, each time the collectors went on strike – making the same demands – they were appeased by empty promises and went back to work. This time they are refusing to return to the streets to collect the more than 10,000 tons of garbage produced by Sana'a residents every day.

I miss the way my city looked when it was clean. Now there are mounds of dirty trash piled up across Sana'a, making it difficult to walk and even to drive. And as the trash builds up, residents are increasingly trying to burn the mounds of garbage – causing yet another environmental hazard.

The problem is the indifference locals have towards this issue. They know that collectors are on strike yet almost every household continues to pile garbage onto the heaps of already rotten trash. The only beneficiaries are the street cats and dogs taking advantage to feast on the trash, tearing open plastic bags and dragging garbage across the streets.

This could be a lesson for the people of Yemen; a lesson about appreciating those invisible heroes without whose work our life would literally sink into a sea of garbage.

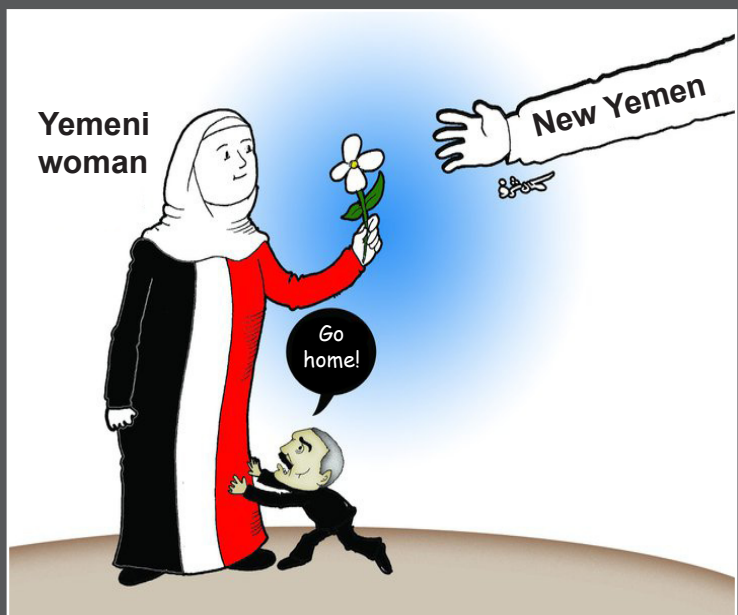
We also need to learn how to manage our daily consumption and the amount of waste we produce. It's time to think about the environment before we use plastic bags or throw out such huge amounts of trash.

But most importantly, these men and women deserve far better treatment and we should learn to give them the respect and thanks they deserve.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SKETCHED OPINION

By Kamal Sharaf



Arab history has been correcting itself

By Rami G. Khouri www.dailystar.com.lb

Well, reviewing events in Syria this week, I guess the unipolar world, the looming American century, and the end of history that were simultaneously announced by assorted American chauvinists and crackpots at the end of the Cold War around 1990 can be discarded for now. The continuing killings in Syria, and the energized global diplomacy that is seeking to wind down or evict President Bashar Assad and his family from power, or both, should be seen as two distinct dynamics that are converging for a moment.

One dynamic is the imminent end of Arab police states and personalized family rule that are being rejected by Arab populations across the region in a spectacular series of uprisings and revolutions. This process includes both removing dictators and then reconfiguring governance systems along new lines to be shaped by Arab citizens themselves. In this dynamic, the Assad family enterprise is on its way out and Syria will soon find itself resuming its historical role and development under more normal circumstances.

The second, and totally separate,

dynamic is the assertion of power by a series of global and regional actors – notably Russia, China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran – that is a logical correction to two recent realities, a sort of correction of history, rather than its end.

First was the misuse of political and diplomatic power in the Middle East by the American-led group of Western countries that has long backed Arab dictators, acted with criminal audacity in waging war in Iraq and leaving it in a shambles today, applied maximum hypocrisy in its dealings with the nuclear issue in Iran, and caved in consistently and shamelessly to Israeli colonialism. Local and global powers alike are now pushing back against the wreckage of American-led policies.

Second is that as the US and other Western powers abdicate some of their roles in the Middle East and withdraw partially and gradually, the laws of physics dictate that others will step in to redress the imbalances and fill the void emerging from this retreat.

So as Russia, China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Iran step up their direct involvement in Syria-centered regional diplomacy, we are also likely to see fresh activism by other players. Notice, for example, how the Libyan and Tunisian governments formally recognized the Syrian National Council as the

representative of the Syrian people, which opens the door for others to do the same and heap new pressure on the Assad regime.

The energized role of the Arab League in Syria is another sign of regional players moving in quickly to fill the vacuum of power and diplomatic initiatives. Egypt will soon stabilize and also play a larger role in the region. These and other signs suggest that diplomatic configurations will continue to evolve for many years ahead, as Arab peoples seek to end their nightmare of perpetual police states, colonization and mass humiliation at the hands of Arab, Israeli and Western powers, respectively.

This kind of historic, structural change comes at a price, which often includes civil wars, chaotic domestic politics, and mass pauperization during transitions to renewed growth, foreign interference, or surges of sectarianism. Change in Syria will happen slowly, and at great cost, as we are witnessing daily. Syria is showing that it is just like all the other Arab countries that have experienced, or will soon experience, revolutionary moments of transition from autocracy to democracy.

Syrians have suffered the same combination of political authoritarianism, social deprivations, economic disparities, mass psycho-

logical humiliation, elite abuse of power and helplessness in the regional and global arenas that afflict so many other Arab countries, and that have sparked the ongoing uprisings. Assad's assertion one year ago that Syria was exempt from the revolutionary impulse for change was a self-imposed hoax and delusion that has now been revealed to be just that.

Now is the moment for all rational people to pause and make sure their feet are firmly on the ground. Events in and around Syria have fuelled a frenzied deluge of wild analysis and prediction that tend to ignore the simple reality that we are seeing today in Syria the convergence of two inevitabilities: the collapse of Arab authoritarianism and the resetting of the regional and global balance of power that comprises Western incompetence and retreat, the rise of assorted large and medium Asian powers like Russia, China, Turkey and Iran, and the resumption of Arab involvement in the writing of modern Arab history.

We should celebrate both, because the resumption of history in the Middle East amid a multipolar world strikes me as much more comforting than the criminality, callousness and carnage that have defined the last few decades in which American, European and

Yemen's Islamists and the revolution

By: Laurent Bonnefoy Foreignpolicy.com

Islamist movements did not start Yemen's revolution, but they have loomed large over its fate. Tawakul Karman, an ex-member of Islah, a coalition party that includes Yemen's Muslim Brotherhood, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her tireless political campaigning. Backers of outgoing President Ali Abdullah Saleh warned of the inexorable rise of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), even after the killing of ideologue Anwar Al-Awlaki by a US drone.

But as in much of the Arab world, the Yemeni revolution has presented both opportunities and challenges to its Islamists. At least five different Islamist trends have played important roles in the unfolding events – and some have fared better than others. Those struggling to help Yemen's political transition must recognize the diversity and internal struggles among these Islamist trends, and be prepared to engage with them as part of the country's political landscape.

The Islamist trend most directly involved in the popular revolution is undoubtedly the Islah party. Islah qualifies as the Yemeni branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, but should be understood as a coalition that includes conservative tribal leaders and prominent businessmen. Islah began as a rather reluctant supporter of the "revolutionary youth" which was calling for the departure of Ali Abdullah Saleh in the early days of 2011. As a key part of the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), the platform of the unified opposition established since the early 2000s, Islah appeared to be willing to make compromises and accept dialogue with the regime, then becoming its main interlocutor.

As Saleh appeared to be losing grip in the late spring, however, Islah moved to capture a position as a central actor of the revolutionary process. Its mobilizing capacity through its mosques, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and activists ended up restructuring much of the revolution, both physically in Change Square in Sana'a,

and in terms of agenda. No other structure or movement seemed able to compete with it. This has made Islah a key broker in the political gamesmanship unfolding over the transition, even as "revolutionary youth" complain that it has hijacked the revolution.

Sensitive to such critiques, Islah's leadership appears to have been willing to leave other players in the front row. It did not claim the position of prime minister of the national unity government that was announced in November 2011. But there should be no doubts about Islah's capacity to mobilize electors massively when general elections are organized. The movement, with its tribal allies, is also trying hard to challenge the narrative according to which alternatives to Saleh are inexistent or are lacking responsibility.

A less well-understood trend is the quietist Salafis, with Yahya Al-Hajuri of Dar Al-Hadith institute in Damaj at their head, who have reasserted their stance of loyalty to the regime in order to fight what they describe as a chaotic situation. This branch of Salafism has played hard to delegitimize in religious terms the popular uprising, stigmatizing the "revolutionary youth" as well as the Muslim Brotherhood for encouraging a process whose main beneficiaries are, in their eyes, the "enemies of Islam." Appearing as the last supporters of the regime may end up being costly in the long run but could also see the quietist Salafis emerge as the popular advocates of stability should the situation deteriorate significantly. Indeed, while precise data is hard to come by, it appears that the quietist Salafis have been losing ground over the past year.

But the Salafis too are changing in the face of popular revolution. An offshoot of the quietist branch of Salafism has been increasingly engaging in political activities for the last few years, neglecting issues of loyalty and criticism of party politics (hizbiyya). These politicized Salafis see the Yemeni revolutionary process as a new opportunity for overt engagement in the political sphere. With the revolution, members of the Hikma and Ihsan asso-

ciations, likely emboldened by the success of Al-Nour party in Egypt, have announced projects to create parties and participate in upcoming elections. Among them, Aqil Al-Maqtari, with important support in Taiz, has established the League for Renaissance and Change. Despite being fragmented along regional lines, these initiatives are significant and politicized Salafis are likely to emerge as a new political force, one that analysts will need in the near future to understand beyond criminalizing stereotypes.

Another trend are the jihadist movements, which are more or less linked to AQAP. They have engaged in a variety of processes that have to a certain extent normalized them, fully embedding these actors in the Yemeni context and in what can be labeled a continuum of violence, particularly in the southern governorates. They have used the revolutionary events to legitimize their own historical narrative. This process has changed the meaning of an "Al-Qaeda" militant in Yemen and leaves space for possible interactions and dialogue with other social and political actors.

Jihadi sympathizers have gained some control over territory in part because of the growing disorganization of the central state and of its shrinking military resources. Effective control over territory (in Jaar for instance) has favored a change in focus toward fighting a guerilla war against the regime and its allies and, at the local level, developing public policies addressing grievances of the population. Such a shift (which should not only be understood as the result of the assassination in September 2011 of Al-Awlaki, the so-called mastermind of the transnational outreach of AQAP) has in a way transferred militant energy and resources on the Yemeni agenda. This process, which is not necessarily centralized or self-conscious, is likely to gain momentum and highlights that confrontation, repression, and the drone attacks strategies are hardly able to address the complexity of the issues that are at stake in revolutionary Yemen.

At another end of the Islamist spectrum, Zaydi revivalists (drawing from a Shiite background) with

the so-called "Houthi movement" have also been directly affected by the revolutionary process. Over the course of 2011, the diminishing military capacity of the regime has forced it to focus on the capital, Sana'a, and therefore, in effect, to abandon much of the Sa'ada governorate and its surroundings to the Houthi rebels it had been fighting since 2004. The Houthi leadership has simultaneously taken divergent options – claiming to accept to play the institutional game including, for instance, by favoring the initiative of Muhammad Miftah to establish the Ummah party or letting some of its sympathizers reach out on Change Square in Sana'a toward non-Zaydi activists, while at the same time engaging in violence with competing Sunni Islamist groups, particularly quietist Salafis in Damaj or members of Islah in Al-Jawf.

The long-running, intense Yemeni crisis is thus radically reshaping the opportunities and the challenges to all Islamist trends. These movements are likely to continue being central actors at the national level and to emerge as necessary interlocutors at the international level. The most significant trend today appears to be one drawing, in the long run, the various Islamist movements toward greater institutionalization, inclusion in the political process, and eventually participation in future elections. But if that political process fails to take hold, the potential for mayhem and armed confrontation should not be neglected, including in the form of inter-sectarian warfare.

Both diverging outcomes obviously depend on internal variables and on the attitudes of Yemenis. But international actors can make a difference. The West should acknowledge the popular legitimacy of these Islamist movements, as well as their great internal diversity, and be prepared to engage with them as an important part of Yemen's future.

Laurent Bonnefoy is a researcher based in the Levant at the Institut Français du Proche-Orient, and author of "Salafism in Yemen: Transnationalism and Religious Identity" (Columbia University Press).

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Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf
Senior Reporter
Mohammed bin Sallam
Interns
Amira Al-Arasi
amira_new20@yahoo.com
Marwa Najmaldeen
marwanajm@yahoo.com
Anas Rawi
anas.rawi@hotmail.com
Muaath Badeeb
Muaath.badeeb@hotmail.com

CEO
Khair Aldin Al Nsour
Managing Editor
Ali Saeed
Editorial Staff
Garnet Roach
garnet.yt@gmail.com
Malak Shaher
malakshaher@gmail.com

Head of Design Dept.
Ramzy Alawi Al-Saqqaf
Sadeq Al-Wesabi
sadeqalwesabi@hotmail.com
Shatha Al-Harazi
shatha.yt@gmail.com
Ali Ajlan
aliajlan.yt@gmail.com

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

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YEMEN BRANCH

ANNOUNCEMENT

OF THE VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION OF
CREDIT AGRICOLE CORPORATE AND INVESTMENT BANK, YEMEN BRANCH
(PREVIOUSLY "CALYON, YEMEN")

TO ALL CUSTOMERS

OF CREDIT AGRICOLE CORPORATE AND INVESTMENT BANK, YEMEN BRANCH

FURTHER TO OUR FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT MADE ON NOVEMBER 24, 27 AND 28, 2011 CONCERNING THE VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION OF THE BANK, AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE HEAD OFFICE OF CREDIT AGRICOLE CORPORATE AND INVESTMENT BANK (PARIS) CONCERNING THE LIQUIDATION OF ITS BRANCH IN YEMEN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE WORLDWIDE RESTRUCTURING OF ITS ACTIVITIES AND THE APPROVAL THEREOF RECEIVED FROM THE CENTRAL BANK OF YEMEN DATED NOVEMBER 1ST, 2011, CREDIT AGRICOLE CORPORATE AND INVESTMENT BANK, YEMEN BRANCH REITERATES ITS ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION OF ITS OPERATIONS WHICH WILL START FROM MARCH 1ST, 2012 AND THE GRADUAL CLOSURE OF ALL ITS BRANCHES IN YEMEN WHOSE CLOSING DATES ARE SCHEDULED BELOW;

- CLOSING OF ADEN BRANCH ON MARCH 31, 2012
- CLOSING OF MUKALLA BRANCH ON MARCH 31, 2012
- CLOSING OF TAIZ BRANCH ON APRIL 30, 2012
- CLOSING OF HODEIDAH BRANCH ON APRIL 30, 2012
- CLOSING OF ZUBEIRY BRANCH AND HEAD OFFICE IN SANA'A ON JUNE 30, 2012

THE BANK CONFIRMS THAT THE PROCEDURES ON THE VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION AND CLOSING OF CREDIT AGRICOLE CORPORATE AND INVESTMENT BANK, YEMEN BRANCH WILL BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE APPLICABLE BANKING LAW IN THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN NO (38)/ 1998 AND THE CENTRAL BANK OF YEMEN REGULATIONS WITH THE AIM OF SECURING ALL LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF ITS CUSTOMERS.

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في الختام يتقدم بنك كريدبي أجريكول بالشكر لكافة عملائه الكرام على ثقتهم في التعامل مع البنك عبر كل هذه السنوات ودعمهم خلال عملية التصفية الإختيارية.

كما يؤكد لعملائه ان عملية التصفية الإختيارية لعملياته في اليمن وإغلاق فروعها سيتم بطريقة منهجية ومنظمة لإنجاز هذه المهمة بسهولة.

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الفروع الأخرى

- فرع عدن: الشارع الرئيسي - المعلا، (صندوق بريد ٥٣٧١، هاتف ٣/٤/٢٤٧٤٠٢) (٩٦٧٢)
- فرع الحديدة: شارع ٢٦ سبتمبر - الحي التجاري (صندوق بريد ٣٥٧٧، هاتف ٧/٢١٩٥٠٦) (٩٦٧٣)
- فرع تعز: شارع المواصلات - امام البريد، (صندوق بريد ٥٦٨٦، هاتف ٧/٢١٠٥٦٨) (٩٦٧٤)
- فرع المكلا: لشارع الرئيسي - حي الديس، (صندوق بريد ٥٠٢٢٧، هاتف ٢/٢٨٨٣٠١) (٩٦٧٥)

الحاقاً لإعلاننا السابق بتاريخ ٢٤-٢٧-٢٨/١١/٢٠١١ بخصوص التصفية الإختيارية للبنك،

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- إغلاق فرع تعز في ٣٠/٤/٢٠١٢م.
- إغلاق فرع الحديدة في ٣٠/٤/٢٠١٢م.
- إغلاق فرعنا والمركز الرئيسي في صنعاء في ٣٠ يونيو ٢٠١٢.

ويؤكد البنك أن إجراءات التصفية الإختيارية وإغلاق بنك كريدبي أجريكول للتمويل والإستثمار - فرع اليمن سيتم وفقاً للقانون رقم (٣٨) لسنة ١٩٩٨م بشأن البنوك النافذ في الجمهورية اليمنية وكذلك تعليمات البنك المركزي اليمني بهدف تأمين الحقوق الشرعية لكافة عملائه.

كما يؤكد بنك كريدبي أجريكول للتمويل والإستثمار فرع اليمن لعملائه الكرام بأنه ابتداءً من ١ مارس ٢٠١٢م سيتوقف البنك تماماً:

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يوم الاقتراع للانتخابات الرئاسية المبكرة

Newly-trained midwives establish home clinics



Yemen has only 5,000 midwives, but needs at least 20,000, according to the YMA.

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

More than 100 midwives have opened home clinics with the aim of alleviating the suffering of thousands of women who face difficulties and dangers during their delivery, especially in the rural areas.

The women were trained by the National Yemeni Midwives Association (YMA), supported by USAID, which also provided them with the necessary equipment to set up their own clinics.

Yemen suffers from a shortage of skilled midwives – especially in rural areas where women run the risk of complications and even death as they travel many miles

to reach a midwife before giving birth.

Last Saturday, the YMA started a two-week training course for 30 midwives in Shabwa and Amran governorates, teaching them how to run a small business and empowering them to establish their own home clinics and improve the quality of reproductive health services in their local areas.

The YMA also helps those midwives to gain licenses from the Ministry of Health so that can operate legally.

"We have only about 5,000 skilled midwives while Yemen needs at least 20,000," said Dr. Suad Qasim, head of the National Yemeni Midwives Association.

The YMA was established, and began training midwives, in 2006 with the assistance of USAID, in the hopes that they would be able to open and manage their own clinics.

"This project is unique and was created to alleviate the suffering of thousands of pregnant women in rural areas who are scared about their delivery. They really need such projects," she said.

Qasim told the Yemen Times that some women in rural areas deliver their babies with the aid of neighbors or old, unskilled midwives who

use traditional tools and methods. However, she said that resorting to unskilled midwives is also danger to women's health.

The National Yemeni Midwives Association plays a vital role in training midwives and providing them with refresher courses to make sure their skills remain up to date. It was established in 2006 to improve midwifery sector, increase the number of trained midwives and raise awareness about safe delivery methods and reproductive health.

Dr. Suad travelled to Uganda to see how home clinics had helped women in the East African country. "It was a great idea that contributed towards easing the suffering of women there. We wanted to implement the same experience in Yemen and we succeeded."

In addition to offering women in rural areas access to well-equipped clinics in their locality, these clinics also provide a source of income to the midwives and their employees.

"One of the midwives who benefited from this project has

hired 12 workers in her clinic while others have expanded their clinics," said Fatoom Ali Noor, secretary-general of the YMA.

She explained that people in these areas have expressed their satisfaction about the new clinics, adding that to date, there have been no deaths in the home-run clinics.

Noor went on to criticize the poor midwifery service offered by some Yemeni clinics and hospitals. "Unfortunately, some women have been hurt or treated harshly by midwives in some hospitals. Some

are careless with heavily pregnant women," she said.

Shams Mohammed, a midwife from Amran governorate and one of the trainees, said that her area lacks both clinics and skilled midwives.

However, Mohammed is very optimistic about the training she received. "I'm going to establish my own 24-hour clinic to help people in my deprived area and raise awareness about reproductive health among people here," she said.

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In this section we talk to young people about their concerns, hopes and dreams. Every week we hit the streets and share what young people have to say right here.

This week's question:

Will you participate in the presidential election on February 21? Why?



Hussain Fatehallah, 46
I am looking forward to voting on February 21 to choose a new president for Yemen.

Adnan Almuhana, 27, Post-graduate
Participation in the Yemeni presidential election is more important at this time than ever before. It is my pleasure to partake in this election. I think that every single Yemeni who loves Yemen has to contribute in this political event. When they do so they will place the cornerstone for building a new Yemen and prove to the whole world that we can practice our legal rights. It will help us move from a dictatorial era to a bright democracy free from corruption and release Yemen from the grip of crisis. I hope for a better future for my beloved country.

Abdulnasser Al-Abdali
I do not fully support this election as it seems rather strange but I will participate so that change takes place legally and to avoid civil war and anarchy in Yemen. I think this election will be the master key for the future of Yemen. I also see Hadi as the most acceptable and suitable character for the transitional period as he is patient and wise enough to peacefully lead Yemen to a better future.

Khalid Al-Karimi, 23
The presidential election is a fateful step. Some may say the whole process of this election is futile, since the result is already agreed. It is true that the future president of Yemen has been appointed by the whole world, but rather than criticizing, it is better to support the regionally and internationally unanimous candidate Hadi. Personally, I will be the first to stand in a queue to exercise my rights and vote. Why should we take part in the

coming election? Your participation is an indication of your maturity, awareness and responsibility. The electoral process is the best way to avoid havoc, strife, dictatorship and hereditary reign. It is the soul of democracy. Now let us prove to the world that we are a democratic people.

Adel Ahmed Al-Qadassi, 30, graduate
In my point of view we must all participate in presidential election and exercise our constitutional rights. No matter what we think of it – that it might be not legitimate with only one candidate – we all have to give our best to bring Yemen out of this crisis.

Redhwan Raweh, 27, English teacher
Yes, I will vote. This day will truly be an opportunity to lead our country into safety and stability. We need to be responsible and put the interests of Yemen above all else. Despite the obstacles we will inevitably face, we can build a new Yemen. So we must put our differences aside and all participate in the presidential election on February 21.

Gamal Abdulkarim Alghazaly, 30, computer engineer
I will definitely participate in the coming election for these reasons; first, to give the new president a national legitimacy; second, to participate in a real election; third, to protect Yemen against collapse or civil war; fourth, to achieve the first goal of our peaceful revolution; and finally, to put the last nail in Ali Abdullah Saleh's coffin.

Sameer Yeslam, 25, accountant
Of course I will vote because I think it's the only way to overcome this bad situation. We are a very kind people and don't deserve to live in this man-

ner – I'm certain that what our prophet taught about Yemeni people will be shown on February 21 when the people will forget their conflicts and put the interest of Yemen above all. We will show the world that we really live in a democratic country.

Ali Naji Hadi, 24, student at Sana'a University
I will vote because my conscience tells me that in the interest of homeland, I must participate in the presidential election. Because it is really a referendum to say we do not want a family reign. And most important, the election will fulfil one of the objectives of our youth revolution – finally getting rid of Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Sami Shamlan
I will participate in the presidential election on February 21 because firstly, I think it is the only way to protect Yemen from any outside plans that could destroy our country. Secondly, it is our chance to end the era of Ali Abdullah Saleh and begin a new one to rebuild our beloved country together. Finally, I think that voting in this election will improve stability and help return everything to its rightful place.

Next week's question:
Do you think that consensus candidate Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi can lead the two-year transitional period successfully?

Send us an e-mail with your name, age, occupation or university course to ytyouth@gmail.com. This is your chance to share your humorous stories, poems or opinions with other young readers!

Picture of the week



Soufis celebrate the birth of prophet Mohammed in old Sana'a.
Photo by Tom Finn

Arabia Felix

By: Bilal Ahmed Homran

I am far from my motherland (Yemen) and I am worried: Worried for my loved ones, worried for the children of a failing united society, worried for the lady I met in Change Square weeping over her son's body, and sadly I am worried for the whole Yemeni nation as it discovers the reaction to its freedom from a long and cruel 33 year dictatorship rule under Saleh.

I am at a distance far from the noise of gunfire. Yemen is at a crucial crossroads in its lifetime.

My sole recommendation to the caretaker government would be to allow all of its people to contribute to the plans for a stronger, peaceful, and prosperous new Yemen. And sadly to say this has not been the case. President Saleh's rule over Yemen was not an easy task and I can truly say he did a great job ruling over a complex tribal, politically diverse and religious society. At the same time I must state the obvious that Saleh's rule over Yemen kept the life of the Yemeni nation like a ticking bomb waiting to explode and that's the reality on the ground now. The different factions of Yemeni society have their own self made interests on what is to become of Yemen after Saleh.

Criminal gangs have taken the streets of my hometown Taiz. Terrorists have mobilized and been given easy and free access to anything as the government has been preoccupied in trying to maintain power. The continued unsolved wrongs by the northerners towards their southern Yemeni counterparts kept the divide an option for the south. Sadly the corrupted greed that has overpowered every governmental employee has kept trust at a distance. The Houthi confederate in the north continues to aim for a one-hierarchy Zadi caliphate. And the high percentage of poverty has tested the patience of the Yemeni people.

Yemen is the poorest nation in the Middle East and the causes are many but all lie on the failed leadership of the Yemeni government. Riches in natural resources are in abundance in Yemen. And that's a fact to all of you Yemeni outsiders. Safety and corruption has caused these resources to go unnoticed.

Arabia-Felix is what the Romans called modern day Yemen. And they knew what they were talking about. Aside from the vast wealth hidden in and on Yemeni soil, is the hearts of the Yemeni people. Yes warm hospitality is what I enjoy and have grown accustomed to love. Yemenis

will do anything to make sure that their guests are welcomed with open arms. This isn't only to foreigners. I was driving to the internet cafe with my cousin one night during the holy month of Ramadan. We stopped by a local cafe and my cousin stepped out to order as I remained in the car to catch up on my reading.

As my cousin ordered our regular juices and sandwiches a teenage boy comes by my car and hands me two pieces of kak (a Yemeni cookie like cake pastry). With simplicity and warmth I realized that he only kept one for himself.

I can roam through the forbidden zone of Hadramout on a camel, knowing that hospitality is waiting at the end of the long desert divide.

Without hesitation I must say that Yemen is my motherland and it has an abundance of greatness to be found. It will be decades before its people discover the true realities of the new democratic norms; A newly divided society if the caretaker government fails to include all of the Yemeni people in its decision-making. I wish Yemen nothing but the peaceful best and a prosperous future Insha Allah!

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Vacancy

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Crossword

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

ACROSS

- Cesspool (4)
- Put together (8)
- Acquit (7)
- Tease (5)
- Variably (12)
- Cake (6)
- Hope (6)
- Headwear item (3-6,3)
- Mannequin (5)
- Motorbike attachment (7)
- Partly (8)
- Detect (4)

Down

- Arenas (8)
- Harmonious sounds (5)
- Afternoon rest (6)
- Retract a statement (3,4,5)
- Stewed meat (7)
- Dines (4)
- Oblique hit (8,4)
- Science fiction weapon (5,3)
- Liberty (7)
- Part of the blood (6)
- Chops roughly (5)
- Flightless birds (4)

Sudoku

Easy

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

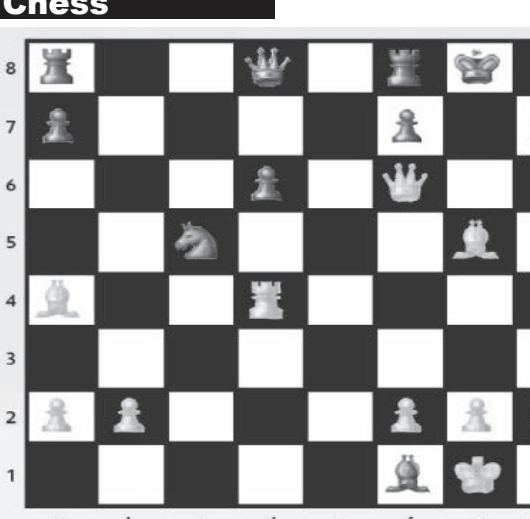
Intermediate

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

Difficult

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

Chess



Solutions

Chess: Rg4
Cross Words: Across: 1 Sump; 3 Assemble; 9 Absolve; 10 Taunt; 11 Inconstantly; 13 Murn; 15 Aspire; 17 Tena-gallon hat; 20 Model; 21 Sidecar; 22 Somewhat; 23 Espy.
Down: 1 Stadiums; 2 Music; 4 Sista; 5 Eat one's words; 6 Bouilli; 7 Eats; 8 Glancing blow; 12 Death ray; 14 Freedom; 16 Plasma; 18 Hacks; 19 Emus.

White plays and wins in the 3rd move

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Yemen's winning World Press Photo



Samuel Aranda's winning photo beat off competition from more than 100,000 other entries.

Amira Al-Arasi

Fatima Al-Qaws, is the veiled woman cradling her wounded son after an anti-government demonstration in October. She is also one of the subjects in Samuel Aranda's winning World Press photo.

Al-Qaws, who is from Ba'dan district in Ibb governorate but lives in Sana'a, explained that she only

found out about the photo after her niece phoned from the UAE – though she still did not realize the significance of the picture.

"I thought that the photo people were talking about was actually my appearance in an interview on Suhail TV and Al-Jazeera some months ago, so I did not pay much attention to it," she said, but her niece insisted it was her and her son.

Al-Qaws explained that she first saw the photo on her son's mobile

phone and recalled the day of October 15 on Al-Zubairy Street – a conflict line between anti-regime protesters and security forces at the time.

"It was after an attack against demonstrators on Al-Zubairy Street," she said. "I went to the field hospital and did not see my son among the dead or wounded protesters. I checked the place again and saw my son lying on the ground suffocated with tear gas," she explained. "So I embraced him and [Aranda] must have taken the photo at that moment."

Her son, Zayed Al-Qawas, 18, said he thought it was a joke until more people called to tell him about Aranda's picture.

"I did not expect this photo to win among thousands of pictures and it is a real support to the revolution," he said. "It demonstrates that Yemenis are not extremists."

Helping Yemen

The Spanish photographer's photo, which was taken while on assignment for the New York Times, beat off competition from more than 100,000 entries to win one of the most prestigious photography awards on Friday.

The New York Times' Lens Blog wrote that after hearing the news, Aranda called his mother in Spain, who cried for 45 minutes. He said that "while conversations might revolve around composition and form", he hopes it will help the people of Yemen. He also commented on the help he received from Yemeni photographers – specifically mentioning Mohamed Al-Sayaghi of Reuters.

Aranda, who now lives in Tunisia, covered the Arab Spring from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen. In December, he presented a selection of Arab Spring photos at the Spanish Embassy in Sana'a, alongside freelance photographer Lindsay Mackenzie.

'An intimate moment' Koyo Kouoh, one of the jury mem-

bers on the World Press photo board, said: "It is a photo that speaks for the entire region. It stands for Yemen, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Syria, for all that happened in the Arab Spring.

"But it shows a private, intimate side of what went on. And it shows the role that women played, not only as care-givers, but as active people in the movement."

Nina Berman, another World Press judge, added, "In the Western media, we seldom see veiled women in this way, at such an intimate moment. It is as if all of the events of the Arab Spring resulted in this single moment – in moments like this."

Yemeni photographers are also proud of Aranda's achievement. "We feel proud of this photo because it is very important for the world to have a new impression of Yemen," Nadia Abdulla, a freelance Yemeni photographer, said.

"The foreign media has been presenting Yemenis as terrorists but this is the first time Yemen's beautiful and expressive side has been shown," she added.

Setting the standard

The 2011 World Press Photo award is the 55th annual contest in what is universally recognized as the world's leading photojournalism prize, setting the standard for the profession.

The contest draws entries by professional press photographers, photojournalists and documentary photographers from across the world, with 5,247 photographers from 124 countries participating this year and 101,254 pictures judged.

The jury awarded prizes to 57 photographers in nine themed categories, with the Arab Spring and the Japanese earthquake and tsunami both making a big impact.

All entries are presented and judged anonymously by 19 internationally recognized professionals over two weeks before the winners are announced.

Aranda will officially receive his World Press award in Amsterdam on Saturday, April 21, 2012. The award also carries a cash prize of €10,000 and a Canon EOS Digital SLR Camera and lens kit.

An exhibition of the award-winning images will be open to the public at the Oude Kerk, Oudekerksplein, in Amsterdam on Friday, April 20, until June 17.

A worldwide tour of the exhibition will also be launched, covering a record 105 venues in 45 countries. Combined with a yearbook, distributed internationally in seven languages, the winning images will reach a worldwide audience of millions in the course of the year.



Aranda covered uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen.



The Spanish photographer presents an exhibition at the Spanish Embassy in Sana'a in December 2011.

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