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## **Houthi-Salafi confrontations** renewed in Sa'ada

#### **By: Mohammed Bin Sallam**

SA'ADA, April 22 – Ten people were killed and two others wounded in bloody confrontations took place on Saturday between Houthi armed men and four students of Dar Al-Hadeeth Salafi School in the Dammaj area of Sa'ada.

The Salafis claimed that four of them were killed, along with six Houthis killed and two wounded, which the Houthis denied.

"Four students of Dar Al-Hadeeth School were stopped by the Houthis at checkpoint belong to the Houthis, approximately 500 meters away from the house of Faris Mana'a,



the governor of Sa'ada, in Rahban area in Sa'ada city," according to a prominent Salafi leader in Dar Al-Hadeeth, requesting anonymity.

"The four students were on their way to Sa'ada's court to sign a marriage contract involving Abdulnoor Al-Baidani, a Salafi student at Dar al-Hadeeth, who was married recently to a girl in Dammaj [a hometown for 25,000 Salafis in Sada], " he said.

"The Houthi armed men tried to take the students' rifles but they refused. So the Houthis shot at them. Though the students escaped to Sheikh Shwait's house, located nearby, no one helped them," he added.

"A Houthi-Salafi agreement led by Sheikh Hussein Al-Ahmar stated that no one would stops students from Dar Al-Hadeeth, check them, disturb them or take their guns, wherever they are," he said.

The Salafi leader in Dammaj accused the Houthis of breaking the truce agreement.

"However, the Houthis broke this agreement and took the students' guns. They collected 500 armed men of their supporters quickly to prevent any mediation to release the students before being killed," the sheikh continued.

"We didn't retaliate but instead we conveyed the issue to Sheikh Al-Ahmar and several other sheikhs, who asked us not to fight the Houthis and promised to arbitrate the matter," he said.

"The sheikhs will solve the matter according to Yemeni tribal customs. They demanded that we send the guns, according to Yemeni trib-



Armed men of the Houthis have thier own security checkpoints throughout Sa'ada. They killed on Saturday four Salafi students at one of their checkpoints in Sa'ada city.

al traditions where both aggrieved parties have to send guns to the sheikhs as a sign of good will. They [the guns] are given back to each party after solving the problem," the sheikh concluded.

"Four of our men, who were protecting the Rahban area in Sa'ada, were killed and two others wounded," Sheikh Saleh Habra, a leader of the Houthis, told the Yemen Times. Habra for his part accused the Salafis in Dammaj of provoking the conflict again.

"Though we followed the terms of the agreement headed by Sheikh Hussein Al-Ahmar between us and people in the Dammaj area, some Salafis are still trying to bring us into conflict with them," he said.

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until late December was ceased in line with truce agreement brokered by Sheikh, Hussein Al-Ahmar, an influential tribal leader in Amran, south Sa'ada. "What is going on in the Dammaj area is a mere sectarian conflict and

the continuing of such conflicts will cause a sectarian war nationwide, reported China's Xinhua News Agency, by way of Yemeni researchers.

There are mutual accusations between Houthis and Salafi leaders of Dammaj of instigating sectarian violence in Sa'ada governorate.

Dar Al-Hadeeth Quranic school in Dammaj was established in the

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مقابلة حصرية

Dr. Yahya Al-Shaibi to the Yemen Times:

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**Read full interview** on pages: 5 & 6

> الدكتور يحى الشعيبى في حوار مع اليمن تايمز " لاأعتقد أن حكومة اليوم جادة بدليل البطُّ، في اتخاذ القرارات رغم ضيق الوقت."

نص المقابلة كاملة باللغة العربية – الصفحة السادسة و السابعة

1980s by the religious leader Sheikh Moqbel Al-Wadie and is considered the biggest Salafi school in Yemen. Now Sheikh Yahia Al-Hajoori is the head of Dar Al-Hadeeth. There are an estimated 7,000 students in Dar Al-Hadeeth of different nationalities and 2,500 families live around the school.

The Houthis are known for their relationship to Zaydism. Their former leader, Houssein Al-Houthi, was killed in 2004 during the first round of the war between the Houthis and the Yemeni army. They have been through six wars with the central government, the last one

ending in 2010.

The Houthis accuse Dar Al-Hadeeth's leaders of opposing Yemen's youth revolution.

According to Mohammed Abdulsalam, the Houthis' spokesman, there was no conflict between the Houthis and other religious groups prior to the Salafis creating conflict in Sa'ada governorate.

Yet, according to one of the Salafi leaders in Dar Al-Hadeeth school, what is happening in Sa'ada is a result of the grudge the Houthis bear the Salafis, enforced by their Shiite views along with their political ambitions to rule the country.





# The sectrain battles which erupted in November 2011 and continued



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## **AROUND THE NATION**



## Saudi and Iran exchange accusations over Somali military recruitment in Yemen

#### By: Muaad Al-Maqtari

SANA'A, April 22 – The flow of African refugees in Yemen, in particular Somalis, has sparked a wave of accusations between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Iranian and Saudi media outlets have accused each other's countries of recruiting Somalis who flow into Yemen as fighters.

The Iranian military-run Fars News Agency (FNA) said last Thursday that 1,300 Somali refugees were transferred to Saudi Arabia to be militarily trained. They claimed that this is part of a Saudi plan to train hundreds of Somalis to fight the Houthis in Sa'ada, north Yemen.

The Tehran based news agency also said that the US government is involved in preparations of a plan to counter the Shiite Islamists in Yemen. "Saudi Arabia uses Somalis to fight the Houthis in north Yemen, and they are trained in Saudi military bases who take advantage of Somalis who infiltrate into Saudi Arabia through trafficking. They are trained to fight on behalf of them,"

FNA said. The Saudi Al-Sharq, a Riyadh based Newspaper posted a prolonged interview with a Saudi analyst, Ali Al-Twati, who spoke about the consequences of Yemen's turbulence on the Gulf's security.

Al-Twati affirmed that there are superpowers such Iran that insist on provoking tensions in the region, in particular in Yemen, to have political and sectarian influence.

He said that Al-Qaeda in Yemen depends on military supplies that are provided via the Arabian Sea,

pointing out that Iran is involved in providing this support to ignite chaos in the Gulf.

He cited that Somalia is no less dangerous than Abyan, and that Al-Qaeda militants gathered there. He claimed that a number of Somali militants were captured while they were fighting with the Houthis in the latest war between the Yemeni government and the Houthis.

A Somali news website, Somalia Today, expressed concerns about the possible consequences for Somalis as a result of quasi-official accusations between Riyadh and Tehran.

In an analysis posted on the website on Thursday, Somalia Today expressed concerns about news recently posted by the Iranian military, indicating that innocent Somalis will be affected as a result of the news.

It further said that Somalis were previously killed owing to rumors and reports that falsely stated that Somalis had fought on the side of the former president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

On the Yemeni side, a meeting was held last Saturday to discuss the flow of Somali refugees in Yemen.

The meeting was held in the headquarters of the Foreign Affairs Ministry in the capital Sana'a with the attendance of the Minister for Human Rights, Huria Mashhoor, deputy minister of the Foreign Ministry for Refuge Affairs, Ali Muthna Hassan and the representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR in Yemen), Naveed Hussain.

It discussed the flow of Somalis who come to fight with Al-Qaeda as well as the consequences of that on Yemen.

The Yemeni Interior Ministry said on its website that smuggling boats landed 234 Africans on the coast of Shabwa, on the Arabian Sea, and off the coast of Taiz on the Red Sea. The boats managed to escape, according to the Ministry of Interior.

The Yemeni security services said on Friday that among the African arrivals were 60 women and 34 children, and that 195 of the Africans were from Somalia with the remainder from Ethiopia.

They indicated that 158 of the Africans landed on the Dhubab coast of Taiz, and the other 76 landed on the coasts of Shabwa governorate.

The security services said that they sent the refugees coming from the Horn of Africa to the main camp of refugees located in the Kharaz area of Lahj governorate.



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## Yemeni fishing boat freed from pirates

#### By: Ali Saeed

AL-MAHRA, April 22 - Forces of the Yemeni Coast Guard, in coordination with Spanish Naval Forces in the Gulf of Aden, freed a Yemeni fishing boat from Somali pirates on Friday, 42 miles off the coast of Al-Mahra governorate, south of the port of Nashtun.

The boat, which was abducted by Somali pirates on March 26, has been returned to its owner in Al-Mahra, after being brought in to the port of Nashtun, Shuja'a Mahdi, commander of Yemeni Coast Guard Operations, told the Yemen Times on Saturday.

He explained that, "The Yemeni Coast Guard is preparing to attack pirates inside Yemen's regional and economic waters, who are primarily at large during this season, as the sea is quiet and fishermen are there in large numbers."

He added that the Somali pirates



Only one boat has been so far released of ten others still in abduction by the Somali pirates since January, 2012.

utilize the calm waters to attack Yemeni fishermen and commercial ships from all directions with small boats.

In the last four months, Somali pirates have hijacked approximately

ent locations, including the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea and around the island of Socotra, according to Yemeni Coast Guard officials.

"Only one of the hijacked boats has been rescued so far, and the ten Yemeni fishing boats in differ- others are still with the pirates,"

#### He indicated that Yemeni fishermen do not abide by safety mea-

said Mahdi.

sures, and often fish in Somali regional waters, which are some of the richest with fish, but are highly vulnerable to piracy.

'We educated Yemeni fishermen on security and safety measures and told them not to enter Somali regional waters," said Mahdi.

He added that Yemen's Coast Guard also exchanges information on piracy with international naval forces in the Gulf of Aden in order to reduce attacks against Yemeni fishermen and commercial ships.

The Yemeni Coast Guard, which was established in 2003 and is run by the Ministry of Interior, still lacks sophisticated ships that can sail beyond Yemen's economic and regional waters, in order to combat Somali pirates who mostly operate outside Yemeni's home waters, according to Yemeni Coast Guard.

## **Al-Zandani calls on militant** groups to renounce violence, engage in dialogue

#### **By: Mohammed Al-Samei**

SANA'A, April 22 – Abdulmajeed Al-Zandani, a prominent Yemeni cleric and a leading Islah party figure, called on militant groups on Friday to renounce violence and to participate in the upcom-

ing national dialogue due

of foreigners whose countries have agreements and conventions with Muslim states.

Al-Zandani said that fighting Muslim soldiers or pulling guns on citizens or even attacking Western countries which have treaties and US and for the entire international

against us [Yemen]," he said. Last month, the US ambassador to Sana'a, Gerald Feierstein, said in an interview with London-based Al-Hayat newspaper that Al-Zandani is a source of concern for the community, considering him a terrorism

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to kick off before long, as maintained by the GCCbrokered power transfer deal.

In an interview with the daily newspaper Akhbar Al-Youm, Al-Zandani said "If these groups refuse to renounce violence, then the government and the Yemeni people should take decisive action against them in order to restore security and stability."

He denounced violent acts, killing of soldiers, and targeting of public services and foreign interests by armed groups, calling on the government Abdulmajeed Al-Zandani to enter into dialogue with these groups on condition that the groups renounce violence.

He indicated that it's not permissible to fight Muslims, soldiers or civilians, citing words of the Prophet Mohammed: "Whoever trains the gun on us is not one of us."

Speaking about the newly-elected President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, he said that all Yemenis have willingly chosen Hadi, and now they are looking to him for reforms.

Al-Zandandi stressed that the first step to solve the disputes with the militant groups starts with holding a national dialogue, which the government already announced in order to overcome the multiple challenges currently facing Yemen.

Regarding the attacks on foreign interests, he has pointed out that it's forbidden to target the interests



conventions with Muslims is forbidden in Islam.

'What's the crime the peaceful Westerners have committed when they are killed inside Muslim states?" Al-Zandani asked.

He questioned the sense of terrorist groups, and said, "The government is chosen by the people. We complained about the former regime, but now we have a new government and a new President. What do these groups want?"

"You [terrorists] said that you did not intend to fight Muslims, but you do intend to fight other countries and attack their interests. The interests you attack will prompt these countries to ask our government to hand you over to them. If the state refuses to hand you over, these countries will wage a war

supporter who poses a danger to the US as well as the entire world.

For its part, the Islah party, the main party in the opposition coalition known as the Joint Meeting Parties, to which al-Zandani belongs, has expressed regret over the US ambassador's comments about Al-Zandani.

Islah, which is a wing of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement in Yemen, said in a statement released last month that "the allegations of having links with terrorism against Al-Zandani have been brought up

by many US officials before and on different occasions, and the party has repeatedly showed willingness to open Al-Zandani's file, in which they found that all allegations against him are baseless." The party stressed that the accused is innocent until proven guilty.

The statement stressed that Al-Zandani himself has announced more than once and in more than one media outlet his willingness to stand for public trial in a national court on charges made by Americans, but no one responded to him.

"If the allegations were not fabricated by the former regime, they were invented by its media outlets in order to politically blackmail Al-Zandani and his party," read the Islah party statement.

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## **Ansar Al-Sharia threatens to attack YLNG**

#### **By: Mohammed Abdulaleem**

SHABWA, April 22 – Security forces affiliated with the Yemeni 3rd Naval Brigade deployed extensively last Saturday around the Yemen Liquid Natural Gas Company on the harbor in Belhaf, Shabwa governorate, and imposed several blockades in anticipation of attacks from Ansar Al-Sharia, a militant group affiliated with Al-Qaeda.

This deployment came as a reaction to known Ansar Al-Sharia plans to attack YLNG Company and its petrol stations in Belhaf using cars bombs, according to secu-

rity sources in Shabwa.

Ansar Al-Sharia, based in the Azzan area of southern Shabwa, prepared six cars bombs last Thursday with the aim of attacking the company in Belhaf, where large numbers of foreigners gather, according to the Ministry of Interior.

The Minister of Interior ordered Shabwa's security office to deal with the threats eriously in order to find ways to prevent Ansar Al-Sharia attacks on the company, according to the Ministry of Interior. Moreover, the Ministry expressed its confidence in Shabwa's

security services to stop Ansar Al-Sharia attacks.

Ansar Al-Sharia's plans to attack the YLNG Company using car bombs shows the diminishing scale and elaborateness of their operations due to the major attacks against them in Abyan, Shabwa and Al Bayda', according to the Ministry of Interior.

Ansar Al-Sharia, still controls many parts of Shabwa governorate, in the south east of Yemen, particularly Azzan, which lies between Maifa'a and Al-Radoom districts. US drone aircraft recommenced flying missions again last Friday,

along with Yemeni military planes, above the Al-Rawdah and Azzan areas in Shabwa to track Ansar Al-Sharia operatives.

The US drones and the Yemeni military planes broke the sound barrier in the skies above Al-Rawdah and Maifa'a districts. As a result of the sonic boom, residents feared a military attack on their area, according to eyewitnesses in Al-Rawdah district.

A drone, thought to be under tary planes.

American control, made an exploratory flight over these districts, along with low-flying Yemeni mili-

## Military officer suspended for smuggling weapons to Ansar Al-Sharia

#### By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, April 22 - On Friday, the new commander of the Southern Military Region, General Salem Qatn, who replaced former president Saleh's aide, General Mahdi Maqwala, suspended a military officer accused of smuggling weapons to Ansar Al-Sharia, an Al-Qaeda affiliated militant group, reported state-run newspaper Al-Jomhoriah on Saturday.

It explained that the officer was rendered to the Political Security Headquarters in Aden to investigate his withdrawal of 410 artillery shells from the region's armory and handing them to units of Ansar Al Sharia in Abyan governorate, south Yemen.

Ansar Al-Sharia, which took control of Zinjibar, the capital of Abyan, in late May 2011 after security forces abandoned their positions, is said to have links with the former president's loyal military officials, who colluded with the group to take over parts of Abyan and



Military officers accuse former leader of the Southern Military Region of providing weapons to Ansar Al-Sharia in Abyan.

Shabwa governorate. This is thought to have been done with the aim of terrorizing the West, so it would see Saleh's departure as synonymous with insecurity in Yemen, according to Mohamed Ghazwan, a journalist who was recently in Abyan.

"Through my visits to Al-Qaeda positions in Abyan, their weapons hint that some military officials are indeed colluding with them," Ghazwan said. "It is unbelievable that their [Al-Qaeda] tanks continue firing

and do not run out of shells. There must be people who supply them with ammunition," he said. The Minister of

Defense, General

Arabic program from 12:00 noon - 2:30 p.m. Box 2002, Sanaa, Yemen Email: sanaa@Qsi.org Accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA) Member of Quality Schools International

Mohamed Naser Ahmed, formed military assets counting committees in early March to keep track of all Yemeni army hardware and human assets, to prevent the transfer of weapons to terrorist organizations.

"If they [Yemeni military leaders] have real intentions of controlling weapons leakage, it is in their hands and can be achieved easily by counting all ammunition," Ghazwan said.

Ansar Al-Sharia attacked the 31st Armored Division on the same day when Maqwala left the office to his successor, Qatn, on March 3rd. The militant group then attacked and killed over 150 troops, captured 72, and took over heavy weapons, including tanks.

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Officers and soldiers of the 31st Armored Division accused the former leader of the Southern Military Region Maqwala of providing weapons to Al-Qaeda one day ahead of leaving office.

Other military sources said that the new leadership of the Southern Military Region is still searching for lost military equipment, which disappeared from the region's armory just 24 hours before Maqwala departed from office.

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## **INTERVIEW**

## Dr. Yahya Al-Shaibi to the Yemen Times:

# "Its slow indecisive actions show that the government is not taking its job seriously."

#### Interview by Nadia Al-Sakkaf

With over 30 years of public service, Dr. Yahya Al-Shaibi was one of the few men who has held his ground and reputation since he started his career as a chemistry professor at Sana'a University in the seventies.

Today he is known for being one of the political movers and shakers on behalf of the General People's Congress (GPC), as a member of its general committee, and one of the moderate politicians of the former regime who were instrumental in making the Gulf Initiative happen. Prior to his post today as the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in the reconciliation government, he was the Minister of Civil Services. Previously he has been Mayor of Sana'a and Governor of Aden, Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education.

In addition to his official posts, Al-Shaibi co-founded the "Yemen First" organization which aims at strengthening national identity and a culture of tolerance. He was recently appointed as a member of the ministerial committee to negotiate with protestors to clear the squares. The Yemen Times met with Al-Shaibi to talk about higher education, the GPC and other current issues.

State universities are going through tough financial, academic and even political crises which are affecting students' education. As Minister of Higher Education, what are you doing about that?

During the last year, because of the overall sentiments around the country, many problems in state universities have surfaced. The accumulation of political, financial and academic problems blew up together and complaints of corruption, illegal appointments, nepotism, shortages in lab equipment, buildings and so on, sped up the deterioration of the universities affecting mostly the students.

Another major problem the universities are suffering from is the



President Hadi needs to remember that he is a reconciliation president and hence does not need to flex his muscles through confrontation. Instead, he should reach compromises and arrive at solutions with the least losses possible.

heavy politicizing of the educational environment. This has caused conflicts between the teachers, between the students, and between teachers and students. This is why, for example, I am against any sort of elections for university president vacancies at several universities, because I know it will turn into a political campaign rather than a choice to elect the best person for the job. The university law stipulates a specific mechanism for this through the forming of the universities' boards of trusties. I expect

the cabinet to form them by the end of this week.

I used to teach at Sana'a University for many years in the past. We took so much pride in our job, and when we as professors travelled, we could not wait to come back to give to our students. Upon my appointment as the Minister of Higher Education, I paid visits to all the universities and was very depressed at what has become of the higher education system in Yemen.

The way things were managed at the universities was chaotic and irresponsible. There was no planning, budgeting, vision or whatever. There is redundancy in teachers of some disciplines and shortages in others. The parallel system outside the competitive mainstream enrollment is a problem. It started at a five percent of admissions, which was intended to create a supplementary source of income for the university. However, because of greed it has increased up to 100 percent of the official admission, which creates a huge burden on the educational capacity of the universities, and at the same time the financial returns are not utilized for the improvement of the education system.

Now the Higher Education Ministry presented a study on the parallel system to the High Council for Education on this issue. In turn the council has created a committee to look into the matter and decide on whether to shut down the system entirely or allow it to exist according to strict conditions.

We have also created other committees to review the problems in **role in the future. As** the higher education system especially quality of education. The Higher Council for Education has I believe it is faralready decided on several reform *fetched that he plays* measures which the ministry will implement soon. We will also appoint a chief of **the party today or** academic accreditation and quality control who will evaluate the curriculums and educational structure *for his son Ahmed*, in all colleges in both public and private universities. decisions even if it means shutting down some colleges or universities all together and reforming the educational system.

We will also launch a number of creative discipline diplomas of one or two years, such as in graphics, 3D design, radio production, ecommerce, etc. I believe that students graduating from these courses will have the required skills to start their own businesses and become entrepreneurs rather than wait for a job.

There are current steps being taking for this starting with 12 disciplines funded by the World Bank and will be under the sponsorship of the quality control project in the ministry for the academic years 2012-2013.

The annual budget has recently been approved and we will use whatever funds we have to reform the system. One of the measures I have taken is to stop state sponsored scholarships, which cost us over YR 11 billion. We are sticking with the cultural exchange programs, which include around 300 Yemeni students in various disciplines as well as state sponsored students on rare specializations.



It is completely up to Saleh himself to decide whether he is interested and capable of playing a significant political for his son Ahmed, a political role in in the near future,As I believe it is far-Accordingly we will take some *fetched that he plays* a political role in the party today or in the near future.



Dr. Yahya Al-Shaibi

I am under a lot of pressure to bend the rules and follow the old way of running things, but I am a man of order and believe that the rules were meant to be implemented and this is my personal source of strength.

Why instead of direct appointment did you open to competition the cultural attaché vacancies in our embassies abroad? Also what's new in the Top-100 qualified government leaders project that you championed a couple of years ago?

Many were surprised at my decision to open the doors to competition instead of direct appointment for the 13 cultural attaché vacancies in our consulates abroad. Unfortunately those who criticized this decision were not used to transparency and selection by merit for government posts. Through this decision we received 1,100 applications and I am sure that we will be able to choose the best qualified men and women which will positively affect our image abroad and their performance. This notion of choosing the best was also the driving force behind the Top-100 project I suggested along with a group of others. The point was to recruit 100 highly qualified Yemenis, offer them encouraging compensation and appoint them in high decision making positions so that they positively contributed to the development of the country.

ed with this project during my work as Minister of Civil Services as we advertised for deputy ministers and general manager's positions. We have a highly qualified team now at that ministry.

The suggestion is to have them run the economic and financial institutions of the country, of which there are over 50, as well as form-



## The way things were managed at the universities was chaotic and irresponsible. There was no planning, budgeting, vision or whatever. There is redundancy in teachers of some

decisions. Having them at the top of the institutions they would be working in and giving them full authority would save them from being sabotaged by their bosses and colleagues who would be receiving less than one quarter of their salaries.

The project is put forward again today and was presented to the Ministry of Planning which is the concern authority as well as the Prime Minister. I hope that it will be discussed in the donors meeting to come.

Between 2003 and 2006 you were governor of Aden, which today is witnessing extreme security and political conflicts. How can we save Aden? During the three years I was governor of Aden I came to understand and appreciate the governorate, and it saddens me to see what has become of it today. It is a situation that is not far from what the entire country is going through.

Previously Aden was an especially civil refuge. Today it is a hub of criminals, armed gangs and Islamic militia, etc.

The conflict in Aden is not only a political one but an armed one, and this is caused by the absence of the rule of law and the weak security apparatus.

Enforcing security in Aden should be a national priority and could be easily achieved within three or four months if the needed funds were there supported by political will. We just need strong security and enough numbers to ensure control over unruly gangs and enforce the rule of law.

Having a strong security hold over the governorate does not mean there is no space for political disagreement. It means that within the law anyone can exercise their right to political affiliation and freedom of expression, they can hold protests, seminars or whatever, as long as they don't vandalize property or terrorize the people.

#### In your view, what are the real reasons that prevent political solutions today?

The main political problem in Yemen is a trust issue between the various political opponents, which explains the slow progress in the transitional steps according to the Gulf Initiative. The lack of trust should be overcome by the moderate personalities on both sides to reach compromises.

We had successfully experiment-

## disciplines and shortages in others.

ing advisory groups at both the president's and prime minister's offices.

Having those men and women in high decision making positions in economic institutions would create new sources of income for the country, and would also help top decision makers make the right

There are many Yemenis who put the country's best interest before their personal gains. However, they are hesitating because they are faced with political tensions and bias. They need to be welcomed and provided with a friendly environment that would make use of their expertise for the sake of Yemen.

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#### 6 23 April, 2012

## INTERVIEW



We have less than two years to fix our country and all Yemenis, especially decision makers, must realize that this is not enough. But we will have to deal with it, because otherwise the country will get into deeper trouble and a constitutional vacuum if the parliamentary elections don't take place in 2014.

Unfortunately, the delay in progress and slowness in effective decisions makes me believe that this government is not taking its job seriously.



The international community is still waiting to see serious steps taken by the Yemeni government to deal with its pending issues, such as removing signs of the military in the cities, unifying the army and clearing the squares.

#### What about the restructuring of the army and the national dialogue?

Unifying the army under the command of the Ministry of Defense is a crucial matter and may take longer than two years. However, there are initial steps that could and should be taken today.

Ironically, I think the national dialogue is a much more difficult task than the army since there are so many political differences and stakeholders.

The implementing bodies of the transitional stages, whether it is the army or the dialogue, are still distrustful of each other. This lack of trust is delaying planning and execution while we don't really have that much time.

The foremost priority now is to created a timely plan for each of the transition's stages so that we can complete one and immediately jump into the another. The problem is that the country's leadership keeps getting distracted by the petty problems leaving the main issues unsolved.

President Hadi needs to realize this and remember that he is a reconciliation president and hence does not need to flex his muscles through confrontation. Instead, he should reach compromises and arrive at solutions with the least losses possible.

In the mean time the prime minister needs to realize the intensity of his position and toughen up and stand his ground by not submitting to various pressures in order to achieve results in the Gulf Initiative process.

If the leaders create a political environment that comforts Yemenis and make them regain their trust in their state they will support it with all their might. Evidence of this is already visible when the citizens supported the army in kicking out the terrorist group Ansar Al-Sharia from Lawdar in Abyan.

#### You are now a member of the ministerial committee in dialogue with the youth in the squares. What is the best way to reach out to them in your opinion?

We should have created this committee the day after signing the Gulf Initiative, but it was unfortunately pushed back until today, which is why the protestors believe the government is not serious in attending to their demands.

The committee I am a member of is tasked with negotiating with the protestors in the squares to reach an agreement on what guarantees they need to clear the squares.

I believe the priority should be to negotiate with the independent youth who formed coalitions and groups and were sidelined by the political parties. Protestors affiliated with political parties will be addressed through their parties.

What we will be doing now is reaching out to the independent groups, helping them identify common demands and visions for what they want in order to reach joint programs. Then representation will be much easier after reaching a common vision and plan.

I support the methodology through which we gather the various proposals from youth groups, create workshops to discuss them and come out with a shared program that can be agreed on.

As for youth who belong to political entities but were not signatories to the Gulf Initiative, such as the youths of Houthis and the Southern Movement, they should be dealt with separately since they have specific grievances and demands unlike the independent youth who are concerned with national issues.

The importance of the national conference lies in the fact that it would deal with all political groups, and the results of these discussions will define the future of this country. People responsible for the dialogue should realize this and take it seriously.

I have a problem with the slow pace at which the dialogue and all the transitional steps are happening, which makes me question the seriousness of the government.

The donors' conference was delayed more than once despite the urgent need for support. Why is that?

It is true that Yemen needs urgent support, especially financial, from its friends but they have made their position clear. It was highlighted by King Abdullah of Saudi who said, "Help yourselves in order for us to help you."

The international community is still waiting to see serious steps taken by the Yemeni government to deal with its pending issues, such as removing signs of the military in the cities, unifying the army and clearing the squares.

The longer we take to do these things the longer we will wait for help to come. The donors' conference was supposed to take place in March, then it was delayed to April, and now May. It could be delayed further if we don't "help ourselves, so that they can help us."

In order for us to help ourselves we need to put Yemen first above our personal interests and to be serious in dealing with the national issues. This should be reflected in quick decisions and reaching compromises away from confrontation and random work.

In fact, this should be how everyone operates in this transition



Dr. Al-Shaibi: The GPC must review its structure and reform itself if it wants to remain a strong political player in Yemen's future according to the new variables.

including the youth in the squares **zation. Is there an intention to** who demand change. I was disappointed at their attitude towards change because it seems it has not moved beyond their lips to reach their minds or hearts.

I was waiting for them from the first day they occupied Change Square to say this is a time for change and from now on we will not chew gat or we will respect time and commitments more, etc. But they remained as they were before, practicing their old ways. How can we demand change and not want to live it?

The first time I was Minister of Civil Services, I received 1,006 presidential orders and more than 10,000 from the prime minister to hire people outside the recruitment system. All of which I took no heed of and left in the drawers of my office.

Because I was able to say no based on conviction and according to the system, not once was I reproached on ignoring those orders. And this is what I hope Yemenis will learn, to respect and live by the law.

You are a member of the general committee at the General People's Congress, which is the highest level in the organi-

## reform the party?

The seventh term of the party ended in December last year. We are supposed to hold the eighth conference some time soon in order to discuss this issue and many other pending issues of the party.

There is need for reform and intent to reform, but we can't do it outside the general assembly of all members in the coming conference. Major decisions such as electing the president, general secretary, assistant general secretaries and the general committee members will be done during this conference.

The GPC needs to realize that the situation has changed and that while yesterday it was the ruling party, today it is only a partner in power. The GPC must review its structure and reform itself if it wants to remain a strong political player in Yemen's future according to the new variables.

Although there are many within this party who understand the changes and who are trying to bring points of view closer, and who were also instrumental in reaching the Gulf Initiative, there are yet others who are still holding on to the old wavs.

Fortunately for Yemen, the mod-

erates from the GPC and other parties overcame the rigidity of the old school fellows. The same moderates must continue to push forward so that we don't lose all that we worked for.

As for former President Saleh's role in today's political arena and in his own party, it is completely up to Saleh himself to decide whether he is interested and capable of playing a significant political role in the future. It is up to him to decide if he wants to remain as head of the GPC or resign and be happy with an honorary role in the party. As it is, Saleh still has many supporters in the GPC who will vote for him in the coming assembly if he chooses to nominate himself.

As for his son Ahmed, I believe it is far-fetched that he plays a political role in the party today or in the near future, because of the law that prevents those holding military positions to be politically active. His presence today in the Republican Guard is more important than in the party.

If in the future he decides to quit his post in the military and join the party, it is up to the party to decide whether his presence amongst it will be in its favor or not, and decide accordingly.

أعضاء اللقاء المشترك كانت لهم نفس

ولكن لحسن ألحظ تغلب الفريق

يجب أن تناقش في إطار المؤتمر العام

كيَّف نكون في ساحة التغيير ونطلب الوضع اليوم ليس كَالأمس عندما كان و المشترك على التيارات المتشدَّدة في

الشباب في الساحات أن يقوموا بتغييرات جذرية في حياتهم تثبت أنهم حقاً راغبون والذي من خلاله سيتم انتخاب رئيس التوجهات ولكن كان هناك فريق أخر من بالتغيير للأفضل مثلاً أن لا يتعاطوا للمؤتَّر والأمين العام والأمناء العموم الجهتين حاولوا تأزيم الموقف. القات في الساحات وأن يتعاملوا بجدية المساعدون واللجنة العامة. مع الرأي الآخر ويعيشوا الديقراطية حقاً. على المؤتمر الشعبي العام أن يدرك أن المعتدل من كل من المؤتمر الشعبي العام

التعامل مع قضايا المرحلة الانتقالية. إذا لم نتدارك الأمر مع العلم أن لدينا حوالي سنة ونصف فقط سوف نصل إلى فراغ دستوري ونغرق أعمق في الأزمات بشتي أنواعها.



لجنة الحوار الوطني وأن يعمل في جميع المسارات وأن يتخذ القرارات بالتوافق المسارات وأن يتحد الشرارات بسورت وأن يعمل وفق برنامج مزمن للفترة المتبقية من أجل كسب الوقت والخروج بأقل الخسائر. وفي نفس الوقت على على المؤتمر الشعبي العام أن رئيس الوزراء أن يدرك جسامة مهمته وأن لا يخضع للضغوط من أجل أن تستطيع حكومة الوفاق السير بخطى سريعة في اتجاه تحقيق وتنفيذ المبادرة الخليجية. إذا وجد الجو السياسي العام الذي يثبت للشعب أن القيادة السياسية جادة في الإصلاح سيتجاوب اليمنيين في كل أنحاء اليمن مع الدولة وأفضل مثال ما شاهدناه في لودر عندما قام المواطنين واللجان الشعبية بمساندة الجيش لإخراج أنصار الشريعة من المديرية.

> ما هي مهام لجنة الحوار مع الساحات التي انت عضو فيها؟ وفي رأيك ما هي افضل طريقة للتعامل مع المعتصمين في الساحات؟

> كان علينا أن نشكل لجنة الحوار مع الساحات من اليوم التالي لتشكيل حكومة الوفاق ولكن للأسف تم تأجيل هذا الموضوع إلى اليوم. مما هز ثقة الشباب في الحكومة الحالية وجديتها في التعامل مع قضاياهم.

> أنا عضو في اللجنة المشكلة حالياً من قبل رئيس الوزراء والتي مهمتها الرئيسية التفاوض مع الشباب في الساحات. أعتقد أن الأهم التفاوض معّ الشباب المستقلين الذين شكلوا ائتلافات متعددة والذين كانوا هم من بدأ فكرة التغيير ثم تم تهميشهم من قبل الاحزاب الأخرى. شباب الساحات التابعين لأحزاب سياسية سيتم التفاوض مِعهم من خلال أحزابهم، ولكن المهم حاليا الوصول إلى الجماعات المستقلة ومساعدتهم في توحيد

يعيد ترتيب نفسه إذا أراد أن يستمِر كتنظيم قوى في الساحة وفقا للمعطيات الجديدة، وإلا

فإنه سيساهم بتقليل ثقله كحزب منافس في اللعبة السياسية.

رؤاهم والوصىول إلى رؤى مشتركة لتكون مشاركتِهم مثمرة في الحوار الوطني. أما مسألة التمثيل سيتقرر وفقاً لحجم المشاركة من مختلف الجهات. أنامع المنهجية التي تقتضى جمع أوراق عمل من كل الجماعات الشبابية المستقلة وعمل ورشات عمل في اماكن تجمعهم في محافظات الجمهورية للخروج بمطالب ورؤى مشتركة واضحة يتم الإجماع او الاتفاق عليها.

بالنسبة للشباب من الجماعات الأخرى الغير موقعة على المبادرة مثل شباب الحوثيين والحراك علينا أن نتحدث إليهم أيضا ولكن في إطار مختلف لأن لديهم قضايا محددة ومطالب أكثر تحديدا من شباب الساحة المستقلين الذين تتمحور

مطالبهم حول قضايا وطنية عامة. إن أهمية الحوار الوطني والتعامل مع كافة الشرائح ينطلق من كون هذا الحوار سيحدد شكل مستقبل اليمن وعلى الجميع أن يدركوا هذه المسؤولية الضىخمة ويتحملوها بجدارة.

المشكلة أن التنفيذ يجري ببطء شديد بالرغم من ضيق الوقت وهذا ما يدفعني للقول بأن هناك عدم جدية في

تم تأجيل مؤنمر المانحين أكتر من مرة بالرغم من أن اليمن بحاجة إلى دعم المجتمع الدولي. ما سبب التأجيل؟

صحيح أن اليمن بحاجة ماسة وفورية إلى الدعم بالذات الدعم المالى من أصدقائها ولكن موقفهم واضح وقد جسده الملك عبد الله من خلال قوله: «ساعدوا أنفسكم لكي نساعدكم». المجتمع الدولي لا يزال ينتظر من اليمنيين أن يحلوا مشاكلهم وأن يقوموا بعدد من الإجراءات الجادة في طريق المصالحة الوطنية قبل أن يمد يده

هناك خطوات في إطار المبادرة الخليجية بما فيها توحيد الجيش وإخلاء الساحات والتي تأخرت بسبب عدم جدية الحكومة في التعامل معها مما أدى إلى تأخر المساعدات إلى اليمن. كان المفروض أن يتم مؤتمر المانحين في شهر مارس وتاجل إلى إبريل والأن إلى مايو ولا يزالوا ينتظرون منا أن نساعد أنفسنا قبل أن يساعدونا.

ولكى نساعد أنفسنا علينا أولا أن نحب اليمن ونكون جادين في التعامل مع القضايا الوطنية. تتجلى هذه الجدية فى سرعة اتخاذ القرارات والوصول إلى توافقات والوقوف في صف القانون والقول لا لكل من يريد أن تسير الأمور بشكل عشوائي وعرضة لرغبات الأفراد.

هذه يجب أن تكون منهجية الجميع. كيف يطالب الناس بالتغيير وهم لا يريدون أن يغيروا أنفسهم؟ كنت أقنى من

التغيير ولا نريد أن نعيشه؟

للأسف لم ينتقل التغيير إلى العقل أو القلب ولا يزال مجرد كلمات ينطق بها الكثيرون بدون أن يؤمنوا بها أو يتبعوها. على الذين يريدون التغيير إلى الأفضل رفض الطرق القديمة والسلبية في التعامل مع المسؤوليات الوطنية وأن يقولوا لا للعادات التي أصبحت ممنهجة في حياتنا والتي أوصلت اليمن إلى الفوضى التي

هي عليها اليوم. أنا لا أتحدث عن الساحات فقط بل عن كل اليمنيين بغض النظر حول حجم مسؤوليتهم. عندما كنت وزيرا للخدمة المدنية والتأمينات وصلنى ١٠٠٦ توجيه للتوظيف من قبل الرئيس السابق وأكثر من عشرة آلاف توجيه للتوظيف من رئيس الوزراء وكلها تغاضيت عنها وتركتها في مكتبي بدون تنفيذ لأنها لم تمر عبر الإجراءات القانونية. ولأننى استطعت أن أقول «لا» من منطلق سليم لم يتم معاتبتي ولو مرة واحدة من قبل الرئيس السابق علي عبد الله صالح أو رئيس الوزراء في ذلك الوقت لأنهما كانا يعلمان أنى أتمسك بالقانون وأسير عليه.

أنت عضو في اللجنة العامة للمؤنمر الشعبي العام، هل هناك توجه لإعادة هيكلة الحزب؟

كما تعلمون أن فترة المؤتمر العام السابع للمؤتمر الشعبى العام قد انتهت منذ ديسمبر الفائت ولا نزال ننتظر انعقاد المؤتمر العام الثامن للتنظيم. هناك توجهات نعيشه. في إطار التنظيم للإصلاح وهناك قضايا

يستحوذ على السلطة بشكل مطلق مقارنة بموقفه كشريك في الحكم اليوم. وعليه أن يعيد ترتيب نفسه إذا أراد أن يستمر كحزب قوي في الساحة وفقا للمعطيات الجديدة وإلا فإنه سيساهم بتقليل ثقله كتنظيم منافس في اللعبة السياسية.

بالرغم من وجود الكثيرين في إطار المؤتمر الشعبي العام ممن يفهمون المتغيرات السياسية ويسعون إلى تقريب وجهات النظر وكان لهم دور فعال في إنجاح المبادرة الخليجية، وهناك الكثير من

22 كنت أتمنى من الشباب في الساحات أن يقوموا بتغييرات جذرية في حياتهم تثبت أنهم حِقا راغبون بالتغيير للأفضل. مثلا أن لا يتعاطوا القات في الساحات وأن يتعاملوا بجدية مع الرأى الآخر ويعيشوا الديمقراطية حقا. كيف نكون في ساحة التغيير ونطلب التغيير ولا نريد أن

الطرفين واستطعنا أن نصل إلى اتفاق يحمي اليمن من المزيد من التدهور. ونفس الفريق عليه أن يواصل المشوار في المرحلة الراهنة حتى نستطيع أن نقطف ثمار الجهود في المرحلة السابقة. أما بخصوص دور الرئيس السابق علي عبد الله صالح في المشهد السياسي وكرئيس لتنظيم المؤتمر الشعبى العام في المرحلة القادمة فهذا لم يتم تناوله إطلاقا فى المبادرة وهو أمرُ على رئيس المؤتمر على عبد الله صالح أن يقرره بنفسه، وأن يقرر مدى رغبته أو قدرته على ممارسة السياسة في المرحلة القادمة كرئيس التنظيم أو رغبته في أن يستقيل من منصبه وأن يبقى رئيسا فخريا للتنظي لا يزال رئيس المؤتمر على عبد الله صالح يحظى بالكثير من المناصرين فى إطار تنظيم المؤتمر الشعبى العام ويستطيعون أن يصوتوا له في انتخابات المؤتمر العام الثامن إذا ما شاء أنّ يبقى في موقعه والقرار في النهاية يعود له.

بالنسبة لابنه أحمد فمن المستبعد جدا أن يلعب دورا ما في حزب المؤتمر إما حاليا أو في الفترة القريبة لأن القانون يمنع على المنخرطين في الأجهزة العسكرية أن ينضموا لأحزاب سياسية أياً كانت. إن وجوده في الحرس الجمهوري أهم حاليا من التنظيم. أما بالنسبة للمستقبل في حال عدم شغله وظيفة عسكرية فشأنه شأن أي مواطن يمني وعلى المؤتمر الشىعبي العام أن يقيس في حينها إذا كان وجود أحمد علي كعضو في التنظيم سيكون في صالح التنظيم أم لا ويجب أن يتم قرار قبوله بناءً على هذا المنطلق.

## **INTERVIEW**

# الدكتور يحيى الشعيبي ليمن تا يمز: «لا أعتقد أن حكومة اليوم جادة بدليل البطء في اتخاذ القرارت برغم ضيق الوقت»

#### لقاء نادية السقاف

تقلد الدكتور يحيى الشعيبي العديد من المناصب الحكومية وغير الحكومية خلال مسيرته المستمرة منذ أكتر من ٣٠ عام. ويعد الشعيبي أحد المحركين السياسيين الفاعلين والذين كان لهم دور في المبادرة الخليجية وتحقيق التوافق بين الخصوم السياسيينَّ من منطلق موقعه كعضو في اللجنة العامة في المؤتمر الشعبي العام، وموقعه الاجتماعي والسياسي كوزيراً سابقاً للتربية والتعليم والتعليم العالي وكمحافظ سابق لمدينة عدن، ووزيراً للدولة أميناً للعاصمة ووزيراً للخدمة المدنية والتأمينات.

بالإضافة الى المناصب الحكومية يترأس الدكتور الشعيبي منظمة اليمن أولا التي تهدف إلى تعميق الهوية الوطنية لليمنيين وتأصيل ثقافة التسامح. تسلم الدكتور يحيى منصب وزير التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي في حكومة الوفاق الوطني الحالية بالإضافة إلى تعيينه مؤخراً عضواً في اللجنة الوزارية للحوار مع شباب الساحات.

يمن تايمز التقت الدكتور يحيى الشعيبي للحديث عن وضع التعليم العالي والمؤنمر الشعبي العام وغيرها من قضايا الساحة.

> تمر الجامعات الحكومية اليمنية بأزمة مالية، أكاديمية وحتى سياسية مما أدى إلى تدهور الوضع التعليمي واستمرار الإضرابات. ما هو وضع التعليم العالى في اليمن اليوم؟

> خلال العام الماضى وبسبب الأحداث ظهرت على السطح المشكلات العميقة التي تعانى منها الجامعات اليمنية. فقد عانى الطلاب والموظفين والأساتذة والجميع بشكل عام من تراكمات للعديد من القضايا وصادف أن تفجرت كلها في وقت واحد مما أدى إلى الأزمة التي تعانيها الجامعات في الوقت الراهن.

> هناك مشكلة فساد وتغييب للأنظمة والقوانين الإدارية بسبب المحسوبية والتعيينات المخالفة للقانون بالإضافة إلى عدم توافر الكادر المتخصص والأجهزة الضرورية في المعامل وعدم توفر المباني الجامعية وقلة الاعتمادات والموارد المالية والكثافة الطلابية وغيرها من المشاكل والتي يكون الطالب الجامعي هو المتضرر الأكبر منها.

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هناك مشكلة فساد وتغييب للأنظمة والقوانين الإدارية بسبب المحسوبية والتعيينات المخالفة للقانون في الجامعات.

الطريقة التى كانت تدار فيها العملية التعليمية في كثير من الكليات لم تعتمد على رؤية وبرامج واضحة ولا مناهج ملائمة لاحتياجات السىوق. كما أن النظام الموازي يعد مشكلة رئيسية لأنه شكل ضغط على قدرات الجامعات من دون أن تعود إيراداته المادية على الجامعة ذاتها وتطويرها. كان الأساس من النظام الموازي أن يشكل رافد مادي صغير للجامعات والاقتراح المبدئي كان تخصيص ٥٪ من المقاعد من خلال هذا النظام ولكن بسبب تحوله إلى نظام تجاري وصلت إلى ١٠٠٪ فِي بعض الكليات وهذا غير عادل. ولأهمية الموضوع فقد قدمت الوزارة دراسة عن وضع التعليم الموازي للمجلس الأعلى للتعليم العالي وقد أقر المجلس تشكيل لجنة من أعضائه للنظر في إمكانية إلغاءه أو الابقاء عليه وفق ضوابط صارمة تخدم العملية التعليمية في بداية تعييني كوزير للتعليم العالى قمت بزيارات لكل الجامعات وأصبت بإحباط شديد بعدها. ليست هذه المؤسسات الأكاديمية التى أعرفها والتي قضيت فيها سنوات من عمري كأستاذ جامعي. كنا عندما نسافر إلى الخارج لا نستطيع الانتظار حتى نعود إلى جامعاتنا وكلنا شوق للعطاء وبذل المزيد من الجهد للعملية التعليمية، أما الآن فالوضع يُرثى

والحلول ورفعت نتائج اللجان الى المجلس الأعلى للتعليم العالي والذي أقر العديد من القرارات للمعالجة، وسنقوم بتنفيذها فى القريب العاجل.

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على الرئيس عبد ربه منصور

تشكيل لجنة الحوار الوطني،

وأن يعمل في جميع المسارات

وأن يتخذ القرارات بالتوافق،

وأن يعمل وفق برنامج مزمن

للفترة المتبقية من أجل كسب

الوقت والخروج بأقل الخسائر.

الوزراء أن يدرك جسامة مهمته

وأن لا يخضع للضغوط من أجل

أن تستطيع حكومة الوفاق السير

بخطى سريعة في اتجاه تحقيق

نظامى وأحترم القانون وأطبقه فى كل

الحالات لأن هذا ما تعودت عليه ونفس

الوقت هذا مصدر قوتي وثقتي بنفسي.

ما هي الفكرة من وراء فتح باب

وتنفيذ المبادرة الخليجية.

وفي نفس الوقت على رئيس

هادى كونه رئيس توافقى سرعة

وقريباً سيتم تعيين رئيساً لمجلس الاعتماد الاكاديمي وضمان الجودة والذي بدوره سيقوم بتقييم البرامج التدريسية والأقسام والكليات والجامعات الحكومية والأهلية على ضوء الدراسات ستتخذ القرارات المناسبة بالإبقاء أو إلغاء العديد من البرامج أو الأقسام أو الكليات أو حتى الجامعات، والعمل على تطوير العملية التعليمية وتحسين جودتها في مؤسساتنا التعليمية العليا.

كما أن لدينا خطة لافتتاح برامج تقنية لتخصصات إبداعية وتقديم دبلوم مدة سنة أو سنتين بحيث يتخرج الطالب ولديه المهارة التي تمكنه من أن يفتح مشروعه بنفسه، بالذات المهارت التي لا تحتاج إلى رأس مال كبير مثل تخصصات الجرافيك أو التي تعتمد على البرمجة الالكترونية وغيرها. وهناك الأن اجراءات لتطبيق برامج متطورة في الجامعات الحكومية عدد (١٢) برنامج تمول من البنك الدولي يشرف عليها مشروع تحسين الجودة في الوزارة في العام الجامعي ٢٠١٢ – ۲۰۱۳.

هناك مشكلة كبيرة في الجو العام في الجامعات وهو التسييس المنتشر والذى أدى إلى نزاعات بين الطلاب بينهم البين وبين الطلاب والمدرسين وبين المدرسين بعضهم البعض.

ومن هذا المنطلق أيضاً أنا ضد عمل التنافس على منصب الملحق الثقافي انتخابات لرؤساء الجامعات لأن هذا أولاً في سفاراتنا في الخارج؟ وماذا حدث ضد قانون الجامعات وثانياً لن يخدم بمشروع قائمة أفضل مائة والتى المصلحة الأكاديمية التربوية بسببب تهدف إلى تزويد الأجهزة الحكومية التسييس الحاصل. قانون الجامعات حدد آليات اختيار رؤساء الجامعات وذلك من خلال تشكيل مجالس أمناء للجامعات الحكومية، والذى اتوقع صدور قرار رئيس مجلس الوزراء بالتشكيل خلال هذا الأسبوع.



الدكتور يحيى الشعيبي

المرجعية الأولى وبالتالى قراراتهم لن تتعرقل بسبب وكيل أو وزير يستلم أقل من ربع مرتباتهم وبالتالي تدفعه الغيرة أو الشعور بالاضطهاد إلى عرقلة عملهم. بل إن وجودهم على رأس مؤسسات اقتصادية سوف يعود بالنفع بطريقة مباشرة بسبب الإيرادات التي سيدرونها على خزينة الدولة وبالتالي سيساهمون بشكل كبير في التخفيف من عجز الموازنة وفي التنمية الإقتصادية المستدامة.

كما أن وجود مثل هذه الخبرات في مكتب رئيس الوزراء ورئيس الجمهورية سيساعد المعنيين باتخاذ القرارات الأفضل لما من شأنه أن يساعد في حل القضايا ورفع مستوى البلد بشكل عام. اليوم يتم إعادة طرح المشروع مجددا وهو موجود لدى وزارة التخطيط المعنية بالأمر، وكذلك رئاسة الوزارء وكذلك اتمنى طرحه في مؤتمر المانحين القادم.

كنت محافظ لعدن من ٢٠٠٣ حتى ٢٠٠٦م، واليوم تشهد المحافظة قلقا واضطرابات أمنية وسياسية كبيرة لم تعهدها من قبل. ما هو تحليلك لما يجري في عدن وکيف يمکن حل

والضىالع وفي نفس الوقت اللاجئين من القرن الافريقي ولا ننسبي الجماعات المسلحة من بعض فصائل الحراك الجنوبي وبعض الانتهازيين البلاطجة الذين استغلوا غياب الأمن لفرض سيطرتهم في مناطق عدة.

استتباب الأمن في المحافظة يجب أن يحتل أولوية وطنية ويمكن بالتمويل الكافي أن يتم بسبهولة بل في غضبون ثلاثة إلى أربعة أشبهر إذا وجدت الإرادة الجادة وتم تزويد الأجهزة الأمنية في المنطقة بالعدة والعتاد الكافي بإمكانهم أن يثبتوا الأمن بقوة القانون ويردعوا المخربين.

أحكام سلطة القانون لا يعنى عدم وجود مساحة للإختلاف وحتى النزاع السياسى. في إطار القانون يكن لأى مجموعة أو حزب سياسى أن يعلن مواقفه وحتى يقيم مسيرات أو احتجاجات طالما ليس هناك أي تخريب أو ترويع للمواطنين.



المشكلة أن تنفيذ خطوات

المبادرة الخليجية يجرى ببطء

شديد بالرغم من ضيق الوقت،

هناك عدم جدية في التعامل مع

قضايا المرحلة الانتقالية وإذا لم

نتدارك الأمر سوف نصل إلى فراغ

دستورى ونغرق أعمق في الأزمات

وهذا ما يدفعني للقول بأن

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صحيح أن اليمن بحاجة ماسة وفورية إلى الدعم بالذات الدعم المالي من أصدقائها ولكن موقفهم واضح وقد جسده الملك عبد الله من خلال قوله: «ساعدوا أنفسكم لکی نساعدکم» .

الوطن على مصلحتها الشخصية والتي بإمكانها أن تساعد في نقل اليمن إلى المستقبل ولكنها مترددة بسبب التشاحن السياسي والضغوط وغياب الإرادة السياسية والجدية التى تجعلهم يقتنعون بأن هناك مجال وترحيب بمساهماتهم من أجل الوطن.

لدينا أقل من سنتين لكي نصلح أمورنا كلها وعلى اليمنيين جميعاً أن يدركوا هذا خاصبة متخذى القرار وإلا سندخل في فراغ دستوري إذا لم تقام الانتخابات البرلمانية في ٢٠١٤. وبالرغم من أن هذا ليس بالوقت الكافي إلا أنه المتوفر وعلينا أن نتعامل مع الواقع ونكثف الجهود لكي نقوم بالإجراءات اللازمة لتحقيق المراد بالمرحلة الانتقالية. وللأسف أعتقد بأن الحكومة غير جادة بشكل كاف في التعامل مع التحديات وبالتالى التأخير في عمل الإجراءات اللازمة والتي في أولها عمل خطة مزمنة

> لقد شكلنا لجان عديدة نزلت الى الجامعات واستعرضت كل المشاكل التي عرضت أثناء زيارتنا لها وناقشت مع كل الجهات في الجامعات سبل المعالجة

هناك عدد من الإجراءات المالية التي سنتبعها من ضمنها إلغاء الابتعاثات إلى الخارج والتي كانت تكلف الدولة فوق ١١ مليار ريال.

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تم اعتماد الموازنة السنوية من قبل البرلمان وسوف نتصرف في إطارها من أجل تنفيذ مايكن تنفيذه لإصلاح التعليم العالى. كما أن هناك عددا من الإجراءات المالية التي سنتبعها من ضمنها إلغاء الابتعاثات إلى الخارج والتي كانت تكلف الدولة فوق ١١ مليار ريال وسىنكتفى بابتعاثات التبادل الثقافي والتي تشمل حوالي ٣٠٠ طالب وُطالبة فيّ التخصصات المختلفة. وكذلك الابتعاث فى التخصصات النادرة فقط.

وهناك الكثير من الضىغوطات التى تمارس على من أجل أن ألتف حول القوانينً من أعلى مراكز اتخاذ القرار ولكني رجل

بكفاءات بمنية متميزة. أين وصل المشروع اليوم؟

استغرب الكثيرون قراري بفتح باب التنافس على منصب الملحق الثقافي في ١٣ دولة لأنهم لم يتعودوا على الشفافية والمعايير التي تساعد في اختيار الأفضل دون محسوبية. تقدم لهذا المنصب ۱۱۰۰ شخص وأنا أعلم أننا سنستطيع أن نفرز الأفضىل منهم من أجل ملء المقاعد الشاغرة في ملحقياتنا وهذا ما يجب عمله في كل ألجالات المختلفة. وهذه هي ذات المنهجية خلف برنامج

« أفضل مَّائة « وكانت الفكرة أن يتم استقدام كفاءات يمنية في مجالات متخصصة وإعطائهم مرتبات عالية حتى يساهموا من خلال مهاراتهم في تنمية الجهات المختلفة التى سيعملون بها. وعلى أن تكون عملية الاختيار وفق الإعلان والمنافسة وشفافية كاملة. وقد تم تجربة هذه الفكرة في وزارة الخدمة المدنية والتأمينات عندما كنت وزيرا لها وذلك من خلال الاعلان عن المنافسة لشغل وظائف الوكلاء والمدراء العموم وتم التنفيذ بشفافية ، وتم استقطاب أفضل الكفاءات للعمل في الوزارة.

وفي إطار هذا المشروع أيضا كانت فكرتي أن يكون هؤلاء المختصين على رأس المؤسسات الإقتصادية في شتي انحاء اليمن الذي يفوق عددها عن (٥٥) مؤسسة وهيئة وكذلك في مكتبي رئيس الجمهورية ورئاسة الوزراء لما يشكله هذان المكتبان من أهمية قصوى في تشكيل رأي متخذي القرار الأعلى في هرم الدولة. بهذه الطريقة سيكونوا

المشكلة؟ خلال الثلاث سنوات التى كنت فيها محافظاً لعدن تعرفت فيها بشكل أكبر على المحافظة ويؤسفني الوضع الذي وصلت إليه اليوم، وهو حال غير بعيد عن الوضع الذي تعانيه إليمن ككل. عدن كانت ملاذا هادئا ومدنيا في الماضى، أما اليوم فأصبحت مرتعا للبلاطجة والقاعدة والجماعات المسلحة وأصبح الصراع فيها صراعاً مسلحاً

وليس سياسيا فقط. المشكلة الرئيسية في نظري في محافظة عدن هو غياب الأمن وانعدام سلطة القانون. وهو الأمر الذي سمح لكل من هب ودب أن يفرض سيطرته بالقوة ويعتدي على الأخرين. وأصبحت المحافظة عرضة لأنصار الشريعة والقاعدة والنازحين من أبين ولحج

フフ

الأخرى..

أعتقد أن الأهم التفاوض مع

الشباب المستقلين الذين شكلوا

ائتلافات متعددة والذين كانوا

هم من بدأ المطالبة بالتغيير

ثم تم تهميشهم من قبل الأحزاب

برأيك ما هي الأسباب التي تعرقل

بشتي أنواعها .

الوصول إلى حلول عملية بين الأطراف السياسية؟

القضية الرئيسية في اليمن اليوم هي أزمة الثقة بين الأطراف السياسية المختلفة وهذا الذي يمنع سير العملية السياسية بحسب مبادرة الخليج ويبطئ فى التوافق السياسي الذي من شأنه أن ينعكس على نجاح المرحلة الانتقالية. بناء الثقة يأتي من خلال الأشخاص المتزنين من كل جانب ومن خلال التجاوب الواضح وإلرغبة للوصول إلى حلول وسط بدلا من مكتسبات سياسية، هناك الكثير من الشخصيات اليمنية المتميزة التي تُغلب مصلحة

وماذا عن إعادة هيكلة الجيش؟ والحوار الوطنى؟

لمراحل المرحلة الإنتقالية.

مسالة توحيد إلجيش هي مسالة ضرورية وستأخذ وقتا طويلا ربما أطول من السنتين ولكن هناك مراحل أولية له لا بد أن تبدأ من الأن. وأعتقد أن الحوار الوطني في حد ذاته قد يكون أكثر صعوبة من توحيد الجيش بسبب التيارات السياسية المتعددة والاختلافات الكبيرة.

هناك هواجس وتخوفات بين الجهات المسؤولة على عمل هذه الخطة وأزمة ثقة تعرقل التخطيط والتنفيذ. نحتاج الى ألية مزمنة واضحة المعالم تشرح كل مرحلة وتنتقل من مرحلة إلى أخرى فى وقت محدد لكى ننجح في نقل اليمن إلى بر الأمان وهذا للأسف غير حاصل الآن بسبب النزاعات السياسية على التفاصيل الإجرائية التى تشتت تركيز قادة البلد عن القضية الرئيسية.

على الرئيس عبد ربه منصور هادي كونه رئيس توافقي سرعة تشكيل

## **OPINION**



## YT vision statement



## "To make Yemen a good world citizen."

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

## OUR OPINION

## Next stop: Gulf Land

espite the dramatic deterioration in the circumstances of Yemenis working and living in Gulf countries, mainly Saudi Arabic, working in the Gulf countries still is a dream for many Yemenis.

The attraction of the difference in currencies, which would allow savings and could potentially pull families out of poverty, is stronger than the many hardships Yemeni workers face in the region. What makes the Gulf more attractive than Europe for the majority of Yemenis is the language and cultural similarities, and of course the relative proximity.

Moreover, there is the back door of human smuggling which at times can be very dangerous, but still worth the risk for many. Hence the estimated 2,500 illegal immigrants who find their way to Gulf countries every month.

The unemployment rate in Yemen has risen over the last year to more than 50 percent. Moreover, there is a difference of at least eight million Yemenis between the number of individuals that are at working age (around 13 million) and those who are included in the economic workforce (around five million).

Additionally, according to official data the local demand for labor (public and private sectors) can absorb between 60,000 to 80,000 new arrivals annually, while the annual supply is estimated at over 200,000 new job seekers.

While we work on long term sustainable economic measures, we should also consider immediate short term ones such as promoting Yemeni labor in the Gulf region.

Other measures include promoting labor intensive activities within the country, and redirecting the performance of operating funds to focus more on poverty and employment.

However, because of the effect of having hard currency flowing into the country, the anticipated economic return of having thousands of Yemenis working in the Gulf could be potentially more effective in the short term than having hundreds of thousands working within in the country.

This was evident from the significant economic impact in 1990 when 1.5 million Yemenis suddenly returned home during the first Gulf crisis. There are several recommendations to promote Yemenis employment in gulf markets:

Creation of well organized and specialized Yemeni employment organizations with networks in the Gulf, activating existing official and unofficial commitments by Gulf countries, and improving the quality of, and customizing Yemeni labor towards, Gulf market needs.

Experience has shown that although this might sound straight forward, there will be challenges from Gulf countries as they think, 'what is in it for them'. In 2006, Saudi Arabia sponsored the establishment of 19 vocational training centers, but they have still not been implemented.

However, if there is political will in Yemen and the Gulf countries, this proposal could be easily implemented. It's a win-win project for both Yemen and its neighbors and could take Yemen's economy a long way in a short time.

#### Nadia Al-Sakkaf

# Sunrise over Yemen

By: Khaled Bahah Diplomat and International Canada April 12

n recent years, rumblings of discontent mounted against Saleh, with a strengthening of opposition parties, primarily the Joint Meeting Parties – a coalition which includes the Southern Socialist Party and the powerful but fragmented northern Islah Party.

Prior to January 2012, Saleh had proposed constitutional amendments, relinquishing both his right to be president in perpetuity and the inferred inheritance of the title by his son. Once rioting broke out, he chose to withdraw these proposals. When this had no effect to bring calm, the regime manufactured pro-Saleh demonstrations outside the presidential palace. However, the demand for Saleh's resignation continued, joined by many tribal people.

Tragedy struck March 18, as troops massacred more than 56 civilians in Change Square, Sana'a. A state of emergency was declared, and the following day, nine Yemeni ambassadors, including myself in Ottawa, wrote to the president condemning the massacres. International outrage was sparked, and by March 23, Brigadier Ali Mohsen al Ahmar declared support for the revolution, representing a serious high-level military rupture, while several Yemeni governorates split from government control.

In response to increasing violence, Yemen's Foreign Minister Abubakr Al-Qirbi was dispatched to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), to hint that Saleh would sign an initiative outlining a roadmap to peaceful resolution, including power transfer, conditional upon immunity from prosecution. The GCC acted accordingly but, despite four promises to endorse the initiative, he reneged on his own proposal. The document remained unsigned and Yemen deteriorated.

Abruptly, on Sept. 23, Saleh returned to Yemen. The violence escalated and UN Security Council Resolution 2014 was issued in October, expressing grave concern over the bloodshed and calling for an immediate adoption of the GCC Initiative to end the crisis. Amid the chaos, the winners of the Nobel Peace Prize were announced on Oct. 7. Among them was Yemeni female activist Tawakkul Karman, whose non-violent protest garnered her international acclaim. In accepting this honour, she dedicated it to the people of Yemen.

Following an absurd number of promises and subsequent refusals, Saleh finally signed the GCC Initiative Nov. 23. Much credit is due to the herculean persistence and patience of Jamal Benomar, UN envoy to Yemen, and Secretary General Al Ziani of the GCC, in implementing the initiative and putting the Operational Mechanism in place. Accordingly, on Dec. 7, a coalition of current and opposition parties, known as the National Reconciliation Government, was established and interim elections were confirmed for February 2012.

January 2012 signified the end of unrestrained revolution and the beginning of inner transformation - the objective was to establish an environment of security, unity and reform prior to multi-party elections in 2014. This process began Feb. 21 with the people formally electing to remove Saleh and appoint acting vice-president Hadi as transitional president for two years. Saleh's agreement to relinquish power was attained upon the condition of his full immunity from prosecution. While immunity continues to be a sore point for Yemenis, it was



Yemen's problems are largely systemic, emanating from a leader who played the rifts within the country as a political chess game.

the only means to an end.

In Northern Yemen, voter turnout was significant and the election was peaceful. The south called for rejection of the election and, as a result, voter turnout was low, consisting almost entirely of northern troops stationed there. Although this underscores the massive efforts required to create future cooperation and trust, it's important to note that only a few months ago, it would have been inconceivable that on Feb. 25, 2012, a new president would be sworn in after 33 years, seven months and four days of oppression. Equally remarkable, on Feb. 27, the first presidential ceremony in Yemen's history was held, attended by the new leader and the former president, whose presence, strategically orchestrated by loyalists, was fiercely unappreciated by the prime minister, opposition parties and youth.

Yemen's problems are largely systemic, emanating from a leader who played the rifts within the country as a political chess game. However, though Saleh may be gone, his ghost remains through the continued presence of military control by his family and former allies such as General Ali Mosen al Ahmar and the backward tribal contingent still loyal to the late Abdulla al Ahmar. It is essential that these individuals relinquish their power immediately or they will find themselves the new target of the revolution. They must step aside in order to show the people that they are part of the cure rather than symptoms of the disease.

Yemen is a work in progress, but its victory over oppression has inspired a spirit of optimism not felt for more than three decades. While much remains to be done, genuine hope springs that on the horizon, a brilliant new sunrise is about to shine over Yemen.

Khaled Bahah is Yemen's Ambassador to Canada



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## HEALTH

# **Motorbikes: robbery, harassment** and tragic accidents





Ministry of Interior said in 2008 that motorbike drivers had caused 80 percent of reported traffic accidents.

#### By: Ashraf Al-Muraqab

he number of motorcycles has increased in the capital Sana'a during the last few years. Many unemployed young people have started to use them as a source of income by acting as 'motorbike taxis' since they are easy to buy and easy to use.

Over 24 motorbike users have been killed in the first half of April 2012, according to a newly released report by the Ministry of the Interior.

"There are many motorcycles in big cities because they are able to move easily during the rush-hour traffic," said Hamdi Al-Mugharem.

"Motorcycle drivers can overcome

traffic jams and drive you where you need to go as fast as possible," he added.

"I prefer motorcycles to taxis, because they are cheaper. Taxi drivers ask for more money and they take more time," said Ahmad Jadan, a resident in Sana'a.

Even government workers prefer motorcycles to other forms of transportation because they are faster and cheaper, according to Mamoon Al-Hubaishi, an official worker.

"Many employed people use motorcycles to increase their income. They work on motorcycles in the afternoon to get more money," said Ali Al-Raimi, a worker in a motorcycle shop.

"This motorcycle is the only source of income I have," said Maher Qaed, a motorcycle driver. "People use motorcycles to get ev-

erywhere faster," he added. "Motorcycle drivers go down nar-

row roads to make shortcuts. In other words, motorcycles are faster, cheaper and easier," said Ghaleb Al-Emad, a motorcycle driver.

Motorbike drivers and safety "Almost no motorcycle drivers wear safety helmets and they don't obey traffic police rules. They carelessly break the laws and no one punishes them," said Khalil Al-Mahjari, a traffic police officer in the Shumaila area in Sana'a.

Customs Administration has issued license plate numbers for motorcycles. Drivers can't get the license plate number unless they

bring a person of good repute to guarantee that no violations will be committed.

However, the procedures of the Customs Administration don't stop the traffic offenses of motorcycle drivers against residents, according to Saleem Al-Sadani, a student in the Faculty of Mass Media at Sana'a University.

"The laws of the Customs Administrations are not fully implemented. So there are still many violations and confusion that the motorcycle drivers cause," added Al-Sadani.

#### **Robberies and harassment**

"I'm embarrassed to talk about the sexual harassment I face from motorbike drivers," said Abeer Al-Harazi, a female nurse in a hospital in Sana'a.

"I hope that the security services can find solutions to protect us [women] and stop the violations we face every day. Some motorcycle drivers use abusive language while some others harass us using their hands," she added.

"Every day, motorcycle drivers try to abuse me by calling me filthy words or by making some frightening movements. I can't endure this anymore. It is as if we are living in a jungle," said Samar Qaed, a resident

Motorcycle drivers don't only ha-

The motorcycle drivers don't just bother pedestrians, they use the sidewalks when the road is crowded, according to Hanan Masood, a student at Sana'a University.

Masood's laptop was stolen by a motorbike rider as she was walking down the street. The driver was laughing as if he was sure he wouldn't be punished, according she said.

'The laptops of two friends of mine were snatched by motorcycle drivers in broad daylight, and also my mobile phone," said Saleem Al-Sadani, a worker.

"My laptop was taken by a motorcycle driver in Mujahed Street and when I tried to resist, he pointed his gun at me," said Mohammed Ibraheem, a student at Sana'a Universitv.

#### Motorbikes cause more traffic accidents

Motorbikes are often the cause of terrible traffic accidents in Yemen, according to Yemen's Ministry of the Interior. The ministry said in 2008 that

motorbike drivers had caused 80 percent of reported traffic accidents. According to the ministry, about





This weekly column disseminates health information to readers in Yemen and beyond. Dr. Siva currently works at Aden Refinery Company Hospital. Lifestyle diseases and cancer prevention are his special interests. Complementary medicine and naturopathy are his passions.

## Food for bone health

o matter what your age, bone health is important. Strong bones help prevent osteoporosis, a disease in which bones become fragile and break easily. Often considered an "elderly" concern, osteoporosis prevention begins at an early age and continues throughout your lifetime. Bone

mass develops rapidly between the ages of 10 and 20 and peaks at age 30. Building and maintaining strong bones depends on calcium, vitamin D, and physical activity.

#### **Foods for strong bones**

The best way to build strong bones is naturally through eating foods that enhance bone health rather than depending exclusively upon calcium supplements. This is particularly true since a recent study questioned the use of routine calcium supplements, suggesting they may play a role in promoting heart disease. Although more studies are needed to confirm this association, why take the chance when you can add bone building foods to your diet? Here are some of the best foods to eat for strong bones:





Milk: Milk is the most likely source of calcium. Milk is a good source of vitamin D because it is fortified, but cheese, yogurt and ice cream are generally not fortified and contain very little vitamin D. Choose non-fat or 1 percent milk. Avoid the others because of their saturated fat and cholesterol content.

Pumpkin (dhubba) seeds: When you think of bone-building minerals, you probably think of calcium. Our bones are largely made of calcium, but other minerals form a strong frame, too. In fact, 50 percent of the body's magnesium resides in our bones. Research shows that a low magnesium intake is linked to bone fragility and calcium

loss, most likely because poor magnesium status alters calcium metabolism. Nuts and seeds of all types are good sources of magnesium, but pumpkin seeds outshine the rest.



Walnuts: These nuts are rich in alpha linolenic acid (ALA), an omega-3 fatty acid and hence deserve their own category. Bones aren't a hard, brittle skeleton like many people think. Actually, they're living organs with live cells and body fluids. Every day, bone cells break down and build back up.

That's how they remain strong and repair after a break. Alpha-linolenic acid leads to a reduction in bone turnover, and a shift in the balance of bone degradation/formation toward formation.





Carrots: They are also a good source of alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, and betacryptoxanthin. Roast them with olive oil or have a juice or add to smoothies.



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30-40 motorbike drivers die each month, and between 100-120 are wounded.

In 2009, Sana'a had the most traffic accidents involving motorbikes with 325 accidents, followed by Taiz with 177 accidents, and Hodeida with 85 accidents, according to the ministry.

Some traffic accidents caused the death of entire families, and in others bodies were left scattered over the road. There are numerous sad stories from traffic accidents, especially motorcycle accidents, which cause long-term negative effects on individuals.

The ministry pointed out that chewing qat while driving is a contributing cause to the high number of accidents.

#### Motorbike driving banned at night in Taiz

On March 18, 2012 armed men gunned down a US English teacher in Taiz from the back of a motorbike. After this attack, the local security leadership decided to ban the use of motorbikes between 6:00pm and 6:00am.

Armed men believed to be affiliated to Al-Qaeda have been reported using the same method in the gunning down of several security and intelligence officers, particularly in Abyan, Hadramout, Aden and Shabwa.

In early March of this year, armed men on motorbikes said to be connected with Al-Qaeda fired at a vehicle carrying a US security team while they were on a training mission in Aden.











Beans: Beans give you a good boost of magnesium and even some calcium. If you're a bean eater, you might also reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease and obesity. Fish: Calcium may be the chief boneforming mineral, but it's nothing without its sidekick vitamin D, which is necessary for

calcium absorption. A small serving of salmon gives you 90 percent of the daily recommended amount of vitamin D. As with low intakes of vitamin K, vitamin D deficiency is linked to hip fracture.

Leafy greens: Your salads and steamed greens are packed with bone-building nutrients, particularly calcium, magnesium and vitamin K. Vitamin K is critical in the formation of bone proteins. Research shows that too little of this fat-soluble vitamin increases your risk of hip fracture, but eating enough vitamin K decreases urinary calcium losses. One cup of raw or a half-cup of cooked

greens provides several times the recommended intake of 90 micrograms per day.

And finally, don't forget exercise. Studies suggest that keeping active is every bit as important for building strong bones. Daily active play in the sunshine will boost your vitamin D as well.

## **CULTURE**

## **10** 23 April, 2012



# **Traditional Sana'ani dress still in fashion**

#### By: Nadia Haddash

lthough fashion trends come and go, many Yemeni women continue to wear the Sana'ani curtain-style dress. Women who wear this popular style customarily adorn the dress by wrapping a piece of brightly colored cloth, called the Al-Masoon around their bodies. It was the lead up to the appearance of "curtain" in the Yemeni home, a piece of square-shaped, cotton cloth with white lines, and decorated with a black and red geometric designs. The cloth is also marked with a unique decoration that occurs in the middle of the curtain.

The dress described above is typical of the original style known as the Radi Curtain, and is currently worn most often by women in regions like Radaa. Due to Sana'a and its surrounding regions sen-



Young yemeni ladies at old sana'a city used the sana'ani dress for sort visit places.



The Appearence of the Sana'ani dress on the revolution events.



still the Sana'ani dress used in the fashion solw events as a Yemeni women sample.

sitivity to international development, fashion there often reflects current trends. However, you can easily spot many Sana'a women in the curtain dress, especially in the old city and in neighborhoods like: Bani-Hashish, Sanhan, Hbabh and Khawlan.

The unique relationship between Yemeni women and the Sana'ani curtain is associated with a cloth that covers the head. The Al-Momq, a face cover made of silk or cotton, is dominated by black and inscriptions colored white and red, the colors ranging from the outside to the inside, forming a black circular center point. Most women wear the Al-Momq, but those who are married and older women also wear an additional head piece called the Amomq, a piece of cloth embroidered with silver or coral colors.

Um sayed, a women from Old Sana'a, said, "We found our mothers and grandmothers wearing it and so on it goes from generation to generation till our day, although it's not used today as it was in the past due to changes in society. But we cannot deny the Sana'ani curtain remains a treasure and heritage that represents Yemeni women."

The appearance of the curtain dress changed slightly after the 1970's, when fabric factories in Yemen stopped production and traders began bringing materials from India. This new material added green, yellow and blue colors, as well as some plant decorations.

#### The beginning of the Sana'ani dress

The history of the "curtain" in

Sana'a and in Yemen is a bit unclear, but people say it began when Imam Yahiya bin Al-Hussein Al-

Rasi came from Sa'ada to Sana'a, and ordered women to wrap their bodies with a cloth found in their homes. This marked the beginning of the curtain dress, but its popularity began to waver with the introduction of the black abaya.

The Yemeni novelist and poet Ali Al-Mugri said, "The Sana'ani curtain was styled originally by the Yemeni people themselves, there's no specific historical date. It started with the appearance of colored dress painting at that time and it was related to the decoration and ornamentation of the old Yemeni houses."

"What proves to us that the curtain dress is originally from Yemen is that there's no place in the world

with such a dress with its beauty, until our days," added Al-Mugri.

The sharshaf, a wide black body cover brought over by the Turks. was worn briefly, only to be replaced by the modern abaya (coat). Despite the spread of the abaya, married, single and widowed women of all different ages continued to wear the curtain dress. It is also popular amongst sellers at the market in the old city.

Wafaa Mohamed, 38, originally from Aden but who has lived in old Sana'a for 13 years with her husband said, "I've worn the Sana'ani curtain since I came here and it became the comfortable dress that I wear wherever I go to places close by. Still the curtain is the most used in old Sana'a for short visits, but when it comes to long visits, we wear the abaya or the sharshaf."

Um Tariq, a 20-year-old woman who was wearing the Sana'ani curtain on her way to a nearby grocery said, "I wear the Sana'ani curtain only for short neighborhood visits." She added that, "My mother, my sisters and I wear the Sana'ani curtain only in the neighborhood, as do most of the women here."

Despite the curtain dress' deeprooted tradition, Amani Al-Soof, a 21-year-old woman from old Sana'a is not hopeful about the future of the curtain. "I didn't wear the Sana'ani curtain before, but I always keep thinking if we could wear it in a modern way instead of the abaya. Unfortunately, it cannot be useful in the current community. Most of the young girls wear it on some occasions as a tradition, or just to have a photo as a sample of traditional Yemeni dress."



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