

Ansar Al-Sharia to execute ten captured soldiers each week

By **Abdurahman Anees**

ABYAN, April 25 — Ansar Al-Sharia, a group affiliated with Al-Qaeda controlling the cities of Zinjibar and Jaar in Abyan governate, announced in a statement released on Monday that it intends to execute more than 70 captured soldiers, along with several officers, starting next Monday, April 30.

“Ten soldiers will be executed each week,” reads the statement.

“The statement of Ansar Al-Sharia is aimed at dissuading the military campaign against them in Zinjibar,” said military sources in the south of Yemen.

Departing from their usual behav-

ior, Ansar Al-Sharia didn't release a statement to the media. Instead, they distributed a message to local residents which announced that 70 soldiers would be executed.

“Because the Yemeni Government is not paying attention to the abducted soldiers and officers, they will be treated according to the Islamic law, which states that prisoners are killed, enslaved, ransomed or granted amnesty. So, all the 70 soldiers will be executed,” reads the statement.

Ansar Al-Sharia demanded that the Yemeni government release some of its captured members being held in the Political Security Prison. In return, they will release the soldiers they have abducted. However,

the Yemeni government hasn't responded to the demand.

Ansar Al-Sharia captured more than 70 soldiers and officers, and about 150 soldiers were killed during the bloody clashes that took place in the area of Dofas, to the west of Zinjibar on March 4.

The victim dead soldiers and prisoners are of the 39th Armored Brigade and the 119th Infantry Brigade in the Abyan of the Southern Military Region.

Ansar Al-Sharia will execute the soldiers starting with those who come from areas farthest away from Abyan, according to sources of Ansar Al-Sharia.

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73 captured soldiers are threatened to be executed if the government didn't release Al-Qaeda affiliated detainees at the Yemeni Political and National Security prisons.

Dismissed general Al-Ahmar finally leaves office

By: **Ali Saeed**

SANA'A, April 25 — General Mohammed Saleh Al-Ahmar, who was dismissed as command of the Air Force on April 6th, has finally left his office on Tuesday after defying President Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi's decree for 19 days.

Al-Ahmar, who is also former president Ali Abdullah Saleh's half brother, has implemented the decree ordering his removal from office in the presence of the UN Secretary General Special Advisor to Yemen, Jamal Benomer and members of the Military Committee.

“I will remain a soldier for the sake of this homeland,” said Al-Ahmar in a meeting ceremony with Benomer and the Military Committee. He denied that he had rebelled against President Hadi saying, “It is untrue that I'm disobedient. The Air Force is the possession of Yemen.”

However, a source at the Yemeni Air Defense said that Al-Ahmar gave up his defiance from being removed after finding his actions

shunned both locally and internationally.

“Al-Ahmar has left office after international pressure exercised by the UN and other witnesses of the GCC power transfer deal,” said Captain Bilal Al-Sofi of the Yemeni Air Forces in Sana'a.

Al-Sofi explained that “Al-Ahmar wanted to keep some prestige for himself by leaving the office in the attendance of Benomer, so Saleh's aides and supporters feel undefeated.”

The UAE-based Khaleej newspaper quoted Yemeni Military sources on Wednesday saying that the former president Saleh called his half brother late Monday night, telling him to end his rebellion and leave the headquarters of the Air Forces in Al-Dailami Military Airbase, near Sana'a International Airport.

Following President Hadi's decree calling for Al-Ahmar to step down, the former chief of the Air Forces closed Sana'a International Airport for 24 hours. On April 7th he threatened to shoot down any

planes attempting to land or take off.

Saleh told his half brother that Benomer had warned him that any one who defied President Hadi's decisions could have sanctions imposed against them by the UN Security Council, according to the Khaleej Newspaper.

The paper added that Saleh has also asked his son, Ahmed who heads the Republican Guards, to withdraw his forces that were protecting Al-Ahmar at the air base.

After the decree calling for Al-Ahmar to step down he refused to do so unless the Minister of Defense and other top military commanders were also dismissed.

An estimated 40,000 Yemeni Air Force personnel had been protesting and on strike from January until early April, demanding the resignation of their chief, Al-Ahmar.

On April 6th, President Hadi appointed General Rashid Al-Janad as the new commander of the Air Force and Air Defense.

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Mohammed Saleh Al-Ahmar leaves the command of the Yemeni Air Forces after 19-day defiance to his resignation by president Hadi. Al-Ahmar has been in this office for over 22 years.

Yemeni students compete in Iken Scientifica competition

By: **Muaad Al-Maqtari**

SANA'A, April 25 — Yusof Al-Kebisi, a sixth grade student from the Yemen Modern School in Sana'a, holds the mini-elevator he has made in his hands. He dreams of winning a trip to NASA awarded by the international Iken Scientifica competition for scientific inventions.

This competition is organized in Yemen by the Al-Hamedy Company, the exclusive agent of Mexus Education Company, an education solutions provider located in Mumbai, India.

Al-Kebisi looks forward to getting a 'passport' by winning in the third round of the competition and moving on to the fourth. Al-Kebisi is one of 60 students who have made it through the first and second rounds of the competition, which started in

March.

Now he is doing his best to be one of six winners in the third round. Those six finalists will be able to travel to Mumbai as a team to compete against 15 teams from different countries including Egypt, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

The winning team will receive a trip to NASA along with three distinguished students selected by the committee of judges. Moreover, the National Geographic Channel will provide special media coverage during the nine students' trip to the USA.

Al-Kebisi won the second round of the competition and the third round will be held at the Police Officers Club in Sana'a, on Thursday morning.

He presented his mini-elevator before the IKEN Scientifica judges

committee, as did the other students. They displayed their other inventions, like a simple automatic watch.

All students had to put together the pieces of their inventions in front of the panel of the jury committee. Al-Hamedy Trading Company which is the exclusive agent for Mexus Education Company in India brought the materials from India to the students for their inventions.

Al-Kebisi operated his mini-elevator using a power generator resembling a small battery. The elevator lifts things from one place to another by connecting the power generator to a gear to move the elevator up and down.

According to Al-Kebisi, the mini-elevator could be scaled up to a full-sized version in the future if the

technology becomes available.

Ruba Al-Awadhi and Ayat Al-Hakemi, two girls from the Al-Jazeera School, also made elevators using the same techniques Al-Kebisi used in his.

Al-Hamedy trading company brings in all the pieces needed by the competitors to assemble their mini-inventions, according to Hatem Noor Al-Deen, director of Al-Hamedy Trading Company.

“The tools we bring in from Mexus Company come with detailed user instructions to help the students construct the samples they want,” Noor Al-Deen told the Yemen Times.

“It is a fact that school books are no longer enough to build students' creativity. So, the Iken Scientifica competition is very important because it uses workshops which are intended to bridge the gap between theory and practice,” added Noor Al-Deen.

Students are happy with Iken Scientifica workshops. “They are very important because they present real issues to help nurture students with creativity so that they can start to think and invent,” according to Kawkab Al-Harazi, a member of the Iken Scientifica team in Yemen.

“This way is the only way to boost curiosity about scientific inventions among Yemeni students and enable them to generate their own ideas,”



If the students passed the third round of the competition successfully they will be rewarded with passports to visit NASA.

said Al-Harazi.

When a student wins one of the rounds, he receives a 'passport', which starts with a message of congratulations sent to the student's father.

Fathers are now confident that their children could be the Iken Scientifica Global Icon 20011-12, and win a free trip to NASA.

Ibraheem, a student in primary school, came to his father, Abdulhameed Al-Sharjabi, last Thursday holding a passport. Written inside was a message encouraging Al-

Sharjabi to reward his genius son for passing the first round of the competition.

After each round, a detailed report of the student's performance, showing his son's strengths and weaknesses, is sent to Al-Sharjabi.

“Ibraheem has developed a lot because of this competition. His thinking has changed and he has started to think about bigger issues than before. He has also started questioning everything he encounters,” Al-Sharjabi told the Yemen Times.

Parliament approves access to information law

By: Muaad Al-Maqtari

SANA'A, April 25 — The Yemeni parliament approved on Tuesday citizens' right to information, after a delay of over four years since the bill was proposed.

In 2008, Member of Parliament Ali Hussein Ashaal, of the Islah party, presented the bill to both the constitutional and media committees of the parliament.

This was followed by another draft presented by the Ministry of Information, and since deliberations on both drafts have been proceeding off and on until recently.

The approved law is a combination of both drafts, making Yemen only the second Arab country after Jordan to issue such a law.

The essence of the access to information law is to allow citizens to demand information from government bodies. It includes clauses on the accountability of concerned authorities to provide information in a timely manner in order to improve transparency.

The law stipulates that every government has to dedicate a media person to answer applicants within ten days of a request. A penalty up to six months imprisonment was stipulated for any individual who

prevented or stalled the providing of information requested within the ten days. Moreover, those who acquire information illegally and publish it could face imprisonment of up to two years.

It was not clear in the law to what extent access to information applies to the private sector.

The law comprising of 66 articles, includes clauses for protecting privacy, and the protection of privileged information, such as information that affects fair competition, copyright, military strategies and foreign policy.

"The law was passed because of international pressure and is not really complete," said Basheer Al-Maqtari of the state-run National Information Center. "For example, it ignores applications for information from non-Yemenis and it does not cover international companies working in Yemen."

The delay in approving the law was a concern for many human rights and media organizations. The Economic Media Center last month presented a petition to the parliament signed by over a hundred civil society activists, demanding the law to be passed soon.

Before the law comes into force, it requires the signature of the presi-



Six months imprisonment was stipulated for any individual who prevented or stalled the providing of information requested within the ten days.

dent, which according to the constitution should happen within days of the parliament's decision.

In a similar vein, the cabinet in its ministerial meeting last Tuesday endorsed a decree to prevent all forms of phone tapping except through a court order. It also approved the internal charter regarding penalties for violations of the wireless and cable communications law no. 38 for year 1991, presented by the Minister

for Telecommunications.

According to the Ministry of Interior's media office, the charter regulates the Internet and long distance calls, and prevents 'smuggled calls' and illegal communication services.

According to the media office, the black market in long distance calls is a "threat to national security and deprives the state of a source of income."

Senior security officer killed in Hadramout



Lieutenant Colonel Adnan Ukeesh, head of the Drug Control Department in Hadramout.

By: Saleh Al-Batati

HADRAMOUT, April 25 — Lieutenant Colonel Adnan Ukeesh, head of the Drug Control Department in Hadramout, died in a hail of bullets from unidentified militants in the town of Ras Hwaira, some 100 kilometers from Mukalla, the capital of Hadramout.

Ukeesh was on a mission to arrest drug dealers who were handling 20kg of their product to local dealers, based on information he received from the security administration in Hadramout.

Ukeesh was tasked with storming the hideout of drug dealers in Ras Hwaira where the dealers had agreed to meet for the business deal.

When he arrived, Ukeesh was showered with bullets in an exchange of fire between his escorts and militants of the drug dealers. He was immediately rushed to hospital, but died en route. Another soldier of Ukeesh's escort was also injured.

The security forces captured two of the militants' cars during an exchange of gunfire, and arrested

one of the injured militants who was transferred to a hospital in the city of Seyuin.

"Security apparatuses are still investigating the incident to identify the criminals", the source added.

"Ukeesh had been known for his sincerity and the seriousness he brought to his work," a citizen in Seyuin said. "He was active, industrious and committed to his profession, especially in the last ten years, when he was tasked with combating drugs."

Similar incidents against security officials have been taking place in Hadramout over the last three years.

The former security chief of Wadi Hadramout, Brigadier Ahmed Salem Al-Amri, was assassinated in an armed ambush which targeted his truck in Nov. 2009. The government then accused Al-Qaeda of being behind the incident.

However, Al-Amri's relatives ruled out Al-Qaeda's involvement in the assassination saying, "We know the killers," alluding to military leaders involved in drug smuggling.

Campaign to eradicate lethal diseases

Muaad Al-Maqtari

SANA'A, April 25 — The World Health Organization (WHO) has started to distribute necessary vaccines in Yemen to stop six lethal diseases.

The vaccines aimed at eradicating whooping cough, tetanus, hepatitis B, haemophilus influenzae, poliomyelitis and diphtheria.

"Yemen has all the new vaccines from WHO to protect children against six lethal diseases," said Dr. Alaa Al-Deen Al-Alwan, Regional Director of WHO in the Middle East.

WHO commenced supplying the Yemeni Vaccination Program with the vaccines because of the mounting deaths of children from these diseases. This is the third weeklong Yemen regional vaccination campaign to be held in 3 years, part of the larger annual Middle East vaccination campaign, according to Al-Alwan.

Muhammad Salem Basendawa, the Prime Minister, and Ahmed Qasim Al-Ansi, the Minister of

Public Health and Population, inaugurated the Yemeni regional vaccination campaign in Sana'a on Monday under the slogan "Reaching Every Community."

The vaccination campaign has prepared special teams to deal with the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Sa'ada, Abyan, and those in African refugee camps, according to Majed Al-Joneed, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MOPHP).

The vaccination of these parts of the community will prevent the reoccurrence of lethal disease outbreaks among them, according to Al-Joneed.

"The MOPHP has established special vaccination centers for the African refugee camps in Kharaz in the city of Lahj, and other places like Haradh, so that all their residents can get the vaccine to eradicate the lethal diseases," said Al-Joneed.

"Further, other special teams have been established to give vaccines to the IDPs in Haradh and Aden, who were forced to leave

their homes because of the ongoing war in Sa'ada and Abyan, respectively" he added.

"The vaccination campaigns face many difficulties while working in poor neighborhoods," Salah Dabwan, head of Aden's Association of Popular Neighborhood Youth, told the Yemen Times.

Al-Joneed denied what Dabwan claimed, saying that the all the poor neighborhoods nationwide are given special care and affirmed that numerous teams were sent to poor neighborhoods to guarantee that all people in these areas receive the vaccine.

The percentage of people who receive vaccines has been increasing every year from 2005 to 2010. Almost 85 percent of Yemeni children received vaccines in the third week of vaccination this year.

"The ongoing circumstances which Yemen has witnessed since last year have reduced the average of the number of people receiving vaccination to 81 percent, which is still considered sufficient," said the Minister of Health.

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Ansar Al-Sharia to execute ten captured soldiers each week

Those who are from the areas near to Abyan will be kept until Ansar Al-Sharia get a guarantee that their relatives won't join the local peoples' defense committees, groups of local residents established to fight against Ansar Al-Sharia, according to the sources.

Ansar Al-Sharia's statement squared with the government announcement that the clashes in Abyan will end soon, and Zinjibar will be cleared of Ansar Al-Sharia's militants.

The military forces claim they control numerous government offices like Abyan's Post Office, the Youth and Sport Office, and other facilities and markets that were occupied by Ansar Al-Sharia, a military source told the state-run Saba News Agency.

"Many militants affiliated with Ansar Al-Sharia fled from Zinjibar after the heavy attacks they experienced and it will be cleared soon."

Yet, Ansar Al-Sharia denied that the Yemeni Army controlled the government offices, and affirmed in a statement released to the media on Tuesday that their fighters retaliated and destroyed a military tank.

Ansar Al-Sharia challenged the government to show a photo of soldiers inside government offices in Zinjibar to prove that they control them.

The National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms known as HOOD, and Al-Karama Human Rights Organization have called upon Ansar Al-Sharia not to execute the 73 soldiers.

And for its part, the Iraf Human Development Organization has urged the Yemeni government and the Minister of Defense to take appropriate actions to ensure the soldiers' safety.

Ansar Al-Sharia abducted the soldiers along with a Saudi diplomat and a Swiss female teacher. They demanded the Saudi and Swiss authorities to release Ansar Al-Sharia-affiliated detainees from the political and security prisons, in addition to paying ransom.

The negotiations between Ansar Al-Sharia and some tribal leaders to release Abdullah Al-Khaledi, the Saudi hostage diplomat and Sylvia Abrahath, the Swiss female

teacher, failed because of an air attack launched by the Yemeni Air Forces on Tuesday.

"Serious attempts have been made by the tribal sheiks to release the abducted Swiss woman and the Saudi Vice Consul, but they completely failed because of the air attack," said Sheikh Tareq Al-Fadhli, a tribal leader in Abyan.

"I negotiated with Ansar Al-Sharia before to release the three abducted French people and they [Ansar Al-Sharia] released them, after receiving millions of dollars in ransom," he added.

Dismissed general Al-Ahmar finally leaves office

Weapons smuggling

An officer at the Ministry of Defense who requested anonymity, told the Yemen Times on Tuesday morning that four trucks loaded with heavy and light weapons were seized while on their way out of the Air Defense military store in Sarif, north the capital Sana'a.

Units of the Air Force Police and the Republican Guards seized the smuggled weapons and transferred them to the headquarters of the defense ministry, according to the officer.

The officer accused the dismissed general Al-Ahmar of organizing the smuggling of weapons to be used against the political settlement.

The commander of the Al-Dailami Military Airbase, Colonel Abdalghani bin Awdl, told the local Akhbar Al-Youm daily newspaper on April 7th that three trucks loaded with different heavy weapons were smuggled from the base by armed tribesmen loyal to the former chief of the Air Forces.

He added that the guards of the base's store had attempted to seize the trucks, but troops from the Republican Guards around the base protected the trucks until they were driven away to an unknown location.

"We are concerned that such weapons may reach terrorist groups who will be capable of occupying the capital Sana'a in one night with such advanced military equipment," said bin Awdl.

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Yemen's Elite: Different views on the uprisings in Syria and Bahrain

By: Ahmed Dawood

Tunisia's Jasmine revolution started in Dec. 2010 and led to the ousting of longtime President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Jan. 2011, eventually leading to another revolution in Egypt.

The Egyptian revolution also led to the ousting of Egypt's longtime president Hosni Mubarak, and then a full-scale civil war broke out in Libya which led to the ousting and death of Muammar Gaddafi after 42 years of rule.

Yemenis welcomed the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions for they opened the door for many other revolutions, particularly in Yemen and later on in Bahrain and Syria.

The uprisings in Syria and Bahrain have provoked controversy, particularly in Yemen. Some of the Yemeni elite consider the uprising in Syria as a 'true revolution', whereas Bahrain's uprising is considered something less.

On the other hand, other Yemeni elites think the uprising in Bahrain as a great revolution against the monarchy, while Syria's uprising is considered a ploy by outside forces aiming to destroy the country.

Satar: Iran considers Bahrain an Iranian district

Sheikh Abdullah Satar, a leader in the Islamist Party, describes what is happening in Bahrain as a demanding of rights, but not a revolution.

Iran wants to spread disorder in Bahrain for it considers it an Iranian district and not an independent country. The citizens can only demand their legal rights, according to Sheikh Satar.

"Though Bahrain is a kingdom, there is freedom of the press. There is also continuous development and women have got all their rights. Moreover, the most important thing in Bahrain is security," added

Sheikh Satar.

However, Sheikh Satar considers the uprising in Syria a 'true revolution' because President Al-Assad's regime have destroyed everything and killed many people while all the people in the world are watching.

"What is strange is that Iran and Hezbollah, a Shiite Muslim military group and political party based in Lebanon, refused the intervention of some countries to stop the killing in Syria," he added.

"Without the support the Syrian regime receives from Iran and Hezbollah, it will not be able to continue," he said.

Hashid: Saudi Arabia failed both the revolutions of Bahrain and Syria

"Saudi Arabia have failed both the revolutions in Bahrain and Syria," said Ahmed Saif Hashid, a member of the Yemeni parliament and leader of Yemen's Youth peaceful revolution.

"People are being killed every day in Syria but the media tries to hide everything. Ten percent of this severe violence would make anyone support the Syrian revolution," he added.

"I support the revolution in Bahrain too, but the interference of Saudi Arabia by sending military troops to reinforce Bahrain prevented it," he said.

"The international community must support the revolution in Bahrain against the monarchy's regime, and stop the torture of revolutionary people and activists in Bahrain," continued Hashid.

Hashid deprecated the contradictory attitudes of Saudi Arabia because it supported the regime in Bahrain and stood against the regime in Syria.

Al-Madani: Bahrain's revolution is forgotten

Bahrain's revolution is forgotten as

all countries ignored it, according to Al-Khaled Al-Madani, a leader of Shabaab Al-Sumud, a group affiliated with the Houthis in Change Square.

"The uprising in Bahrain isn't supported by any country, particularly Iran because the people who started the protests are Bahrainis who speak Arabic and not Persian, and they say that they led a Bahraini revolution," he said.

"We have to judge what is happening in Bahrain by what we see and not what we hear," Al-Madani added.

"We support the right of people calling for their rights but we are against any external interference," said Al-Madani, concerning the uprising in Syria.

"Revolution doesn't need external support worldwide. The revolution in Tunisia and Egypt broke out without any external support. So, we support the revolution in Syria unless there isn't any external interference," he added.

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What is painful is the external interference. Saudi Arabia sent its troops to Bahrain and Iran tries to thwart the revolution in Syria which reflects that they don't respect the will of the people.

Al-Noaimi: Signs of revolution in Syria

What happened in Syria at the beginning was a real revolution but later on the opposition parties divided into two parts. Those who are outside Syria diverted to serve particular foreign agendas, while those in Syria continued to call for political reforms, according to Mohamed Al-Noaimi, the former spokesman of the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) and head of the political department of the Popular Forces Union Party in Yemen.

"We support the peoples' freedom, but at the same time we refuse the external interference and the projects which serve foreign countries and aim at destroying Syria," he added.

"I wonder about all the countries that are concerned about Syria while they totally ignore Bahrain's revolution, how they lead the political power transfer agreement and forget about the people of Bahrain who demand urgent political reforms and not the ousting of the current regime," he said.

Al-maqtari: The external parties don't respect the will of people

The uprisings in Syria and Bahrain are two great revolutions in which the people are against oppression and tyranny just like the revolutions of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, according to Bushra Al-Maqtari, a leader of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) and an activist in Freedom Square in Taiz.

"What is painful is the external interference. Saudi Arabia sent its troops to Bahrain and Iran tries to thwart the revolution in Syria which reflects that they don't respect the will of the people," said Al-Maqtari.

Al-Maqtari criticized the Arab media coverage of the uprising in Syria and Bahrain. The Saudi Ara-



Sheikh Abdullah Satar



Bushra Al-maqtari

bian media was interested in what was happening in Syria while it totally ignored Bahrain. On the contrary, the media in Iran gave much more importance to what was happening in Bahrain, ignoring Syria.



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How to help Yemen come unstuck

By: Sarah Leah Whitson
Foreign Policy
April 20, 2012

Last week's shutdown of Sana'a's airport by security forces seeking to reverse President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi's dismissal of top brass loyal to the ancien régime exemplified exactly where Yemen is stuck.

After three decades under former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, elements within the transitional civilian government are eager to move forward, with ambitious plans to reform the country's legal and security infrastructure. But they lack the muscle to rein in the security

forces, implicated in many of the worst human rights abuses during last year's uprising yet still operating their fiefdoms. Restoring law and order requires a major restructuring of those security forces and a strong dose of accountability for the killings of hundreds of peaceful protesters and indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas.

The blighted record of Yemen's security forces is well documented. The Central Security Forces, headed by Saleh's nephew, Yahya Saleh, stood by while armed pro-government thugs attacked and killed 45 demonstrators on March 18, 2011. The Republican Guards, headed by Saleh's son, Ahmed Ali Saleh, indiscriminately shelled residential

neighborhoods in Ta'iz last year, killing dozens of civilians. There is little contention that these security forces participated in or failed to prevent several similar attacks. Yet when I visited Yemen in late March, the country's general prosecutor could not confirm that a single senior officer in either of these forces had been questioned, much less prosecuted.

In the name of "moving forward," the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the United States worked out a deal offering Saleh a blanket amnesty and all his aides immunity from prosecution for "political crimes" in exchange for Saleh's agreement to leave office – immunity that Yemen's Parliament

enshrined in law this year. The GCC deal included a provision for a draft Transitional Justice Law that would establish a truth commission, leaving open the hope that Yemenis will at least be able to establish a record of the gross abuses carried out by political and military leaders and compensate people who suffered at their hands. But the current draft doesn't give the commission subpoena powers, so even this small remedial measure will prove limited.

Sana'a, Yemen's capital, remains a city divided, with neighborhoods under the control of various warlords, and none under President Hadi's control. The Republican Guard refuses to fully remove its troops and checkpoints because, its commanders argue, the renegade First Armored Division and militias of the powerful Al-Ahmar family won't pull theirs back.

While Hadi and Interior Minister Qader Qahtan have made clear their plans to bring the security services under civilian control and remove officials implicated in abuses, it's also clear they are currently powerless to do so. Yahya Saleh's appearance at my meeting with Qahtan was a surprise, and effectively preempted any discussion of the Interior Minister's relationship with Central Security.

Despite this standoff, the U.S. government has pledged to resume counterterrorism assistance to fight Yemen's thriving Al-Qaeda branch, most likely to some of these same military units, to the tune of \$75 million this year. If the United States is serious about supporting democratic transition and the rule of law in Yemen, it needs to enforce counterterrorism czar John Brennan's promise that no aid will go to units involved in "political shenanigans" such as the airport shutdown. The United States should start with rigorous Leahy Law-style vetting of all security units being considered for funding. It also should help ensure that those units are accountable to Yemen's civilian government, and that the government conducts serious investigations into their abuses.

The international community should also lend technical and financial support to the legal affairs ministry, which has set itself the ambitious task of rewriting the country's major laws to make them comply with international human rights standards, including laws on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), labor rights, political parties, and the media.

Minister Ahmed Al-Mikhlaifi, a former human rights activist, recognizes that this is an opportu-

nity to lay a legal foundation that will protect rights for generations to come. Mikhlaifi's offices, unlike the plush, expansive offices of the National Security Agency and Republican Guard, are in a small, dilapidated building. He works with a skeletal staff, sometimes without electricity – as we discovered during our meeting in the dark. The United States also can support the new human rights minister, Huriyeh Mashour, who has boldly challenged security force abuses, but bemoaned the lack of skills, training, and funding for her underpaid staff.

The United States, the European Union, and the Gulf states were key to persuading Saleh to leave office. Now, they should make an equally concerted effort to help Yemen's new government build rights-respecting security institutions and establish the rule of law. Without these elements, Al-Qaeda is likely to flourish and rival security factions won't accept civilian rule. Donor countries need to ensure that their assistance moves Yemen forward, and doesn't reward elements holding it back.

*Sarah Leah Whitson is Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch.**

CIA seeks Yemen drone strike escalation

By: Jeremy B. White
ibtimes.com
April 19, 2012

In an effort to expand its campaign of covert drone strikes in Yemen, the Central Intelligence Agency has asked for the authority to target suspected terrorists without needing to establish their identity first.

Yemen has assumed a central place in the Obama administration's counterterrorism push, leading to an expanded use of strikes by unmanned drones that are a critical part of the military's arsenal in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The new authority sought by the CIA, reported the Washington Post, would give CIA operatives latitude to operate in Yemen more in line with practices they already employ in Pakistan.

Drone attacks are divided into two categories: "personality strikes" on specific, high-value terror suspects,

and "signature strikes" that involve groups of potential militants whose behavior and gathering places indicate they pose a risk. The CIA is asking for the ability to deploy signature strikes in Yemen.

The tactic carries risks because of the possibility of killing innocent people. The Obama administration initiated a review this summer after diplomats and military officials warned that the signature strikes were straining America's already tenuous alliance with Pakistan. The results were mixed, with some critics of overly aggressive drone strikes saying the CIA retained broad autonomy to launch strikes.

The United States faces a similarly precarious situation in Yemen. A popular uprising toppled former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, a U.S. ally who, in a diplomatic cable released by Wikileaks, told a top American general that he would "continue saying the bombs are ours, not yours." The White House

has been trying to beat back an Al-Qaeda offshoot that has capitalized on the instability in Yemen, both by launching more drone strikes and by offering increased military assistance to Yemen.

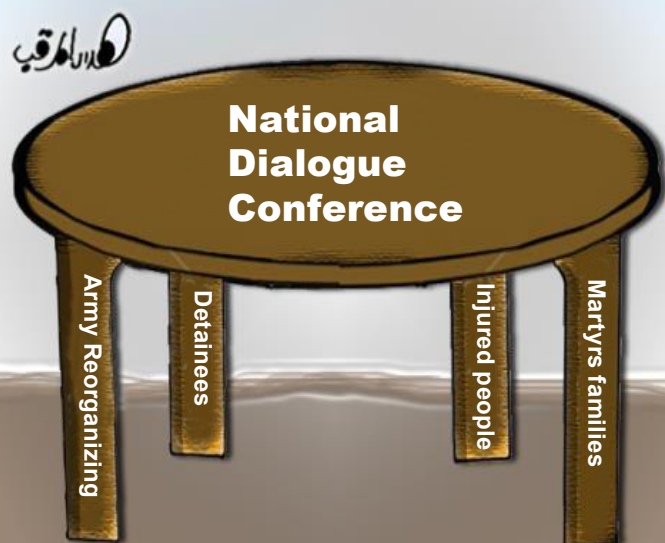
Complicating the situation is the overlap between Al-Qaeda affiliates and local militants targeting the Yemeni government. Many Yemenis are already wary of the United States' intentions, given its history of backing Saleh, and assaults on suspected groups of militants could further inflame an already volatile situation.

"I think there is the potential that we would be perceived as taking sides in a civil war," an official told the Post.

The pace of armed drone operations in Yemen has been accelerating in recent months, including Obama's controversial authorization of a strike on the radical Al-Qaeda cleric Anwar Al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen.

SKETCHED OPINION

By Hilal Al-Muraqib



Vacancy Announcement for National Personnel for the German International Cooperation / Human Resources Officer / GIZ Office Sana'a in Yemen (PN 1998.9272.0-001.00) done by the GIZ Office Sana'a.

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The Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is an experienced service provider and assist the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. With immediate effect the GIZ Office Sana'a invites applications from qualified Yemeni nationals for the following position:

1 Position: Human Resources Officer (HR Officer)

Under the supervision of the Head of Administration the HR Officer will work in the GIZ Office in Sana'a.

Main Responsibilities:

The HR Officer main responsibilities are:

- Central contact for management and staff for all HR questions for national personnel (recruitment and selection, contract issues, development measures)
- Implementing national personnel policies

Main Tasks

- Organizing and directing the recruitment and hiring process for national personnel in accordance with GIZ standards
- Contract processing for all national personnel
- Assistance to staff in all HR matters related to national personnel
- Maintaining information's of hiring conditions for national personnel (remuneration system, salary groups, model job descriptions, labour law)
- Implementing and complying with GIZ's national policies
- Implementing HRM for national personnel
- Developing human resources instruments and procedures
- Organizing of evaluation process
- Planning and organization of training measures

Professional Requirements

Applicants must have the following requirements:

Qualifications

- BA/MSc in business administration, university degree in law, economics or sociology (with a focus on HR management) or similar area

Professional experience

- At least 3 years experience in a comparable position (preferably with international agency)

Other knowledge, additional competences

- Good working knowledge of ITC technologies (related software, phone, fax, e-mail, internet) and computer applications (e.g. MS Office)
- Familiar with HR procedures
- Good knowledge of national labor and social law
- Experience in advising on HR issues
- Impressive track record in a service provider and governance role
- Native Arabic with very good knowledge of English language and ideally a knowledge of German
- Ability to cooperate with others
- Awareness of how to handle HR issues appropriately (confidentiality, data protection)
- Willingness to up skill as required by the tasks to be performed
- Stress management capacity

Address for application

If interested and with suitable qualifications kindly send your application letter (cover letter) and CV in English and Arabic to the following:

e-mail address: giz-jemen@giz.de

Subject line: Human Resources Officer (HR Officer)

Deadline for receipt applications for the above mentioned positions is: 02.05.2012.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Should you be invited for an interview, you will be asked to present all certificates mentioned in your CV. You will also be asked to provide two relevant professional references to be contacted.

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Roadmap for Yemen's economic recovery

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

While Yemen feels its way into economic recovery and as the international community is on stand-by waiting for Yemen to state its economic priorities a team of economic experts have already made headway in this field.

Lead by Dr. Mohammed A-Maitami Chairman of the Khobara Center for Development and Consulting Services, the team came up with a policy paper defining – from a Yemeni perspective – what the urgent, midterm and long term priorities should be, and how to save Yemen from an almost inevitable economic collapse.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed economist Al-Maitami to talk about Yemen's main economic challenges and what should be done to face them.

While the entire world, including Yemen's own government, is still sorting out political challenges, you have been working with your team on the economic priorities for over a year. Why such urgency?

Yemenis realize more than others that although masked with political demands of democracy and peaceful transition of power, our real problems and demands are economic. Today, politics take the lime light because this is what politics are all about. However, without real economic reforms moving on simultaneously all these political efforts face real threats of falling apart in a heartbeat.

As an economist who has been working in this field for over 20 years I saw it coming. This is why right from the beginning of the uprising last year, I and a group of independent Yemeni economist decided to use our skills and come up with Yemeni-lead solutions for existing and expected economic problems.

We started our work in April last year and there was interest from the Americans, the World Bank and other donors but it was really the GIZ that took keen interest in what we were doing on volunteer basis and supported us logistically.

The point is not the lack of money, or donor support that is, but rather local home-grown solutions as to what to do with this money in order to support the country's

economy. We remember that in the 2006 donors' conference in London over 6 billion dollars was pledged, we could not utilize even 10 percent of it. The reason was obvious, no proposed projects from Yemen to utilize this money.

We did not want this to happen again, and along with another four of my colleges we devised a policy paper for Yemen's priorities and presented it to the Ministry of Plan-

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ning which is the government body responsible for this, to the prime minister himself and to the donor community.

What sort of reactions did you receive on this paper?

Amazing reactions! The Minister of Planning immediately welcomed this project which we made totally on volunteer basis and decided to contract our center to create specific economic proposals to be implemented in the transitional period and later.

The prime minister was thrilled with the work we have done and offered to meet with our team on weekly basis to develop this policy paper further and translate it into projects especially in light of the donors' conference due soon.

The international community also pitched in. The World Bank has already agreed to support our initiative with other donors as well to use the center as a provider of consulting services.

What made your policy paper so attractive that you received such welcome?

Well, to start with, it is the only paper of its kind in Yemen. The government's economic bodies are yet starting to think about Yemen's economic priorities while we have been working on this for over a year. The other point is that we are an independent team of Yemeni experts. Our group is composed of



Dr. Mohammed A-Maitami

high level well established independent experts who have already made their marks in the country and abroad.

We really did all this work based on our conviction that the solutions for Yemen's economy have to be Yemeni. We need to stop being donor-driven and start helping ourselves in order for the world to help us.

Finally the priorities we provide here are detailed and tested. They are obviously a work in progress and could be developed further but at least it is a solid foundation for economic planning that should be dealt with seriously.

What are the main highlights of this policy paper?

The priorities are divided into three priorities: immediate, midterm and long term. On the immediate urgent level which we termed

as the socio-economic stability phase we have eight priorities: Poverty reduction, humanitarian relief and Internally Displaced Persons, unemployment especially for new graduates, basic socio-economic services, monetary and fiscal policies, governance, private sector involvement and partnership with the Friends of Yemen group.

At the time being we have focused our work on the immediate priorities because these are what Yemen is dealing with in the present stage and for another two years.

For elevating poverty we recommended specific solutions through reforming existing funds, promoting Yemeni labor in gulf markets, promoting vocational trades and entrepreneurship, encouraging labor heavy investments, enforcing retirement policies, corporate responsibility and real involvement or

private sector and finally reforming public owned companies to become a source of income.

On the IDPS and relief point we proposed creation of a new poverty/IDPs map and working through existing local networks especially in coordination with the private sector for relief aid distribution.

For improving basic services water was the highest priority, in fact we suggested announcing a state of water emergency. Also creating a specialized emergency fund to cover deficiency in any of the standard basic services for citizens, etc.

To improve the monetary and fiscal systems there are specific measures in reforming the wages and compensation system, inflation control through eliminating monopoly, fuel subsidies reform, consumer protection measures, reforming the banking system, applying accountability measures to the public sector especially in income generating bodies such as tax and custom authorities.

On the governance issue, the main point is to create a transparent accountability system that breaks the monopoly and nepotism cycles, creating citizen-state trust building mechanisms, access to information, reforming the judiciary system and rule of law.

On the private sector's involvement front we realize the great untapped potential of Yemeni private sector especially those with investments abroad. Therefore, the first point is to encourage capital back into the country through creating a better investment environment in the same time creating specific channels to quickly deal with grievances.

Finally the partnership with the Friends of Yemen group; the main channel is obviously the financial support through funding especially when it comes to the budget deficit. Also direct support to the nongovernmental economic institutions especially though concerned with microfinance.

Successful microfinance stories: Handicrafts change Fatima's life for the better

By: Amal Al-Yarisi

Fatima Hassan, a maker of handicrafts from Lahj governorate, did not expect that a small loan from the Aden Foundation for Micro-finance would change her life for the better.

Hassan is the breadwinner for her seven family members. She does not have any qualifications other than a high school certificate and some experience in making handicrafts. She worked making handicrafts with simple tools and that's why she had never significantly improved her skills.

Looking back, she said, "I faced many financial hardships and my financial situation was very difficult. Such circumstances helped stop my skills from improving."

The financial hardships she went

through did not stop her ambitions to expand and develop her profession. She decided to take a small loan of YR 25,000 (USD 120) to expand her modest project.

With that sum of money, Hassan bought some tools and opened a small center for producing handicrafts in her modest house. Initially, the handicrafts she produced were sold to neighbors and adjacent shops.

Hassan's ambitions prompted her to participate in the Social Fund Exhibition for Development in Aden Mall, the biggest commercial mall in the city. The visitors of the exhibition admired her products and scrambled to buy them.

"Now my handicrafts are sold and available in many shops. They can be found in Sheik Othman, Crater, and the Khor Maksar areas of Aden," she said.

Hassan makes several related incense handicraft products including Mushjub, (a clothes container with incense to produce a nice smell), juba (a basket for preserving fresh bread), brooms and hand fans.

Hassan's success has encouraged and motivated her to open another kind of business, a beauty salon.

"I borrowed another YR 20,000 (USD 100) which I used to purchase make-up and hair-care products, and opened a modest beauty salon in my house," she said.

Not only did Hassan's small projects increase her income and improve her financial situation, but they also helped provide work opportunities for her family members.

"Every profit we make, we divide it between us where each one of us



Micro credit from Micro Finance Foundation in Aden enabled Fatima to have her own shops to practise her handicrafts and generate an income for her and her family.

has a fixed share," she said.

Hassan wants to take out a larger loan in order to establish a handicrafts shop in Aden city because she wants to expand and develop her handicrafts activities.

The Executive Manager for the Aden Foundation for Micro-finance, Rana Al-Salami, told the Yemen Times that, "Hassan struggled to develop her project because she

is skillful and talented in making handicrafts."

"In addition to the financial services, we further work as much as possible to train and qualify this segment of society. We offer some training courses in several areas such as sewing, embroidery, mobile maintenance, housekeeping, handicrafts, cooking, and making perfumes and incense," she said.

"We also offer some courses in marketing and business administration," Al-Salami continued.

Like many micro-financed projects, which have increased in Yemen over the last couple of years, the Aden Foundation helps people succeed and make their dreams come true. They provide small entrepreneurs with loans in an effort to encourage them, and foster and enhance a

spirit of cooperation and solidarity among community members.

Micro-finance foundations further aim to raise poor income levels, and provide clients with sustainable micro-finance services.

Women are particularly encouraged to take loans as such micro-finance foundations seek to enable them to establish profitable, income-generating businesses.

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Hassan makes several related incense handicraft products including Mushjub, (a clothes container with incense to produce a nice smell), juba (a basket for preserving fresh bread), brooms and hand fans.

Tribes and tribalism in the Arab Spring

By: Khaled Fattah

From Iraq in the north down to the Arabian Peninsula and west all the way to Morocco, tribal values have had a strong influence on shaping the political culture and state-society relations in the Middle East. Historians remind us that throughout the span of the Middle East's history, tribes have often posed a credible threat to central governments, and have played an important role in the making and dismantling of ruling dynasties.



Tribes remain a major political actor in Yemen.

The Romans, the Persians, the Ottomans, the French, the British, the Italians, Arab kings, Imams, Sultans and the post-independence Arab military officers, have all attempted, with various degrees of success and failure, to destroy, co-opt, subordinate and manipulate tribes. The Romans, for instance, allocated payments to tribes in the region to guard the frontiers against external intrusion.

The Persians, on the other hand, used tribes as buffers against emerging powerful neighbouring dynasties, while western colonial forces promoted tribalism as a counterbalance to the rising urban sentiments of nationalism. Tribes, however, posed the most serious challenge to the political elites of the post-colonial independent Arab states.

At the heart of this threat lies the obsessive preoccupation of the 20th century political regimes in the re-

is the outcome of the divergent and changing types of state formation, colonial penetration, economic growth and societal changes.

It is also important to note that the relationships between political administrations, whether foreign or indigenous, and tribes in the region were never fixed. Instead, they were always subject to adjustments in response to alterations in security, economic and political circumstances.

The only fixed feature in these relations is that tribes become strong when political administrations are weak. In other words, the strength of the tribes is closely linked to the weakness of the state. In light of this, the role of tribes in state building in the Middle East is balanced by the role of the state in destroying tribes.

A glance at today's map of state-society relations in the Arab Middle East reveals that tribes remain a major political actor in Saudi Arabia, the oil monarchies of the Gulf, Jor-

failure of the Iraqi military adventure in Kuwait, the Iraqi regime revitalized tribal justice system, and even granted tribal leaders diplomatic passports.

Saddam Hussein went so far with his tribalization policy to the extent of declaring that Iraq's Ba'ath ruling party is "the tribe of all the tribes". On the other hand, in tribal countries with elections experiences, such as Yemen and Jordan, tribal leaders play a significant role in shaping the mechanisms and strategies not only of the regimes but also of the opposition parties, including Islamists. Tribesmen vote in support for their sheikhs, for the sheikhs of their allied tribes, and for candidates who are endorsed by their tribal leaders.

Tribal voting in elections is not based on ideological affiliation but simply on the basis of the social obligations of tribal membership. In other Arab countries with large tribal population, the state's local administrative boundaries are drawn, mainly, on the basis of tribal lines, and local tribal sheikhs are the local administrative officials.

The exercise of power by tribes and their leaders should not be seen, however, as a tribally-motivated attempt to overthrow modern state institutions and replace them by a traditional tribal political order. Rather, Arab tribal leaders prefer the extraction of maximum political concessions and economic benefits from the state, without being directly involved in the complex management of state affairs.

The unfolding Arab revolutions met the giant of tribalism in Libya and Yemen. In the two countries the peaceful 'Arab Spring' has turned into a bloody summer and a violent long autumn. Historically speaking, the modern Libyan and Yemeni nation-states were born and grew up with fundamental geographical flaws, as artificial national political entities that are caught into a strong web of regional and international geopolitical interests.

Lacking harmony between their external modern form and their internal traditional contents, and suffering from serious problems of legitimacy and weak institutional building, modern Libya and Yemen came into existence as political units that are difficult to manage without gaining the support of tribes.

Decades after independence, loyalty and allegiance to the clan and tribal sheikh in these countries remain far much stronger than loyalty to the country and allegiance to the state. Qaddafi of Libya, for instance, relied heavily on his own tribe, Qathathfa, and on other loyal tribes such as Warfala and Maghrha, which includes the Lockerbie suspected bomber Abdelbasset al-Maghrhai, for filling all strategic military and security positions.

Similarly, former president Saleh of Yemen relied on his clan and tribe to infiltrate the military and state institutions. Saleh paid acute attention to the tribal backgrounds of his top ranking commanding officers. The majority of the generals in Yemen's military, for example, are drawn from Salih's clan, Sanhan, and other

clans from Hashid tribal confederation. As a result, the Yemeni military became not a state institution, but a reflection of tribal power. The regime's orchestrated tribalization of state institutions in Yemen makes the state behaves like a tribe, and the tribe behaves like a state.

Even seasoned observers of the Middle East can notice how the current violent uprisings in Libya and Yemen have a strong tribal flavour. Tribes in the eastern parts of Libya, where much of the oil fields are located, are one of the major forces behind the rebellion against the Libyan regime. These tribes were excluded from Qaddafi's four decades patronage system, which favoured tribes in and around Tripoli.

In Yemen, on the other hand, tribes that were marginalized by Saleh's regime, and tribal elites whom their interests clashed with the interests of Saleh's immediate family, constitute a major military and financial resource for supplying and complicating the anti-regime protestation. The prominence of the tribal factor in Libya and Yemen has militarized the uprisings, and pushed the peaceful protests into civil wars, not revolutions.

The stubborn persistence of tribal identity in the Arab Middle East is the outcome of the failure of the national project of political modernization, and the addition of Arab autocrats to politics of survival, even if survival strategies mean radical shifts in posture and policy.

The politicization of tribal cultural identity in the region is one of the troubling symptoms of the Arab State's crisis of legitimacy. In the post Arab spring era, the political administrations in Libya and Yemen will have to be very well prepared for their tough meetings with the giant of tribalism. Political reform based on constitutional legitimacy is the best first step towards undermining the influential political role of tribes in the Arab Middle East.

Dr. Khaled Fattah is a guest lecturer at the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies at Lund University in Sweden. This article was published by the Centre for Mediterranean, Middle East and Islamic Studies.



Former president Saleh relied on his clan and tribe to infiltrate the military and state institutions.

gion with the total confiscation of the political arena, and the forcible submission of all social actors to the will of political leadership.

By looking through the wrong end of the telescope, many in the Western world think of tribal people as nomads, riding camels and living in harsh and remote desert areas. This is not the reality in the Arab Middle East, where the distinction between tribal and non-tribal does not correspond in any significant way between nomadic and settled populations. The majority of Middle Eastern tribes do not move.

Tribal populations, for instance, in Iraq and Yemen are settled farmers, who plant fruits and vegetables beside their sorghum and mill et. Remarkably, tribal identity in the region is still alive in the socio-political consciousness of millions of Arabs residing in modern globalising cities. This unique phenomenon is one of the excellent mirrors to reflect how tribalism in the Arab world is not a way of life.

Rather, it is an identity, which is grounded in cultural psychology and politics. In other words, tribalism in the Middle East is culturally rooted and politically shaped. It's uneven development and strength in the region

dan, Iraq, Yemen and Libya. In these countries, tribal banners fly next to national flags, and tribal identity continues to play an important role in the shaping of decision-making process of the state, and even in the construction of national identity. Tribal identity in these countries is so strong that it is competing with the two remaining influential identities-Islamism and nationalism.

Some authors go further to argue that tribal loyalty can be even more important than Islam. The impressive political influence of tribes in the region illustrates how 'modern' Arab political systems, rich and poor; monarchical and republican, remain very vulnerable to ideologies of tribal realities, and how tribal relations remain deeply intertwined with political relations.

The contemporary relations between tribes and state institutions in the Arab world are expressed, mainly, through relationships of patronage and clientism between influential tribal sheikhs and political elites.

The form of the patronage varies from monthly payments to 'gifts' such as lucrative business deals, lands, government seats, vehicles and houses. For example, during the 1980-88 war with Iran, and after the miserable

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