

## Captured soldiers in Abyan released

By: Ali Saeed

ABYAN, April 29 — Ansar Al-Sharia, a group affiliated with Al-Qaeda, on Sunday released 73 soldiers from Ja'ar in Abyan that have been held captive for two months.

The armed group who took control of much of Abyan governorate in May 2011, released the prisoners after mediation by Islamic clerics, prisoners' families, youth activists and human rights ac-

tivists from Sana'a, Hadramout, Aden and Abyan, said Sheikh Abulwahab Al-Humaiqani, a representative of the Al-Karama Human Rights Organization told the Yemen Times on Sunday.

The mediation team, who traveled from Sana'a on Thursday April 26, arrived in Ja'ar on Saturday morning April 28 and got a word from leaders of the group that the prisoners were to be freed the following day, Mohamed Al-Ahmadi, a member of the medita-

tion team told the Yemen Times.

The local news website, Al-Mas-dronline reported on Saturday that Ansar Al-Sharia had decided to release the army prisoners after "instructions were given by the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Naser Al-Wahishi to do so in respect for the mediation team."

Al-Ahmadi said that Ansar Al-Sharia organized a festival and military parade for the release of the prisoners in Ja'ar where the leader of the organization in Abyan, Jalal Balaidi attended the ceremony and gave a speech to the attendees and the captured soldiers.

"Your [prisoners'] government has arrested our fellows [Al-Qaeda detainees in Yemeni prisons] from their mosques, homes or while at work and have not released them yet," said Balaidi in his speech to the prisoners. "But we captured you from the back of tanks and missiles-launchers."

The group has given each of the

73 captured soldiers YR 10,000 (\$50) for transportation money, according to Al-Ahmadi.

The main road connecting Zinjibar to Aden has been blocked by the army since June 2011 and people in the area live under a blockade, according to Al-Ahmadi.

Ansar Al-Sharia captured the 73 soldiers in early March during fierce battles with the army in Dofas, west of Zinjibar, that caused the death of 150 army troops.

### Two soldiers of the CTU killed in Zinjibar

Ibrahim Mohamed Mufarrah and Jamal Al-Jameema of the Counter-Terrorism Unit (CTU) in Zinjibar of Abyan were killed on Friday April 27 in an armed ambush set up by Ansar Al-Sharia, a source from the CTU told the Yemen Times on Sunday.

Jameel Al-Dufairi and Mohamed Ateeq also from the CTU were injured in the same ambush, the source added.

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# Shabwa in urgent need of security deployments

By: Ali Saeed

SHABWA, April 29 — The Deputy Governor of Shabwa, Ali Rashed Al-Harithi, stated on Saturday that Shabwa is in urgent need of more security and military deployments to prevent the expansion of Al-Qaeda's affiliated groups and their sabotage of international oil companies working in the area.

There are more than four international oil companies operating in Shabwa governorate and they have been targeted in the last two months by Ansar Al-Sharia, an Al-Qaeda affiliated group, who have controlled large parts of the governorate since early June 2011.

"Shabwa's area is like four other governorates of Yemen [put to-

gether], therefore a large number of brigades are needed to maintain security in the governorate," said Al-Harithi in a telephone interview with the Al-Saeeda Satellite TV Channel on Saturday.

This followed the sabotage of a gas pipeline on Thursday April 26 by Ansar Al-Sharia, who said that their "action came in revenge for US airstrikes launched last week against Shabwa."

The Yemen Liquid Natural Gas (YLNG) Company confirmed on Thursday that the 38 inch gas pipeline that links Block 18 to the Balhaf terminal on the Gulf of Aden had been attacked.

"The explosion occurred at 22:20 on 26th April in a desert zone 260 km north of Balhaf Liquefaction Plant. It caused no victims." The company said on its



Large parts of Shabwa's 40,000 square kilometers lack security and military deployment. Many security military units were withdrawn from remote governorates to Sana'a early 2011.

## Revolutionary youth present conditions to participate in the Dialogue

By: Muaad Al-Maqtari

SANA'A, April 29 — The intention of revolutionary youth to participate in the upcoming National Dialogue Conference (NDC) raised controversy in the last few days.

Many parties will take part in the NDC like the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), the General People's Congress (GPC), the Southern Movement, the Houthis, and the opposition based abroad.

The Yemeni government, in its attempts to pave the way for the upcoming NDC, was met with a list of 20 conditions issued by the Organizing Committee of the Peaceful Youth Revolution in Sana'a's Change Square.

The Organizing Committee threatened that the youth of the revolution won't participate in the NDC unless the government meets all of the conditions.

The dismissal of the ousted President Ali Abdullah Saleh's relatives from all military institutions is the principal condition of participation in the NDC for the youth in Change Squares across Yemen.

The second condition is the trial of all those who killed protestors and those who supported the killers. The third is the release of all political prisoners and forcefully disappeared people, whether the youth, the Southern Movement, or the Houthis.

The demands of the revolutionary youth included the rehiring of workers who were fired due to their revolutionary stance, and the firing of unqualified people appointed to government posts during the former regime's rule.

"These conditions are urgent and must be fulfilled as soon as possible,"



The youth in Change Squares demand that army and security units be reorganized to be run by the Defence and Interior ministries.

said Abdulhadi Al-Azazi, a member of the Organizing Committee.

"All detainees who supported the revolution, either military men or civilians must be released. Further, those wounded must receive treatment and the families of those killed in the protests must receive care and adequate compensation," said Al-Azazi.

President Abd Rabu Mansour Hadi must also abolish the Yemeni House of Representatives and Shura Council in the first meeting of the NDC, according to Al-Azazi.

"The current government isn't a part of the NDC. The Gulf Initiative pointed out that the revolutionary youth are among the parties which will participate in the NDC," he added.

In mid-April 2012, Huria Mashhor, the Yemeni Minister of Human Rights, met the youth in Sana'a's Change Square to prepare for the

NDC. This angered the revolutionary youth, because they felt that the National Unity Government considers itself a part of the NDC, though it is not supposed to be.

"Mashhor dealt with the revolutionary youth as if they are obedient to the government," said Abdunnasser Al-Saqqaq, the spokesman of the Coordinating Council of the Youth Revolution of Change (Nasr).

The government dealt with the youth in change squares across Yemen only to cover its inability to make critical decisions like the dismissal of the former president's relatives, according to Al-Saqqaq.

The media loyal to the former regime tries to present the youth of the GPC as if they are part of the revolutionary youth in Change Squares, though they aren't. The Gulf initiative stated that only the youth in Yemen's Change Squares will participate in the upcoming

NDC, according to Al-Saqqaq.

"The youth coalitions in the 17 change squares across Yemen are not all with the dialogue. Some coalitions like Al-Sumood Youth, who are linked to the Houthis, refuse the dialogue and the Gulf initiative in general," said Al-Saqqaq.

During the past year of the revolution, Yemeni youth established more than 600 revolutionary groups to lead and organize the protests.

The Organizing Committee was established in February, 2011. It included youth from the Yemeni opposition parties and was established to organize the protests in Sana'a's Change Square and its offshoots in Ta'iz, Ibb, and Hodeida.

Moreover, there are other effective youth coalitions like the Supreme Coordination Council of the Yemeni Revolution (SCCYR), the Coordinating Council of the Youth Revolution of Change (Nasr), the Civil Coalition of Youth Revolution (CCYR), and Al-Sumood Youth coalition. All these coalitions pursue peaceful change.

Some coalitions have tried to establish a unified pan-youth coalition just like The Preparatory Committee of the Revolution Council, led by Tawakkul Karman, the revolutionary activist and a 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

However, because of the different youth coalitions, there are different strategic viewpoints, but what is important is that they have a single aim of peaceful political change.

The majority of the youth coalitions demand peaceful change and the eradication of tyranny and corruption in order to found a new government based on justice and equality. They all want to establish a civil state built on rule by the people.

## Saudi Arabia accuses Iran of supporting Ansar Al-Sharia in Yemen

By: Muaad Al-Maqtari

SANA'A, April 29 - The abduction of Abdullah Al-Khaledi, the Saudi deputy consul on March 28 in Aden, prompted Saudi Arabia to insinuate an alliance between Iran and Ansar Al-Sharia, an Al-Qaeda-affiliated militant group in Yemen.

Saudi Arabia has made claims that that Iran supports Ansar Al-Sharia in Yemen, according to analyses and research papers from Saudi researchers in academic centers in Al-Riyadh.

The analyses were based on the enormous demands of Ansar Al-Sharia in negotiating with the Saudi authorities to release Al-Khaledi.

The huge ransom demanded by Ansar Al-Sharia to release Al-Khaledi was an attempt to deceive the Saudi authorities to make them believe that Ansar Al-Sharia is in need of money, according to Ibrahim Al-Nahas, a professor of po-

litical science at King Saud University in Al-Riyadh.

"However, Iran is in fact supporting them [Ansar Al-Sharia] financially and recruiting them in Yemen," he added.

"The recruitment of Ansar Al-Sharia in Yemen requires huge amounts of money and this money is given to them by Iran," Al-Nahas said in a report to Al-Riyadh Newspaper on Monday.

"Iran supports Ansar Al-Sharia financially, but secretly, because they don't want the militants of Ansar Al-Sharia to break from their own leaders because of the differing views between Shiite Iran and the Sunni Ansar Al-Sharia," he said.

"The demands of Ansar Al-Sharia to release Islamist fighters," whom he described as followers of an extremist ideology, "in exchange for the abducted diplomat aimed at inciting public opinion against Saudi Arabia," he pointed out.

Ansar Al-Sharia wanted to pass on a message to the public that there are illegal detainees in the prisons of Saudi Arabia. However, such claims are false, according to Al-Nahas.

"Iran is encouraging Ansar Al-Sharia to kidnap more Saudi diplomats to force Saudi Arabia to accept anything they demand. This will make Saudi Arabia very weak, and this is what Iran wants," he added.

"Iran accepts terrorism and supports terrorists financially and intellectually, even through its security agencies by interfering in the Gulf, supporting the Houthis in Yemen, and supporting Al-Qaeda operatives when they fled from Afghanistan," Al-Nahas said.

"The prominent leaders of Al-Qaeda live in Tehran in spite of their Sunni beliefs, different from Iran's Shiite beliefs," he concluded.

A Saudi extremist, thought to be linked to Al-Qaeda, fled to Yemen and kidnapped Al-Khaledi.

Continued from page 1

### Captured soldiers in Abyan released



Ansar Al-Sharia has paid each of the 73 captured soldiers YR10,000 (\$50) for transportation money.

The CTU had not been involved in the fight against Ansar Al-Sharia in Abyan until mid-April when President Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi requested that forces of the CTU in Sana'a to be sent to Abyan to support the army in fighting against the group.

A security source in Zinjibar said the army along with forces from the CTU are advancing against Ansar Al-Sharia.

"Some units of the army are in Zinjibar and the Criminal Investigation Office and the Post Office have been freed from the armed militants," the security source said.

Military commander in Lawdar removed

Brigadier General Abdulqawi Al-Masmari, commander of the 111th Brigade in Lawdar, north Zinjibar has been removed from his post on Thursday April 26 after disputes between Al-Masmari and the People's Defense Fighters in Abyan.

Faraj Hussein Ghaleb has been designated as the new leader of the brigade. Local sources said that the People's Defense Fighters who prevented Ansar Al-Sharia from occupying Lawdar accused Al-Masmari of aiding the armed group against the local fighters.

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# Hadi, from the shadows to the limelight

By: Mohammed Al-Samei

SANA'A, April 29 — After the election of President Hadi on February 21, Yemenis have begun to feel that Yemen is witnessing political progress and have seen the election of Hadi as an end to the regime of Ali Abdullah Saleh, who ruled Yemen for over three decades.

Hadi gained the trust of the six million Yemenis who voted in the presidential elections, and Yemeni political parties had a consensus on his nomination. He dismissed a number of Saleh's relatives in control of the military, some governors and officials loyal to Saleh, and politicians involved in corruption.

Before his election when he was a vice president, Hadi was dubbed as weak and silent.

Yet Hadi's legitimacy was enforced after millions of Yemenis voted for him, and he enjoys regional and international support, according to the researcher and political activist, Nabeel Al-Bukairi.

"On the basis of popular legitimacy and the revolution, Hadi could play a significant role in rearranging the complicated Yemeni political landscape which has existed for more than three decades," he told the Yemen Times.

"Hadi realizes the seriousness of the current Yemeni situation, and if there is no political statesmanship and national responsibility toward what is happening, Yemen will not be a safe and secure country," he went on.

"He [Hadi] also understands that if Yemenis don't seize this golden opportunity of a global agreement to help Yemen, the loss of this opportunity will take Yemen nowhere but hell," Al-Bukairi added.

"What has been done by Hadi during the two past months is an achievement when compared with the complications of the current moment," Fahmi Al-Alim, a journalist, told the Yemen Times.



President Hadi

"This is reflected to a large extent by his commitment to the success of the GCC power-transition deal, ability to ignore Saleh, and making the bold decision to dismiss Saleh's half-brother, Mohammad Saleh Al-Ahmar, chief of the Air Forces, and Saleh's nephew Tariq Mohammad Abdullah Saleh, commander of the Special Forces—a move abhorred by Saleh and his family," he said.

"Since his election on February 21, Hadi has taken many actions aimed at moving the political settlement forward," he added.

"Over two months, Hadi has paved the way to complete what remains of the settlement in its second phase, after the success of the first phase, which included the formation of the National Unity Government, the Military Committee [which was formed on Dec 4, 2011

to restore security and stability], as well as presidential elections," he pointed out.

"However, Hadi's efforts are still below the level required by the people, as he is supposed to have implemented many changes in line with the GCC deal by this past March, in particular the army restructuring and holding the national dialogue."

"However, these were impeded by the former president, whose relatives still run the largest military and security services and have refused to obey the military shake-up which could end their power in the state they ruled for 33 years," he added.

Hadi needs to be backed by the countries overseeing the Gulf Cooperation Council-backed deal. In particular, there must be support for the military reorganizing, a

move that will remove Saleh's son and nephews from power, in order to create a new national military," concluded Al-Alim.

Cosmetic accomplishment

A spokesman from the General Revolutionary Forum, Ali Al-Bukhaiti, believes that Hadi's achievements are merely cosmetic accomplishments aimed at keeping the same regime in power.

He pointed out that Hadi might have future political aspirations, stressing that his government still has a connection to Saleh's family.

"Hadi will not make real changes if the power centers that control the army and security apparatuses are not changed and replaced by commanders not loyal to Saleh or the commander of the of the First Armored Division, Ali Mohsin Saleh," said Al-Bukhaiti.

Jamal Al-Nimri, a young man from Mahwit governorate, told the Yemen Times that there have been many achievements in the political process since Hadi was elected president on February 21, emphasizing that people can now enjoy freedoms and dignity not to be had during 33 years of "gang rule."

"Hadi rooted out many of those who surrounded Saleh, such as the bosses of the Yemeni Economic Corporation and military commanders," he added.

"Security has been boosted, but what is happening in Abyan makes many people concerned," he added, mentioning that he believes Hadi will put an end to Al-Qaeda-affiliated activity in Abyan.

"Hadi has only achieved two percent of the people's ambitions regarding the objectives of the revolution," Murad Al-Saeedi, a youth from Raima governorate said, indicating that the new military appointments have been a sham.

Al-Nimri said, "Hadi was supposed to arrest the killers, hold them accountable, bring them to justice, and dismiss the heads of

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Majdi Mahroos, from Hodeidah governorate, believes that Hadi can reduce the level of political unrest, stressing that compromise has been reached between different political sides, and that Hadi took bold presidential decisions in dismissing Saleh's relatives.

"He further appointed officials and governors who enjoy popularity in some governorates," he added, asserting that the Yemeni political solution is a role model for other

Arab Spring countries.

"Hadi created an appropriate atmosphere for regional and international support" he made clear. "The Gulf states and United States are interested in supporting the interim government."

"Essential services have developed remarkably, life has returned to normal, the Military Committee has been formed, sandbags and checkpoints have been removed from the capital Sana'a, private forces were set up to maintain security in the capital Sana'a, and some military commanders loyal to the former regime were dismissed."



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# Sexual harassment goes unpunished in Yemen

By: Ghaida Al-Ariqi

**Z**ainab, a young woman in her 20s, lives in Ibb governorate with her conservative family. She decided to visit one of her relatives in Taiz. After a tedious journey, she arrived at a taxi station at 7pm and was shocked when a man wearing a traffic police uniform started to harass her.

She said the man kept following her, and when she shouted at him with the aim of drawing the attention of passers-by, he accused her of indecent acts and arrested her.

Many women in Yemen who are subjected to sexual harassment do not notify the police as they fear the social tradition that demeans those women who speak about being subjected to harassment. Additionally, security measures are fragile and allow offenders to easily evade penalties.

With the increase of harassment against women in the street, markets, universities and even inside the family, questions about the role of the police and combating sexual harassment are being raised.

Articles 270-375 of Yemen's penal law address various sorts of harassment.

General Brigadier Abdul-Ghani Al-Wajeh, secretary general of the Athletic National Police Club, says that the problem is that measures take a long time and that allows offenders to go unpunished.

Al-Wajeh affirmed that there is a gap between the police and society regarding cooperation, confirming that victims abstain from notifying police about harassment, or bringing witnesses.

He indicated that some police stations took to cutting the hair or beards of those involved in harassment, and that this action managed

to reduce sexual harassment. However, the practice was suspended under the pretext that police were not judicial authorities and could not hand out punishments.

Bushra Al-Khawlan, a police woman, relates the story of her sister who was harassed and abused on a main street. When her family notified the police station, their case was referred to the General Prosecution, then it was referred to Criminal Investigation. However, the perpetrator managed, through mediation, to avoid going to jail.

Lieutenant Haifa Hussein, from the Interior Minister, says that policewomen cannot deal with harassment notifications as they lack training in this field.

She says that a phone line for complaints (199) has been set up, but that there were very few notifications received, as social traditions do not allow victims to speak out.

Ahmed Al-Tahiri, security chief of Maean district in the capital Sana'a, says that the role of police is to arrest perpetrators red-handed.

"We send security patrols to those places that are known as gathering places for women, taking with them their ability to deal with different cases," he affirmed.

He said that among the obstacles police face is that victims and their families do not notify them about harassment, as they prefer to avoid being demeaned by their community.

Sheikh Jabri Ibraheem Hassan, a religious preacher at the Ministry of Endowment, says that the penalty against harassment in Islamic law is Tazeer, a punishment that can be administered at the discretion of a judge.

He stressed the importance of raising awareness about rights and duties through training work-



Victims of sexual harassment do not report their abuses to the police due to social traditions that stigmatize women being sexually abused.

shops.

"If the harasser views women as his sister or mother, then he will realize the gravity of the harassment he commits," he added.

He urged women who are subjected to harassment to notify police in order to put an end to these acts, pointing out that notification serves the community as a whole

and that the silence increases the crime.

He stressed the importance of cooperation by all people to raise awareness about the effects of har-

assment on the community, citing that media outlets should play an active role in changing the community's culture about dealing with harassment.

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a good world  
citizen."**

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

OUR  
OPINIONDonors should  
walk the walk

**W**ith all the commotion about the national dialogue, and the first ministerial outreach committee to hold a dialogue with the youth finally established, I thought 'here we go', thinking positively that Yemen is on its way to true reconciliation.

However, I came to realize that while the committee headed by the Minister of Human Rights has already started its discussions with the youth, the committee has not yet found any support from donors.

Minister Hooria Mashour, the committee's team leader, told me that she had already presented an action plan with budget over a month ago so as to facilitate operational expenses for the youth dialogue, however she has been met with nothing more than sniggers.

"It is unnerving! They [the donors] already know that the government is suffering from extreme financial problems and a huge deficiency in the budget. They want us to start the dialogue and they say they are 'Friends of Yemen'. We [the ministerial committee] are the official body responsible for moving the dialogue further, yet we receive no help!" she said on Thursday.

Apparently donors such as the Responsive Governance Project (RPG) from USAID and the EU have been supporting random projects with civil society organizations and with the Ministry of Youth, both unrecognizable by the youth in the squares. Even the German's have been doing their own facilitations for several months now with the factions in the south.

However, when it comes to the official committee's demand for covering operational expenses for workshops, meetings and so on according to the budget, donors have been turning a deaf ear.

There is no harm, in fact it is needed, to have more than one activity regarding governance and civil society involvement in the dialogue with the youth or in general. But to blatantly ignore the official authority despite the knowledge that this dialogue is what will really take Yemen to stability is unacceptable.

"Sometimes I feel like I am begging," said the disappointed minister. "They have committed to supporting Yemen. We have already presented plans. If they have comments on the plans let's talk, but the dialogue process with the youth is going to slow significantly, if not stop completely, if we don't get urgent support."

The donors should not just talk the talk, and then wonder why things are not progressing well. I have full faith in this committee and its ability to make headway with the youth, provided it gets the support it needs. And like the minister said, we are not begging, this is a part of the international community's responsibility and commitment.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Do Arab men hate women?  
It's not that simple

By: Nesrine Malik  
The Guardian  
First published April 25

**T**he latest edition of Foreign Policy, the cover of which bears the same stark question posed by its main article "Why Do They Hate Us?", has stirred up some serious controversy. In the article, Mona Eltahawy runs through a litany of indictments of women's rights in the Middle East, and issues a call to arms against cultural relativism. What stands out, however, is her simple demand for readers to recognize that men, in the Arab world, hate women.

Reading the article I found myself bristling, yet simultaneously felt guilty for doing so. For who can deny the serious, endemic discrimination from which women in the Middle East suffer? Reading on I tried to convince myself that it was the author's sensational style that was bothering me, and that this shouldn't obscure the message, or that the title and imagery were unfortunate, but the problems they were attempting to illustrate were real.

Yet to my dismay I found, as I read on that instead of unravelling and unpicking the usual stereotypes which pepper the plethora of commentary on Arab women and exposing missing nuances, the author simply reinforced a monolithic view

— holding the argument together using rhetoric, personal anecdotes and a rhythmic punctuation with her main theme — that all Arab men hate Arab women. It did not help that with every page scroll, a different iteration of an unbelievably misguided shot of a naked woman, posed and blacked out in paint to expose only her eyes, assaulted one's sensibilities. A lazy effort at controversy, equating women with sex, and jettisoning the whole point of the edition, by ironically, reducing women to the stereotype Eltahawy dismisses as "headscarves and hymens."

I grew up in Sudan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and in personal and professional dealings have had to grapple with most of the problems highlighted in the piece. They are very real. But there is a fine line to tread when writing about the status of Arab or Muslim women. For to do anything but condemn outright, and expose the real suffering we go through feels like shirking a responsibility and wasting an opportunity. And the problem with rejecting generalizations around women's oppression is that it is easy to misunderstand this rejection as a denial of the problem. Who could quibble with highlighting child marriage, female genital mutilation, or legally protected domestic abuse? Only a Stockholm syndrome-suffering apologist for patriarchy and moral relativism. How can one truly call

for equivocation when we have a war on women on our hands?

The offenses mentioned in the article are undeniable. We should not be distracted by the West's reduction of Muslim women to pawns in culture wars or military campaigns. Nor should we be distracted by ad hominem attacks on Eltahawy herself, or complain at the idea of airing of dirty laundry. But these offenses are not just because men hate women. Or, as I fear the article suggests, that Arab men hate Arab women. This is not a disease men are born with, or contract from the Arab atmosphere. Even Eltahawy herself, attributes it to "a toxic mix of religion and culture." And to this I would add the political oppression and stasis that enabled these structures to become de facto governance, where entrenched tribal allegiances, pre-Islamic mores and social tradition trumped weak political culture. A general retardation that extends not just to women but to every aspect of personal freedom and civic rights.

Yes, in Saudi Arabia women cannot drive, but men cannot elect their government, instead they are ruled over by a religiously opportunistic dynasty. In Egypt, it's true that women were subjected to virginity tests, but men were sodomized. In Sudan women are lashed for wearing trousers, but ethnic minorities are also marginalized and under assault. We must not belittle the issues

women face, or relegate them to second place, but we must place them in a wider context where wholesale reform is needed. One cannot reduce a much more universal and complicated problem merely to gender.

Eltahawy argues that "our political revolutions will not succeed unless they are accompanied by revolutions of thought." But I would argue that nor can the latter succeed without the former; a more generous political space will allow for the challenging of patriarchy, which in turn extends the roots of political reform deeper. To heed Eltahawy's call and indulge in cultural absolutism — if we are to use the West as a model, basic women's and even minority rights, did not become enshrined until there was a political environment when traditional structures (particularly the church) had sufficiently receded.

The call to arms, therefore, should not be to the outside world to recognize the truth of men's hatred towards women, but rather to Arabs. And in a time of political upheaval this call should ask them to look inwards and continue to recognize and dismantle the structures that have been perpetuated for too long. This reform is already under way when it comes to women's rights thanks to the efforts of several Arab feminists, such as Nawal El Saadawi and Tawakul Karman, who recognize that we need to fight the patriarchy, not men.

Among other troubles, Yemen faces a creeping famine  
Disaster approaching

The Economist  
April 21

**A**nisa is only 18, but already a mother of two and a widow. She married her husband, a fisherman, at 13. He "fell in the sea", she says, and never came back. Cradled in her lap, Anisa's younger daughter Amina is just shy of her third birthday. She looks more like a baby than a toddler. A fine layer of sweat covers her oversized forehead. She breathes rapidly, her belly sticking out from a dirty T-shirt, distended by hunger. Like many poor rural Yemenis, Anisa and Amina have suffered a series of shocks from which they may not recover.

Even before 2011, when an uprising unseated Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen's ruler of 33 years, and fight-

ing between military and tribal factions threatened to tear the country apart, life was hard for Yemen's poor. Rabbat, Anisa's village, is an inland hamlet of the coastal province of Hodeida where farming has been hit by years of drought and rising fuel prices. Young men travel far in search of dangerous, low-paid work on fishing boats or try their hand at smuggling to Saudi Arabia.

Life was just bearable before the political crisis. Anisa's father, a barber, gave what he could. Neighbors helped with food and money. This community spirit has long cushioned suffering in a country aid workers have described as "on the brink" for decades.

Everything in Yemen travels by road, and most water is drawn from the ground using diesel-powered pumps. During the unrest both roads and fuel supplies were often

cut, so prices for basic goods rose fast. Many businesses closed, and farms suffered another year with little rain. Unemployment rose above 50 percent. In late 2011, the government decided to cut fuel subsidies.

As household budgets have shrunk, better-off Yemenis have had less to give their poorer neighbors. Many have taken to buying food and water on credit. Anisa has no way of paying off the YR 20,000 (USD 90) she owes for water, and worries about getting more. She and her daughters now eat twice a day when others can spare food or money: tea, bread, rice, maybe some fish if they are lucky.

In March, the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) reported that levels of food insecurity in Yemen had doubled since 2009. Today 5 million people go hungry so of-

ten that it affects their long-term health. According to UNICEF, the WFP's counterpart for children, some 30 percent of kids in Hodeida are "acutely" malnourished, threatened with stunted growth and cognitive impairment. The 30 percent figure is twice the level the UN uses as a benchmark for crisis. And hunger is rising, says Lydia Tinka, a veteran of multiple African crises who works in Hodeida for Oxfam, a British charity.

The big aid agencies are gearing up for an appeal, but fear it will be hard to raise money until there is evidence that people are starving to death. Yemenis like to keep things behind closed doors; failure to care for children is seen as shameful and meetings with people like Anisa remain a rarity. Until poorer Yemenis open up or start dying, their plight risks being ignored.

## SKETCHED OPINION

By Rashad Al-Samei



## Privatization of higher education

By: Aref Abdullah Al-Selmi  
arefalsalami2@gmail.com

**A**ll of us knows the importance of higher education and its necessity in a world that recognizes only those with higher education degrees. In Yemen, getting a bachelor degree is very difficult as a result of corruption in the higher education sector. This corruption changed the public education system into a private one by establishing educational systems aimed towards profitability. In order to get a bachelor degree, Yemeni students — especially those with low marks at high school — have to give in to the reality and enroll in these private systems, because higher education is the gateway for a better future.

According to Article no.54 of

Yemen's Constitution, "The state guarantees the right of education for all citizens." But unfortunately in 2004, the "parallel" Moazi and personal expense systems arose in public Yemeni universities. According to this system a student has to pay a large amount of money, starting from US 200 up to US 2,500 depending on the specialization. If you are studying medicine or engineering, you will pay a higher amount than if you are studying human sciences. If we calculate the total amount received from the students at Sana'a university alone, it amounts to between YR 400 million and YR 2 billion annually.

These systems must be cancelled as soon as possible because they are unfair, blocks the future of poor students, increases the number of illiterate and unemployed youth in the society, and above all is the

main source of financial corruption in universities.

I don't think that the Moazi and the personal expense systems serve the nation or students. More they are torturing the students by the amount of money they have to pay. Instead of concentrating on their studies, students have to work to gain the money to be able to continue their education.

The sons of officials always study abroad even if they got low marks at high school. So what's the difference between those students and those who are poor? According to the constitution all students have the right to free education, and the priority is for the those who want to continue their education and can contribute to their homeland's development.

What a shame will be on the government if the privatization of

education continues and is not cancelled. The government has to take into consideration that the youth made their revolution in order to get rid of corruption of which the Moazi system is a part.

The students — at all the public Yemeni universities — will not stop their continuous demonstrations to achieve their demands, which are the canceling of the Moazi and personal expense systems, the transfer of the students under those systems to the general system, extending the purchasing power of the universities, and publication of the financial amounts that were received from students to be used for the purchasing of labs, books etc. for the universities.

If the government cannot cancel these unfair systems, the students have to overthrow the regime again!

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Publisher & Editor-in-Chief  
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf

Senior Reporter  
Mohammed bin Sallam

## Editorial Staff

Sadeq Al-Wesabi  
sadeqalwesabi@hotmail.com

Ali Ajlan  
aliajlan.yt@gmail.com

CEO  
Khair Aldin Al Nsour

Managing Editor  
Ali Saeed

Sam Kimball  
sam.r.kimball@gmail.com

Ahmed Ali Dawood  
daod2009@gmail.com

Head of Design Dept.  
Ramzy Alawi Al-Saqqaf

Mohammed Al-Samei  
alsamei77@gmail.com

Muaad Al-Maqtari  
muaadnagi@gmail.com

## Offices

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

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# Families in Yemen shun female prisoners



By: Amal Al-Yarisi

Many Yemenis look at female prisoners and former prisoners with contempt, believing that only depraved women are sent to prison, according to Saqr Al-Amari, a taxi-driver in the capital Sana'a.

"I can't marry a woman who's been in prison, even if she was unjustly imprisoned. She faced charges, was sent to prison and may have taken on bad habits while inside," added Al-Amari.

Relatives and family members look down at women with a criminal record, even if they were not proven guilty.

Because of this, lots of female inmates in the Central Prison in Sana'a don't receive visits from their families, according to Najla Al-Lisani, director of the Legal Department at the Yemeni Women's Union

(YWU).

Some husbands have divorced their spouses because they were sent to prison. Along with the ill-repute surrounding incarcerated women, men who continue to live with a woman who has been sent to prison are stigmatized.

Al-Lisani said that she remembers that a female prisoner, who served an eight-month prison sentence, was divorced by her husband and her family abandoned her.

"And while she was an inmate, no one in her family came to visit her," said Al-Lisani.

### Life after prison

Many imprisoned women in Yemen have no opportunity to go back home after they are released. The only choice for them is to go to special women's shelters.

"When this woman [mentioned above] got out of prison, she had no place to go to but to Al-Weam

House," Al-Lisani added.

Al-Weam House, which is run by the YWU, was established in 2009 to give shelter to and rehabilitate female offenders whose families abandoned them when they were sent to prison.

"Many female prisoners in the Central Prison were abandoned by their families after getting out of prison," said Al-Lisani.

"We keep an eye on female inmates, so we can take those who have finished their sentence out of prison and to the shelter house if their families abandon them," she added.

The security administration of the Central Prison in Sana'a declined to allow the Yemen Times to see the female inmates at the prison.

"The visit may have been rejected because of awful conditions in the prison, which the administration doesn't want to be publicized in the press," said Al-Lisani.

Negative attitudes towards former female prisoners

The big challenge for female prisoners is how to integrate with society after getting out of prison, as most of them are considered social outcasts by the people around them.

"I have negative feelings towards women who've been in prison, whether they were guilty or not," said Ameen Al-Darisi, a storekeeper in Sana'a.

Al-Darisi doesn't accept the idea of marrying a female prisoner. He thinks that no one should be blamed for the prisoner's problems but the prisoner and her family, because, according to him, the family failed to instill strong moral and religious values among its members.

However, others have a different view regarding female prisoners.

Ahmed Ali, a student in the faculty of Mass Media at Sana'a University says, "We should have mercy on female prisoners because some of them were unjustly imprisoned. Therefore, society has to support them to overcome this situation instead of stigmatizing them."

### Learning vocational skills in prison

Women inmates in the Central Prisons in Aden and Sana'a have the opportunity to attend free vocational training courses.

However, female inmates do not benefit from such courses unless there is psychological support for positive use of time in prison. The family can play this crucial role in encouraging female prisoners to acquire skills while in prison.

For one of the prisoners, who was found guilty of manslaughter, her husband and family continued to visit and support her for three years until she was released, according to Al-Lisani.

The imprisoned woman gained several skills while in prison. "With support from her family, she learned sewing and embroidery, because her family stood by her, and she knew that her husband was eagerly waiting to take her home after getting

out of prison," added Al-Lisani.

But the female prisoners who don't receive visits and care from their families don't engage in training and suffer negative psychological consequences, to the degree that they fight with each other in prison, according to Al-Lisani.

The YWU offers free training courses to female prisoners on income-making, sewing and embroidery.

"We try to rehabilitate them in-

der to be effective members of society in the future," added Al-Lisani.

The YWU also stays in communication with women after prison to help them start their own small businesses.

"We help them so that they don't commit other crimes," said Al-Lisani.

"Some of them are unjustly imprisoned. Their families and society must accept them as normal people," Al-Lisani concluded.

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### Selection of Consultants Request for Expression of Interest in

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The Republic of Yemen has obtained a grant from Abu Dhabi Fund for development for the purpose of financing " deepening and widening the access channel in the Port of Aden" project with an amount of US \$ 30,000,000 . The Ministry of Transport, represented by Yemen Gulf of Aden Ports Corporation (Project Implementation Unit) intends to utilize a portion of this assistance in consultancy services of the project mentioned above, for which this announcement was issued. The project aims to deepen and widen the access channel in the Port of Aden, which will enable the port to accommodate the new generation container vessels, and making the port a Hub port for transit cargo services in the region.

Hence, YGAPC ( PIU) – Port of Aden invites the qualified consultants companies/firms to express their interest and wish in the participation of submitting the required consultancy services. The wishing companies /firms have to submit all the data and documents that confirm its competence. They may enter into coalition or alliance in order to improve their qualification opportunities. the consultant services include the following required phases:-

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Expressions of Interest shall be made in three hard copies (one original copy + two copies) along with a soft copy (CD) to the address mentioned below.

The selection of the consultancy company/firm will be carried out according to the bases and criteria stipulate in the guide book of procurement and consultancy services issued by the Tenders High board effected in the Republic of Yemen, and also the instructions issued by the Abu Dhabi Fund, the concerned companies / firms may obtain additional data from the address below during the official working hours from **09:00 am up to 14:00 pm**

Expressions of Interest must be delivered to the address below by **3<sup>rd</sup> June 2012**.

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Yemen Gulf of Aden Ports Corporation  
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**Deadline for submission is 12:00 hours noon on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2012. No submission after the date above will be considered.**

Incomplete submissions will not be considered.

**Opening of applications will be at the Project Implementation Unit office of the headquarters –Port of Aden at the same time mentioned above with the presence of the consultant firms or their representatives.**

### اختيار استشاريين

إعلان للتعبير عن الاهتمام لإعداد وثيقة المناقصة والعقد والمشاركة في التفاوض والإشراف على التنفيذ لمشروع توسعة وتعميق القناة للاحة في ميناء عدن

حصلت الحكومة اليمنية على منحة من صندوق أبوظبي للتنمية وذلك لتمويل مشروع تعميق وتوسعة القناة الملاحة لميناء عدن بمبلغ -/30,000,000 دولار أمريكي ونظوي وزارة النقل ممثلة بمؤسسة موانئ خليج عدن اليمنية (الوحدة التنفيذية للمشروع) استخدام جزء من هذه المساعدة في الخدمات الاستشارية للمشروع المذكور أعلاه التي من أجلها صدر هذا الإعلان.

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  3. مجال العمل الرئيسي وسنوات الخبرة في مجال الدراسة المعنية.
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# Yemeni parliament passes USD 651 million 2012 tribal leaders' budget

**Sheikhs (tribal leaders) have a large affect on different areas of life in Yemen. Sheikhs are not often elected, the title usually being conferred by family succession. They represent a large percentage of Parliament and Shura Council members. Sheikhs in Yemen are always male, there are no female sheikhs.**

By: Yasser Ezzi

Many sheikhs own numerous companies, large farms and other assets. Additionally, most of them receive monthly salaries and other privileges from the government and even from foreign countries.

The Gulf Research Center (GRC) reported in July 2011 that, "For many decades, Saudi Arabia adopted 'dollar diplomacy' as a main instrument to influence developments inside Yemen."

"And, the Saudis could not develop a credible alternative to this instrument," the GRC added.

It explained that "Saudi Arabia, despite transferring billions of dollars every year to the bank accounts of the influential Yemeni leaders, remains in reality a marginal player in the country's political affairs."

The former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who ruled the country for 33 years, also used the same mechanism to gain tribal alliances. Further, Saleh used to appoint sheikhs as governors or other high-ranking government posts, and sometimes reward them military rank without being involved in the army.

He established a special authority for sheikhs (the Tribal Affairs Authority) for which the government used to appropriate large financial allocations.

Some sheikhs operate to solve social problems, press the government to establish service projects in their areas and mediate for people to gain government jobs. Many others, however, are accused of committing violations, abusing people, breaching laws, imposing tributes and looting lands.

Some sheikhs work as de facto rulers in their areas, and government authorities can do nothing without their cooperation and coordination. They can have private prisons, private armies with numerous kinds of weapons, and have been known to refuse the orders of the government with little consequence.

"Sheikhs played a significant role in enabling the General People's Congress led by Saleh to have a majority inside the parliament as they used their influence, funds and sometimes weapons to force people to vote for specific candidates," Mustafa Al-Sabri, a journalist told the Yemen Times.

## Saleh gone, but his instruments are still in place

On Monday April 16, the 2012 state budget proposed by the National Unity Government was passed by

Yemen's parliament. At the same time, the parliament recommended an additional YR 14 billion (USD 651 million) for monthly payments to sheikhs and dignitaries.

The Finance Ministry attempted to revoke the sheikhs' appropriations, but the majority of the General People's Congress, still led by the former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, passed the sheikhs' budget on April 16 after disagreement with other lawmakers.

A member of parliament, Shawqi Al-Qadi of the Islah Party, told the Yemen Times that the financial appropriations of 14 billion for tribal leaders is a simple case of corruption. He pointed out that these financial allocations violate Yemen's constitutional laws and the principles of equal citizenship and opportunity.

He said that some tribal leaders affiliated with Saleh, who are also members of the parliament, seek to impede the interim government. He also said that some sheikhs are not satisfied with even those salaries allocated to them, and that they receive considerable financial amounts from the Republican Presidency items, other government institutions and that they also hold several government posts.

"Unfortunately, there is a group of people who are connected to the former president who have large funds and they use them to achieve their own goals and purposes, and harm the interests of the nation," he added.

"Though the budget has deficits in items of education, health and infrastructure, the lawmakers of the GPC insisted on wasting public funds on sheikhs and dignitaries," Al-Qadi said.

"It was supposed to be that members of parliament side with the issues of those who voted for them and their needs, instead of wasting resources to obtain tribal alliances that make no progress for the people and their needs," he added.

He emphasized that the government and President Hadi are able to stop the waste of public funds under the GCC-mediated power transfer deal.

Mohammad Jubran, professor of economics at Sana'a University, said that Yemeni laws do not allow the parliament to add any financial amounts to the budget and this supports the attitude of the Finance Minister, Sakhar Al-Wajeeh.

"I advised him [Al-Wajeeh] not to surrender to the parliament because the current House of Representatives is not legitimate, its legal term ended in 2009," Jubran said.

"If prior parliaments couldn't make amendments to the budgets,

then why does this parliament want to do that?" he added. "The current parliament wastes resources instead of protecting them."

"As an economist and a man who came from a tribal family, I demand that the Tribal Affairs Authority be cancelled, and that no salary or funds be given to any tribal leader whatever his description except for those who hold scientific certificates for which they can serve the nation," he went on.

"This is a misuse of public funds, but President Hadi and the consensus government wants to avoid engaging in side rows that are not among their priorities, particularly at this critical stage," a journalist and activist, Saleh Al-Suraimi, told the Yemen Times.

"The appropriations of financial amounts for sheikhs are not a new thing and it is an instrument of Saleh's regime. The revoking of these appropriations would result in problems for the government," he added.

Ali Alwafi, an economist, described the 2012 budget as the worst ever, pointing out that numerous allocations were added to items of the budget that will not be of benefit to the people.

He said that more than YR 317 billion (USD 1.4 billion) has been approved for defense and security, expressing his surprise that parliamentarians stood idly by as such large appropriations of the budget happened, stressing that the budget was supposed to increase items such health and education.

Meanwhile, the Study and Economic Media Centre (SEMC) denounced the recommendations passed by the parliament that included financial appropriations for sheikhs and dignitaries.

"The disbursement of funds for sheikhs and dignitaries is public corruption that contradicts the Yemeni constitution, laws and the International Convention against Corruption, and is a systemic support to corruption," said the SEMC.

In a statement, SEMC said the government had reduced the expenditure of the Republican Presidency items, which was a major source for corruption in past years, in particular those funds that went to gain tribal alliances. SEMC reaffirmed that parliamentarians insisted on violating laws and legitimizing corruption.

It further expressed sorrow about the lack of transparency in the state budget and the exclusion of civil society organizations from involvement in reviewing the budget to see how public funds are being disbursed.

"The National Unity Government follows the same measures as the previous governments in dealing with the state budget," the SEMC said.

## Protests in Taiz against sheikhs' budget

On Monday April 23, massive crowds took to the streets of the southern city of Taiz in protest at the alloca-

tion of salaries for sheikhs, stressing that it is unacceptable to grant sheikhs funds after the uprising.

They said that Saleh used tribal sheikhs to abuse people, manipulate elections and counterfeit the will of people, and demanded the government not give them any funds.

They further demanded the government reallocate the funds for sheikhs towards the families of victims of the uprising and to investment projects.

Mohammad Al-Bashari, a student

at Sana'a University, described the funds given to sheikhs as a form of corruption that must be ended after the revolution, emphasizing that Yemenis sacrificed themselves to end the waste of public money.

He demanded that President Hadi

and the government allocate these funds for poor families and projects that may boost the state economy, asserting that most sheikhs operate against the interests of the state, and abuse and repress people in rural areas.



For many decades, Saudi Arabia adopted 'dollar diplomacy' as a main instrument to influence developments inside Yemen, According to the Gulf Research Center.

Republic of Yemen  
Council of Ministers  
Economic Opportunity Fund (EOF)  
Vacancy Announcement for

## Executive Director (ED)

The Government of Yemen, represented by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC), has received a Grant from IFAD and co-finance from the Islamic Bank for Development and the European Commission for the Economic Opportunities Fund (EOF). EOF was created by Presidential Decree # 183-2010 dated 25/09/2010 as a public-private partnership working to improve the economic status of poor women and men in rural areas. Currently, the EOF seeks a qualified Yemeni candidate for the position of executive director.

The Executive Director will lead the EOF to improve the economic status of poor women and men by creating sustainable economic opportunities in the program's area. He/she will direct the EOF to stimulate the growth and technological improvement of selected value chains and the creation/growth of rural business activities and enterprises, promote linkages between producers' associations and markets through contractual arrangements, promote compliance with national and international food security and safety standards; develop public and private economic infrastructure in support to the selected value chains; expand the rural outreach of financial institutions; enhance access to sustainable rural financial services; promote alternative financial services to stakeholders of selected value chains.

### MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead and manage the EOF within the guidelines established by the Board;
- Report to the Board of Directors;
- Recommend the AWP/B to the Board and implement the corresponding operational activities;
- Direct and monitor the activities of the EOF in a manner that ensures that the strategic, operational and capital plans are met and that the assets of the EOF are safeguarded and optimized in the best interests of the program;
- Develop and implement operational policies set by the Board to guide the EOF within the limits prescribed by the EOF articles and the framework of strategic directions detailed in the project;
- Develop and recommend to the Board the overall corporate organizational structure and the appointment of Executive Management;
- Manage and oversee the required interfaces between the EOF and the public and act as the principal spokesperson for the EOF. This includes the responsibility for managing the equity and other financial market interfaces on behalf of the EOF.
- Ensure the coordination of all program components and activities between project staff, implementing partners, command area communities and other stakeholders.
- Ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all program activities and that woman beneficiaries participate effectively in program interventions and benefit in an equitable manner.

### REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- A graduate degree in business or financial management or similar subject;
- A minimum of 10 years managerial level experience;
- A minimum of 7 years experience at managerial level in the private sector;
- Working experience in or with the public sector and in donor-financed programs;
- Wide network of contacts within MoPIC, MAI and MoF and the ability to communicate with and motivate a wide range of people including ministers, senior Government officials and leaders and ordinary members of civil society;
- Initiative, commitment, breadth of vision and capacity for innovative, lateral thinking;
- Leadership and team building qualities and experience;
- Fluency in spoken English in both writing and speaking.

### How to apply

Interested qualified candidates are encouraged to apply for this position within 15 days from the date of announcement by sending a CV and a cover letter to the following email address: [hr@eofyemen.org](mailto:hr@eofyemen.org) or [eofyemen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:eofyemen@yahoo.co.uk). Job title should be put in the email subject line.

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# Seeing the world from within



Reham, third from left, holds the hands of her colleagues as they line up for the marathon

By: Safiya Al-Jabry

From a distance, Amr Shakir looks like any other 7-year-old child. His bubbly character draws people to talk to him. But as one gets closer to him and spends more time with him, one notices that he rarely makes eye contact and does not concentrate on one thing at a time. Amr is one of the many autistic children in Yemen.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is one category of disorders that fall under pervasive development disorders. It is characterized by broad impairment in thinking, reacting and feeling.

'Sorry, I am human,' are the simple yet powerful words written on a small board outside the gate of the Yemen Center for Autism. The sign arouses the curiosity of passersby, who take a look inside to learn more about autism. According to Ahlam Al-Riyashi, managing director of the Yemen Center for Autism, the center is a home for 77 autistic children.

"The kids here have different stages of autism; some are severe while others only show mild symptoms of the disorder," Al-Riyashi said.

Just like Amr, Reham is another autistic child at the center. From observation, Reham shows more severe symptoms of autism than Amr does. She doesn't socialize with people at all except with teachers she is close to.

"There are a lot of misconceptions about autism in Yemen," Al-Riyashi said. "Autistic children can sometimes be violent, and most parents of autistic children think that their children are crazy and cage them in rooms."

There is no clear-cut medical test for autism; diagnosis involves observation of the child. Once a child has been diagnosed with autism, various therapies to control the symptoms and maximize learning are available.

The center offers therapies and education for autistic children and helps educate their parents on how to handle their children. These children are offered classes in hygiene, physical education, music and learning of the environment through pictures. They also have swimming classes every Wednesday at the Saudi German hospital.

Reham understood what her principal meant when she said they had a day off to go to marathon in the park. She jumped up and down cheerfully and provoked the other children in her class to jump with her.

Al-Riyashi organized an awareness marathon on Monday, April 16th in the Al-Sabeen area of

Sana'a. It was attended by the center's teachers and volunteers from universities. "This is a way of creating awareness about the disorder," she said. They also build awareness through bazaars at the center.

Some of the volunteers who attended the marathon got the chance to meet autistic children for the first time in their lives.

"I felt that with these children, there is a slim window of opportunity to interact with them and observe them interacting with each other. I noticed them being very protective of each other and being very close to each other. It was touching, and an eye-opening experience for me," Khadija Abdulhakim, a marathon volunteer said.

Because of the lack of education about this disorder, some parents think their autistic children suffer from mystical ailments such as the evil eye, or possession by the devil.

"Once my neighbor told me to take my child to a sheikh to be treated by the Quran, saying he was possessed by demons," said a mother of a 12-year-old autistic child. "I had read about this disorder before so I knew what my son was experiencing. Once you get used to their way of life, it's not so difficult to understand them and fulfill their needs."

"Autistic children do not have the ability to remember people they meet. It takes time for them to even get used to their teachers," Khadija Al Yassini, a teacher at the Center said. She graduated with a degree in psychology several years ago. "I've been teaching these children for three years now and I enjoy it more than anything else. They make you feel happy, because you feel as though you create something new for them every day. It's not like teaching an ordinary child; it takes patience and requires knowledge in psychology."

"The rewards of teaching these children and interacting with them every day outweigh the physical and emotional strength it involves to take care of them," Al-Yassini added.



Amr Shakir, seven-year-old autistic child



Volunteers posing with the teachers and kids from the Yemen Center for Autism after the marathon.

## Autism: Symptoms

The fact that autism has no physical signs before the age of three makes it easy for a care giver to dismiss early symptoms as a delay in growth. The following are some signs to alert the care giver:

- No babbling by 12 months
- No clear words by 16 months
- No two-word phrases by 24 months
- Gradual loss of speech as child grows older



## HEALTH WATCH

By: Dr. Siva



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

## Foods that can harm bone health

Bones form the foundation of your body and you should take special care to maintain the health of your bones. Your diet has an impact on bone health, both in the positive and in the negative ways. Last week we saw how some foods can strengthen our bones. Now, we will see how certain other foods can cause weakening of your bones by leaching out minerals from them.



Let's see what these bone-weakening foods are:

**Soft Drinks:** Many soft drinks contain phosphoric acid which increases the rate of calcium excretion through the urine. Also, many who consume soft drinks frequently avoid drinking other calcium-rich drinks like milk or calcium and vitamin D fortified orange juice (which we see in the supermarkets these days), thus lowering their overall calcium intake. You can help yourself by swapping the carbonated drinks with healthy options like milk, fruit smoothie, yogurt, and calcium and Vitamin D fortified orange juice.

**Salt:** Sodium in the cooking salt causes calcium loss, weakening bones over time. According to experts, you would lose around 40 milligrams of calcium in urine for every 2.5 grams of sodium, the amount of sodium you should get in a day (present in a teaspoon of salt). In a study conducted on post-menopausal women, it was found that women who consumed a high-sodium diet lost more bone minerals in comparison to those who didn't. Apart from table salt, salt also shows up in nearly all processed foods like breakfast cereals, whole grain breads, and fast foods, making up 75 % of the total sodium consumption. Cooking with small quantities of salt is good but better still is limiting your consumption of processed foods. Eating plenty of potassium-rich foods also helps in decreasing the loss of calcium as potassium helps balance sodium levels in blood. Foods rich in potassium include oranges, bananas, sweet potatoes, bananas, tomatoes, and spinach.

**Caffeine:** Caffeine is present not only in coffee, but also in energy drinks (around 80 milligrams per can). Since caffeine containing drinks have an addictive element, so you might find it difficult to switch to other healthy options. Limit your intake of coffee to just one or two cups in the morning while getting adequate calcium to offset any losses caffeine causes. You can also try switching to tea as research suggests that, although tea contains caffeine, it does not harm. Taking green tea every day is very good for bone health. Researchers think that plant compounds present in tea might be protecting bone. Adding milk to your coffee can also reduce some of the bone-sapping effects.

**Alcohol:** Research shows that excess alcohol intake can affect your bone health and increase the risk of osteoporosis later in life. When you drink too much alcohol every day, it interferes with the pancreas and its absorption of calcium and vitamin D, both of which are essential nutrients for your bones. Additionally, heavy drinking affects the functioning of osteoblasts, the bone-making cells. Some studies also suggest that alcohol decreases the female hormone, estrogen, and can lead to irregular periods in women. As estrogen levels decrease, the bone remodeling process slows down leading to bone loss. You can help by limiting yourself to one drink every day or quitting altogether. When you quit drinking, your bones may recover fairly rapidly.

**Vitamin A:** Vitamin A, found in egg yolk, liver and full-fat dairy is good for vision and the immune system. However, excessive intake of vitamin A is as harmful as lack of Vitamin A. The risk of spontaneous fractures is seven times more in those who consume more quantities of Vitamin A. Researchers noticed a high incidence of hip fractures in Scandinavia and the United States, where the use of vitamin supplements and vitamin A fortification is common. However, vitamin A is still important in small doses. You can opt for low fat or non-fat dairy products, and take egg whites only since egg yolks are rich in Vitamin A. Also, if you take multivitamin, it's a good idea to be aware of how much vitamin A is in your daily multivitamin to avoid getting too much.

**Hydrogenated Oils:** Studies have shown that Vitamin K gets destroyed when liquid vegetable oils get converted into solid oils by the process of hydrogenation. Vitamin K is needed for strong bones and for calcium absorption. Green leafy vegetables contain the highest amount of Vitamin K. Vegetable oils like canola oil and olive oil are the second best sources. If you love baked items which are prepared by hydrogenated oils, then try making cookies and muffins at home using canola oil.

You might find it difficult to control your urges for these foods. It is not very easy and you cannot switch over to healthy options all of a sudden. But cutting back slowly and steadily will allow you to escape the long-term consequences.

# Financing the jihad: Al-Qaeda & kidnappings in Yemen

Recent kidnappings of foreigners in Yemen reveal an interesting development.

By: Haykal Bafana

The kidnappings in themselves do not stand out – they represent an age-old tribal practice in Yemen, where the hostages are used to strengthen a tribe's bargaining position with the power of the day. Usually, negotiations between the Yemen government & the tribe are rapidly commenced, and once a mutually agreeable settlement is reached, the hapless hostage is released unharmed.

But three consecutive kidnappings of foreigners recently have apparently resulted in Al-Qaeda having custody of the hostages.

1. A Swiss woman was kidnapped in Hodeida, western Yemen, on March 14, 2012. News began to surface soon after in Yemeni press sources that she had been spirited away to Shabwa province, and handed over by the tribal kidnappers to Al-Qaeda.

2. In Aden, the consul general of Saudi Arabia was kidnapped on March 28, 2012. Initially, local sources indicated that a personal issue was involved and that negotiations between a woman's family & the Saudi Arabian embassy were in progress. Two weeks ago, local news began to report that the consul general was in Al-Qaeda custody in Abyan province.

3. On 22 April 2012, a French man working for the International

Committee of the Red Cross was kidnapped near Hodeida. And already, news is emerging that he is allegedly in Shabwa province in Al-Qaeda custody.

At this stage, there is no confirmation that all three foreign hostages are actually being held by Al-Qaeda. It is rare for foreign or even Yemeni media to penetrate the Al-Qaeda-held areas in Abyan & Shabwa to confirm the truth of these reports. Further, the partisan propaganda being produced by Yemeni press outlets in the last six weeks has reached truly ridiculous levels and one is driven to dismiss a large majority of the news reported.

Nevertheless, assuming that the hostages are indeed in Al-Qaeda custody, a number of explanations can be hypothesized.

First, one possibility is that Al-Qaeda itself was behind the kidnappings. This would be a startling new development, as kidnappings have never been part of mainstream Al-Qaeda methodology, whether in Yemen or elsewhere. Indeed, it is a troubling idea that Al-Qaeda can extend its geographical scope of operations to Hodeida (twice) as well as Aden, & spirit the kidnap victims hundreds of kilometers back to Abyan & Shabwa, past a multitude of security checkpoints. Further, it would mean that Al-Qaeda mounted these kidnappings in the midst of an ongoing bloody crackdown by the military in Abyan & Shabwa, and

adds emphasis to their impressive tactical capabilities in Yemen.

A second, and more likely, possibility is that Al-Qaeda may have made it known that kidnappers would be paid for the release of foreign hostages into Al-Qaeda custody. The kidnappers of the Swiss woman reportedly accepted a US\$50,000 payment to hand her over to Al-Qaeda custody. The Saudi consul general ended up in Al-Qaeda custody, after negotiations between the woman's family & the Saudi embassy over a sum of approximately US\$40,000 got bogged down. For the French man kidnapped on April 22, Yemeni press is already reporting that he is in Al-Qaeda custody in Shabwa. In this scenario, it is reasonable to assume that the tribal kidnappers would readily hand over custody to Al-Qaeda in exchange for money – the current Yemeni government is overwhelmed by a slate of critical problems, and is probably unable to perform its usual role of mediating with the tribesmen.

Whatever the truth may be, such kidnappings are likely to be a profitable enterprise for Al-Qaeda, as a means to finance its operations in Yemen and abroad. It is known that in light of tight controls imposed on finance from sympathizers in the GCC states and elsewhere, as well as the lack of funding sources within Yemen itself, that Al-Qaeda is financially stretched. With the recent escalation of military attacks by Yemeni & American forces in Abyan & Shabwa, it is clear that Al-Qaeda needs to fund its "jihad". From this perspective, the kidnapping



Kidnappings are likely to be a profitable enterprise for Al-Qaeda, as a means to finance its operations in Yemen and abroad.

of foreigners in Yemen may be the solution that Al-Qaeda has found to finance its activities.

Such an idea is likely to have had its genesis in the kidnappings of the 3 French aid workers near Seiyun, Hadhramaut province in May 2011. The initial news was that tribal captors were involved, with some unspecified local grievances. 3 months later, news suddenly emerged that the French were in the custody of Al-Qaeda militants in Shabwa. The three aid workers were finally released in November 2011 and flown from Shabwa to Oman, amidst much secrecy. Oman had apparently paid off on behalf of the French government, in part or in whole, the massive US \$12

million ransom demanded by Al-Qaeda.

Such a huge ransom paid would certainly sustain Al-Qaeda operations in Yemen for an extended period of time. And the incident may have highlighted to Al-Qaeda the viability of foreigner kidnappings as a source of funding. For example, reports say that the sum demanded by Al-Qaeda for the release of the Swiss woman is a staggering US \$66 million.

While it is clear on humanitarian grounds that all efforts must be made to procure the release of the foreign kidnapping victims, the governments involved must be strongly discouraged from following the French example & paying the exorbitant ransoms

being demanded, even if lives are lost. With certainty, these ransoms will be used to further perpetuate the plague of Al-Qaeda in Yemen, to the detriment of all Yemenis. This is ironic, when the demands of the international community have led to the sacrifice of hundreds of Yemeni soldiers (and civilians) in the war against Al-Qaeda.

In any event, whether the current spate of kidnappings are revealed eventually as Al-Qaeda operations, or it transpires that Al-Qaeda is now a "willing buyer" of hostages from tribal kidnappers, the extensive tabeau of security problems faced by Yemen just got a little more extended.

## Epilogue

For the purposes of this article, I have conflated Al-Qaeda in Yemen into a single, monolithic entity. This is certainly not the case in the convoluted political landscape of Yemen. It is notable that another militant outfit in Yemen has kidnapped foreigners before.

In 1998, the Aden Abyan Islamic Army kidnapped a number of foreign tourists, with a bloody ending in a botched rescue attempt by Yemeni security forces. Now in 2012, is it merely a coincidence that Tareq Al Fadhli, who was a key leader of the Aden Abyan Islamic Army, has now apparently taken charge of negotiations for the release of the Saudi consul and the Swiss woman?

Coincidence or not, it is certainly an indication that Al-Qaeda in Yemen is not a single monolithic organization with a unified command & control structure.

## إختيار شركات الشحن والتخليص – برنامج الاغذية العالمي للأمم المتحدة



يقوم برنامج الاغذية العالمي التابع للأمم المتحدة في اليمن بمراجعة وتحديث قائمة الشركات التي تعمل في مجال الشحن والتخليص المحتملة.

وعلى الشركات المهتمة والمؤهلة والراغبة، تقديم طلب إستمارة الأستبيان الخاصة بالشحن والتخليص، لتعبئته وإرفاق جميع وثائق وبيانات الشركة والتراخيص ذات الصلة لمزاولة المهنة، خلال فترة أقصاها نهاية دوام يوم السبت الموافق 12 مايو 2012، ويطلب من الشركات المعتمدة لدى برنامج الاغذية العالمي للأمم المتحدة، تعبئة إستبيان الشحن ذات العلاقة خلال الفترة الموضحة أعلاه، علماً بأن الطلب الوارد من قبل الشركات بعد هذا الموعد لن يأخذ بعين الاعتبار، وينبغي تقديم الطلب إلى مكتب البرنامج في صنعاء على العنوان التالي، مع كتابة "قائمة شركات الشحن والتخليص"، علماً بأن الشركات التي سيتم قبولها في القائمة هي فقط التي سيتم دعوتها للمشاركة في المناقصات.

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فيلا رقم 22، شارع نواكشوط  
ت رقم 01 - 214100  
المكتب الرئيسي - صنعاء

على الشركات الراغبة سحب إستمارة إستبيان الشحن والتخليص الخاص بالبرنامج وتعبئتها، وأرفاق جميع المستندات المطلوبة في الإستبيان.

للاستفسار، يرجى التواصل على الأرقام التالية: 737507841 أو 733223303

## "United Nations World Food Programme – Selection of Potential Clearing & Forwarding Companies"

The United Nation Word Food Programme, Republic of YEMEN is currently reviewing its shortlist of potential clearing & forwarding companies.

Interested and qualified companies are requested to fill the WFP Transport Questionnaire, and submit it together with a letter of interest, a company profile and supporting documents such as references, copy of company registration/licenses for clearing & forwarding from the relevant authority. The deadline is Saturday May 12, 2012. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Companies who are already short listed by The United Nation World Food Programme are requested to fill the Questionnaire and submit it again along with the supporting documents. Applications should be submitted to the following address, with reference "Clearing & Forwarding Shortlist". Please note that only short listed companies will be notified and receive request for offers.

The World Food Programme  
Villa no. 22 Nouakchott Street,  
Tel. 01 214100/1  
Sana'a office

Interested companies are requested to collect Questionnaire at the WFP office located at the above indicated address. The questionnaire is expected to be submitted together with other supporting documents.

For more information, please contact on the phone no.: 737507841 or 733223303.

## إختيار مقاولي النقل – برنامج الاغذية العالمي للأمم المتحدة



يقوم برنامج الاغذية العالمي التابع للأمم المتحدة في اليمن بمراجعة وتحديث قائمة شركات النقل المحتملة، وعلى الشركات المهتمة والمؤهلة والراغبة، تقديم طلب إستمارة الأستبيان الخاصة بالنقل، لتعبئته وإرفاق جميع وثائق وبيانات الشركة والتراخيص ذات الصلة، خلال فترة أقصاها نهاية دوام يوم السبت الموافق 12 مايو 2012، ويطلب من الشركات المعتمدة لدى برنامج الاغذية العالمي للأمم المتحدة، تعبئة إستبيان النقل والتراخيص ذات العلاقة خلال الفترة الموضحة أعلاه، علماً بأن الطلب الوارد من قبل الشركات بعد هذا الموعد لن يأخذ بعين الاعتبار، وينبغي تقديم الطلب إلى مكتب البرنامج في صنعاء على العنوان التالي، مع كتابة "قائمة الشركات"، علماً بأن الشركات التي سيتم قبولها في القائمة هي فقط التي سيتم دعوتها للمشاركة في المناقصات.

برنامج الاغذية العالمي  
فيلا رقم 22، شارع نواكشوط  
ت رقم 01 - 214100  
المكتب الرئيسي - صنعاء

على الشركات الراغبة سحب إستمارة إستبيان النقل الخاص بالبرنامج وتعبئته، وأرفاق جميع المستندات المطلوبة في الإستبيان.

للاستفسار، يرجى التواصل على الأرقام التالية: 737507841 أو 733223303

## "United Nations World Food Programme – Selection of Potential Transporters"

The United Nation Word Food Programme, Republic of YEMEN is currently reviewing its shortlist of potential transport companies.

Interested and qualified companies are requested to fill the WFP Transport Questionnaire, and submit it together with a letter of interest, a company profile and supporting documents such as references, copy of company registration or relevant authorization. The deadline is Saturday May 12, 2012. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Companies who are already short listed by The United Nation World Food Programme are requested to fill the Questionnaire and submit it again along with the supporting documents. Applications should be submitted to the following address, with reference "Logistics Shortlist". Please note that only short listed companies will be notified and receive request for offers.

The World Food Programme  
Villa no. 22 Nouakchott Street,  
Tel. 01 214100/1  
Sana'a office

Interested companies are requested to collect Transport Questionnaire at the WFP office located at the above indicated address. The questionnaire is expected to be submitted together with other supporting documents.

For more information, please contact on the phone no.: 737507841 or 733223303.

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**Coffee Break**

**Crossword**

**ACROSS**

- Most odd (9)
- Chamber (4)
- Advancement (9)
- Easy (6)
- Metal alloy (5)
- Back (4)
- Monarchs (5)
- Plunder (4)
- Covers with a concrete surface (5)
- See 14
- Playground item (6)
- Likings (9)
- Man's name (4)
- Vanguard (5-4)

**Down**

- Unwanted signals in a communication channel (5-4)
- Members of the Royal Marines (9)
- Vetch plant (4)
- Concede (5)
- Collect (6)
- Display (4)
- Courage (5)
- Tropical plant (5)
- Omits (6,3)
- Broken-off branches, etc. (9)
- Secret agents (5)
- Tropical bird (6)
- Weak (5)
- Equipment (4)
- Amaze (4)

**Sudoku**

**Easy**

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

**Intermediate**

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

**Difficult**

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

**Chess**

White plays and wins in the 2nd move

**Solutions**

**Chess:** Be5+  
**Cross Words:** Across: 3 Strangest; 8 Room; 9 Promotion; 10 Simple; 11 Steel; 14 Tonic; 15 Rear; 16 Kings; 18 Loot; 20 Paves; 21 Sol-fa; 24 Seesaw; 25 Penchants; 26 Higo; 27 Front-line.  
 Down: 1 Cross-talk; 2 Commandos; 4 Tare; 5 Admit; 6 Gather; 7 Show; 9 Pluck; 11 Senna; 12 Leaves out; 13 Brushwood; 17 Spies; 19 Toucan; 22 Frail; 23 Gear; 24 Stun



## Rainwater harvesting back in fashion



Photo by Sabrina Faber

One of the water tanks using rain water harvesting techniques in the the Old City of Sana'a.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

**T**wenty-five homes in Sana'a will benefit from a 75,000 Euros rainwater harvesting project, one of three winning project ideas of the Philips Livable Cities Award 2010/2011.

The warning that Sana'a could potentially be the first capital city in the planet to run out of water was the driving force behind Sabrina Faber's, the principal for the Rainwater Aggregation in Sana'a (RAINS), project.

Through her scheme, Sabrina hopes to help solve the water shortages commonly experienced in the city during dry spells, whilst providing clean drinking water. This

could potentially result in significant health benefits for the whole population.

The Philips Livable Cities Award was a global initiative designed to generate innovative, meaningful and achievable ideas to improve the health and well-being of city-dwellers across the world and make cities more livable for residents.

"Through their projects, the winners aim to improve the day-to-day lives of citizens in their respective communities. By enhancing livability on a local level, small-scale projects like these have the ability to change and enhance the lives of local inhabitants," said a statement from Philips Livable Cities Awards committee.

Sana'a was one of three cities

to have won the award last year, alongside Buenos Aires in Argentina and Kampala in Uganda.

Sabrina argues that for thousands of years, Yemenis used cisterns to harvest rainwater in mountaintop villages, and terraces to slow, spread, and sink rainwater and then cultivate land on rugged mountainsides.

During two distinct annual rainy seasons, the city of Sana'a and its surrounding basin receive an average of 200 mm per year of rainwater; other areas in the Yemeni highlands, where the bulk of Yemen's population continues to live, receive up to 800 mm per year. If captured, those amounts could translate into millions of liters of clean water for use by in-

habitants.

"Yet, within the last half-century, Yemenis have nearly abandoned the age-old practice of harvesting rainwater," she said.

The RAINS project seeks to restore the ancient Yemeni technique of rainwater harvesting with a modern, innovative twist to produce a system capable of capturing from 10,000 to 100,000 liters a year per structure (capacity is dependent upon rainfall, rooftop area, and the system storage capacity).

The system works by utilizing Yemen's existing flat roofs to capture rainwater, funnel it to a storage tank, and then directly consume that water for garden or external use. Faber, a development aid worker who has lived in Yemen for over twelve years, is using her Philips award to implement 25 to

50 pilot RAINS systems throughout the capital city, in private homes and public facilities.

"The first time I thought about this idea when I was hiking with my husband through the surrounding countryside of Sana'a. We saw firsthand how Yemenis collected rainwater in cisterns and terraces," said Faber. "We realized that every time it rained in Sana'a, the rainwater had nowhere to go. The gift from the heavens was falling on Sana'a without any purpose. The water would either flow out of the city through a major, paved flood channel, or evaporate."

Thus, more than a year ago, she and her husband implemented a prototype for the RAINS system at a site in Sana'a. During the testing phase last summer, in the space of less than 24 hours, and with only two days of heavy rains, the proto-

**4U**

If you are interested in RAINS or want to find out more information contact Sabrina Faber at [sabrina.faber@planetecole.org](mailto:sabrina.faber@planetecole.org)

type, which has two above-ground storage tanks, accumulated over 10,000 liters of rainwater.

That rainwater was and is used to irrigate the facility's garden. It also serves as a backup water supply for the building in the event that city water is not flowing, and thereby reduces the dependence on water obtained from unlicensed wells, the rapid spread of which is helping to deplete Sana'a's water supply.

## Iraqi president gifts Saddam's rifle to Kuwaiti prince

**T**he news of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani gifting Kuwaiti emir's son a rifle belonging to the toppled dictator Saddam Hussein stirred controversy in the Iraqi parliament, according to a newspaper report on Wednesday.

London-based Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper quoted a source from Talabani's office as saying that Hussein's Brno rifle, which was seized after the fall of the dictator in 2003, was gifted to Kuwaiti emir's son, Nasir Sabah Al-Ahmed.

The rifle is said to be the one carried by Hussein during celebrations or when addressing adoring crowds.

"This rifle belongs to the Iraqi people so no one has the right to give it away including the president," spokeswoman of the Al-Iraqiya Al-Hura (Free Iraqi) coalition, Aliya Nisaif, told the newspaper.

"Iraq's history is its history, whether negative or positive... what is posi-



tive we should be proud of, and what is negative we should learn from," he added.

"The heritage of the Iraqi people is not for sale, and there are some symbolic gestures that cannot be overblown out of proportion," said former military officer Hamid Al-Mutlak, also a member of the Iraqiya List.

However, Kurdish official, Mah-

moud Othman, who is a close friend of the Iraqi president, said, "this is not the right time for such issues that can create problems and sensitivities."

Hussein's personal gun was allegedly given to former US President George W. Bush by US Forces.

Source: Al-Arabiya

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