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Houthis accept dialogue, won't put down arms

Khalid Al-Karimi

SAADA, June 3 — On Thursday, armed Houthi groups in northern Yemen announced their acceptance of the upcoming National Dialogue Conference, but on Sunday, their spokesperson stated in a phone interview with the Yemen Times that they will not put their arms down.

"We are not ready to put down our weapons, as they are part of our culture," Saleh Habra, the Houthis'



The Houthis, who rejected the GCC power transfer plan, announced Thursday 31 May their acceptance to take part in the upcoming National Dialogue, yet they decline to lay down their weapons.

spokesperson, said. "All Yemenis carry weapons, and we use them when we feel vulnerable to attacks by government forces."

The Houthis have fought six wars with the Yemeni army, with Saudi Arabia involved in the last round of the fighting, ending in February 2010. The group rejected the GCC power transfer deal removing former president Saleh from office and the installing his deputy, Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi, as president.

However, they finally agreed to take part in the upcoming National Dialogue, intended to bring all parties together to decide Yemen's future political landscape.

"We never said that dialogue is not the best way to end disputes among Yemenis," Habra said. "Dialogue is a part of our culture."

A five-member team from the National Dialogue Communication Committee, which was established May 6 by President Hadi, paid a

visit to Sa'ada on Thursday to invite the Houthis to take part in the National Dialogue.

The team included Dr. Abdulkarim Al-Eryani of the General People's Congress (GPC), Dr. Yaseen Saeed Noman of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), Abdulwahab Al-Anisi of the Islah Party and Abulkadir Hilal and Nadia Sakkaf, two independent members of the outreach committee.

The Houthis' leader, Abdulmalik

Al-Houthi, received the team with open arms, emphasizing his willingness to participate in a serious dialogue in order to work through the nation's problems and accomplish the goals of Yemen's peaceful popular revolution.

He added: "We warmly receive the Communication Committee because we [Houthis] believe in the values of the revolution in addition to our desire to respond to the people's aspirations to build a just civil state, which all Yemenis contribute to building."

The Houthis took control of Sa'ada governorate in March 2011 and appointed the arms dealer, Fares Man'a, as the new governor of the governorate, in coordination with local leaders.

Since then, the group has been accused of expanding their military presence in northern areas including Al-Jawf, Hajja and Sa'ada.

In November, the Houthis engaged in fierce clashes with local Salafi tribesmen in Hajja, Sa'ada and Al-Jawf. Many casualties were reported on both sides.

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1st Armored Division storm Public Corporation for Radio and Television

Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANAA, June 3 — Forces belonging to the 1st Armored Division stormed the state-run Public Corporation for Radio and Television early Sunday morning to disperse a group of employees protesting against the dismissal of the head of the corporation, Hussein Ghuthaim, by Minister of Information Ali Al-Amrani.

A small group of employees at the corporation rejected the minister's decree, calling it unfair.

Al-Amrani appointed Escandar Al-Asbahi as chairman of the corporation, but he was unable to enter headquarters after protesters loyal to Ghuthaim prevented him from starting work.

Mohammed Al-Khalaqi, one of the employees who went on strike to protest the minister's decision, claimed the majority of the corporation's employees will reject the decision.

He criticized the soldiers of the 1st Armored Division for their "violent attack" on the protesters.

"We were peacefully protesting against the arbitrary decision of the minister of information when soldiers from the 1st Armored Division attacked and beat us violently," Al-Khalaqi told the Yemen Times.

Al-Khalaqi criticized the minister, saying "He is going above the authority of President Abdu-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. He has no right to render such a decision against Ghuthaim."



Saleh's media official still refuses his removal by the minister of information, saying it's not the minister's business to issue such decrees.

A source from the minister of information downplayed the significance of the protests and said that the number of protesters did not exceed 20.

"They say the minister has no right to appoint a new manager for the corporation; however, Ghuthaim was appointed by the former minister of information," the source said on the condition of anonymity. "The minister has the full right to appoint a new manager for the corporation."

"Unfortunately, Ghuthaim and his supporters are trying to undermine the government's authority," he said, adding that the employees should obey the decision of the minister.

Hussain Ghuthaim, the former head of the corporation, and one believed to still be loyal to the ousted President Saleh, said in an earlier interview with the Yemen Times that such decisions are only made at discretion of the president, not the minister of information.

More dead in as clashes continue in Abyan between Al-Qaeda, army troops



The leader of Ansar Al-Sharia in Abyan, Abu Hamza Al-Zanjubari, appeared in a video clip posted Wednesday denying that the army recaptured military positions in Ja'ar, the stronghold of Al-Qaeda in Abyan.

Mohammed Al-Samei

ABYAN, June 3- A military official confirmed on Sunday that at least six militants linked to Al-Qaeda were killed and others were wounded when army troops repelled an attack launched by militants on a branch of the Central Bank as well as on other institutions in Zinjibar, the capital of Abyan governorate, in a bid to gain control of the city.

The unidentified official told the state-run news website that clashes with the militants lasted from 5 to 7 a.m. Sunday, and the troops managed to repel the militants' attack and to kill some of them.

The Yemen Times tried contacting military leaders in Abyan, but it received no information on the ongoing clashes in areas of the southern governorate.

Abyan security chief Ahmed Masaoud told the Yemen Times that he has no precise information on the clashes, while a media source pointed out that it's difficult to obtain specifics on the ongoing clashes between the army and Al-Qaeda militants in Abyan owing to defects in communication networks there.

On Saturday, the army launched a fierce attack on groups of Ansar Al-Sharia, an Al-Qaeda affiliate in Yemen. They attacks aimed at gunmen in the Al-Haror area on the outskirts of Jaar, an Al-Qaeda stronghold, leaving many people on both sides either killed or wounded.

The army's attack is a part of an

effort to take control of militant-held posts that have impeded the advance of the army toward Jaar.

Furthermore, air force aircraft struck Al-Qaeda hideouts inside Jaar, destroying many buildings.

Meanwhile, the UAE's Al-Kheej newspaper reported Sunday that Al-Qaeda leaders said their gunmen had repelled attacks by the army on their posts in Al-Haror.

Military sources said clashes between the army and Ansar Al-Sharia erupted Friday evening and Saturday morning on the outskirts of Zinjibar, killing four militants and wounding others.

The leader of Al-Qaeda in Abyan, Hamza Al-Zanjubari, appeared in a video clip posted Wednesday in the October 7 military base in Jaar, denying that their posts were stormed by the government forces.

"Here we are in the October 7 camp, and it's still under our control. We hear lies from the government-run media outlets and other outlets without credibility and accuracy, which say that government troops took control of this position. The troops are still very far away from here," Al-Zanjubari said.

He downplayed the effect of the military campaign the army has been waging since early May against their posts and strongholds in Abyan.

"Our men managed to cut off

Al-Alam—the main road linking Aden with Abyan—and burn down a military pickup truck, killing all the soldiers on board. We also bombed a military vehicle. And this is evidence that we are doing well in the battles. We reject the rumors, launched by the sellout government, saying their troops managed to take control of our posts," he said.

On May 12, the army, assisted by the tribal militias, started an extensive military campaign in an effort to regain control of Zinjibar as well as other towns controlled by Al-Qaeda.

At least 375 people have been killed since the beginning of the military campaign. Among those killed were 275 militants, 65 soldiers, 18 tribesmen fighting alongside the army and 18 civilians, according to an Agence France Press poll.

On Saturday, President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi ordered Republican Guard forces commanded by Ahmed Saleh, the son of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, to storm Zinjibar and eject the militants.

Sources told Al-Kheej that Hadi ordered the commander of the Republican Guard to take the central role in clearing Zinjibar from the militants. According to sources, extra units from the Republic Guards have already departed for Zinjibar at Hadi's behest.

Who obstructs Yemen's power transfer?

Muaad Al-Maqtari

SANAA, June 3 -- Dissatisfaction has spread among Yemenis because of the decision of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, who ruled out the possibility of imposing sanctions against those who hinder the political power transfer in Yemen.

The UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Jamal Benomar, has informed conflicting parties that it isn't wise to obstruct the Gulf-brokered deal and create rebellion in the Third Republican Guard Brigade, during the time of the Security Council's meeting.

Sultan Al-Atwani, secretary-general of the Nasserite Unionist People's Organization, was surprised that the report Benomar handed to the Security Council on Tuesday didn't name specific people hindering implementation of the deal.

"The Third Republican Guard Brigade, stationed in the mountains around Sana'a, is still refusing President Hadi's decrees," Al-Atwani said.

He said Colonel Abdulhameed Maqwala, from Sanhan, Saleh's hometown, is leading a military rebellion in the third brigade, previously headed by Saleh's nephew Brigadier Tareq Mohammed Abdullah Saleh, against the newly appointed Brigadier Abdulrahman Al-Halili.

Al-Atwani said the attitude of the most powerful countries toward those who refuse Hadi's decrees will prolong the crisis in Yemen and put obstacles in the way of holding the National Dialogue Conference (NDC).

He pointed out that the NDC won't be held if the ruling party and the opposition parties continued to front their own tribesmen and weapons.



Despite efforts by the UN Special Envoy to Yemen to end military rebellion at some army units run by Saleh's relatives, military threats still hinder the power transfer in the country.

Moreover, it may instigate war in Yemen if Hadi can't control the military, currently divided as a result of last year's uprising in Yemen.

For his part, Sultan Al-Barakani, the Secretary General of the General People's Congress (GPC), made assurances that the GPC is committed to the terms of the Gulf initiative.

He urged all people to work together to reconstruct what was destroyed in last year's protests that toppled Saleh.

Al-Barakani, known for his loyalty to the ousted president Saleh, asserted the importance of getting the militia out of Sana'a.

Al-Barakani said, "We can't talk about development while fear and

anxiety dominate the country because of armed men deployed in Al-Hasaba, Sawfan and other areas," referring to Sheikh Sadeq Al-Ahmar's tribesmen.

Benomar met several Yemeni officials, included President Hadi, former President Ali Saleh, Major General Ali Mohsein Al-Ahmar, commander of the first armored division, and Brigadier Ahmed Ali, commander of the Republican Guard, to discuss the rebellion in the Third Republican Guard Brigade.

Benomar informed them that the Security Council will impose sanctions on anyone obstructing the implementation of the Gulf initiative.

While leaving Yemen, Benomar

said he will present a detailed report to the Security Council about the security and political situation in Yemen on Tuesday.

Benomar promised that the Security Council would agree to impose sanctions on those who hinder the implementation of the Gulf initiative and refuse Hadi's decrees.

However, the permanent members of the Security Council stated that no sanctions would be imposed against those seeking to upset the initiative. They did take into consideration that the initiative is progressing in spite of the great challenges it faces and commended it for that.

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Renewed clashes in Sa'ada between Houthis and Salafists after short calm

Ahmed Dawood

SA'ADA, June 3 — Kataf district in Sa'ada in north Yemen witnessed military confrontations between Houthis and Salafists over the past four days, resulting in deaths and injuries on both sides.

The Salafists' spokesperson, Muheeb Al-Daleei, said the clashes began Friday when the Houthis attempted to take over the Al-Shafeia security checkpoint, controlled by Salafists, which lies in the east of Kataf district.

The Salafists claimed that they repelled the attack. Confrontations between Houthi and Salafist groups continued on Friday and Saturday.

Bloody clashes continued for hours Sunday. Fourteen armed Salafists were reportedly shot dead, in addition to 35 Houthi deaths, according to Al-Daleei. Injuries were also reported.

In a phone interview with the Yemen Times, Al-Daleei said that over the course of the confrontations, the Salafists took over Houthi weapons, including RPGs.

Al-Daleei indicated that once the communication team set up by President Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi to prepare for the National Dialogue Conference left Sa'ada on Thursday, clashes broke out. He



The sectarian conflict in north Yemen between the Houthis and the local Salafi tribesmen forced hundreds of families to displace their homes.

claimed that last month was relatively quiet in terms of clashes.

For his part, a Houthi information committee member in Sa'ada, Abu Hashim, said the Salafists have spread false information to media outlets in order to misguide the public. He added that the deaths

among Houthis are fewer than the Salafists claimed.

"The Salafists in Sa'ada are conspiring with the Saudis to fight the Houthis," Abu Hashim said.

He said that the Salafists attacked a Houthi-run position in Kataf district, and that the Houthis

repelled the attack. Military clashes, he said, lasted for hours.

According to Abu Hashim, three cars owned by Salafists were blown up by landmines. Everyone in the vehicles was killed.

Clashes between the Houthis and the Salafis have largely halted in

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Two opposing preachers fight in a Sana'a mosque, one hospitalized

Sadeq Al-Faqih and Mohamed Al-Samei

SANAA, June 3 — A dispute broke out between Saleh Al-Dhabiani, a professor at Al-Eman University, and Lutfi Hassen, an Egyptian preacher in the Al-Ansar mosque

in Sana'a.

Basheer Akroot, an eyewitness, told the Yemen Times that Al-Dhabiani came to the mosque in order to deliver the Friday sermon after being abroad for months.

Once Al-Dhabiani mounted the pulpit, Hassen immediately ob-

jected. Al-Dhabiani's guards intervened and started beating Hassen.

Ibraheem Al-Jawfi, another witness, said that Al-Dhabiani started the whole affair by jumping to the platform yelling that "anyone who wants to listen that is up to him,



and anyone that wants to leave is free to."

The eyewitness said Al-Dhabiani was allowed to speak at the Al-Ansar mosque by the landlord and those who built it.

Akroot went on to say that disagreements also occurred last

year from sermons highlighting politics instead of religion. Such sermons instigated Saleh's loyalists to bring orders from the Endowment Office to install Hassen instead of Al-Dhabiani (who is known as a fervent anti-Saleh preacher).

Al-Jawfi said approximately 50 of Al-Dhabiani's supporters broke into the mosque and attacked Hassen. When removed from the pulpit, Hassen was taken to a hospital, while the worshippers continued to fight with Al-Dhabiani's guards.

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Mohammed Aidroos, Field Leader of the People's Committees' in Abyan to the Yemen Times

“The government has to continue to support the People’s Committees’ fighters.”

Interview by: Sadeq Al-Faqih

Local fighters in Abyan have played a major role in the army’s advance against Ansar Al-Sharia, Al-Qaeda’s affiliated group based in Abyan. To know more about the locals fighting alongside the army, Sadeq Al-Faqih of the Yemen Times conducted a phone interview with Mohammed Aidroos, field leader of the People’s Committees’ in Abyan.

What is the current situation of Ansar Al-Sharia after the victory you achieved and the defeats Ansar Al-Sharia sustained in different areas?
War isn't restricted to achieving victory in an area or a district and won't stop until we purge the country entirely of those factions.

I convey glad tidings of victory over those factions to all Yemenis by virtue of the military troops and fighters of the People's Committees', groups of civilian fighters established to back the military, who sacrificed themselves for the sake of their country.

They practice acts of violence and shell mosques, civilians, farms and houses. But we won't allow these factions to control any part of Yemen.

What are the indicators of victory you achieved in cooperation with the military?

Briefly, I would say that the militants were defeated in Yasooif, and their plans proved wrong. Moreover, they were distracted and lost their strongholds.

Instead of attacking, the militants turned to defense, and they couldn't line up together easily as they used to do.

Do the militants have heavy weapons, military vehicles and tanks? Do they get them by way of collusion?

They had some military vehicles, medium weapons, a tank and armored vehicles that they gained in previous battles, but the Yemeni warplanes continued shelling on them and they were almost destroyed.

Does the government give you enough support?

The government has to continue to support the People's Committees' fighters, who volunteered to battle the militants. It supported us with light weapons and ammunition and promised to give more support.

We are patriotic and ready to sacrifice for the sake of our country. Our faith in Allah encourages us to continue fighting those militants until Yemen is purged entirely.

What's the role of media in covering your battles against Ansar Al-Sharia?

The media is busy doing its business and didn't fulfill its duties in covering everything except for some media correspondents. Therefore, I would like to thank those who continuously cover what is going on and shed light on battles.

I call on the media to stand by the side of the military instead of spreading false information.

Are the warplanes that launch exact strikes on the militants Yemeni or American? And do they take off from American battleships or from Yemeni airports?

The warplanes take off from Yemeni airports like Aden airport and also airbases like Al-And airbase. No American warplanes have participated in the battles. We have a professional cadre of Yemeni captains who are qualified enough and well-trained to hit their targets accurately.

Do you have a mobile hospital to take the wounded fighters?

All wounded fighters are taken to government hospitals. President Hadi, the minister of defense, the governor of Abyan, the chief of staff and all prominent figures pay enough attention to them.

But where exactly do you take them?

I can't tell where exactly because it is a military secret that mustn't be known.

What do Ansar Al-Sharia militants look like?

They are all about 20 years old and have long hair like women.

Is it true that some militants give themselves up to you? And how do you deal with them?

Yes. Through the Yemen Times, I urge them to surrender instead of following their deviant thoughts.

We treat them in a good manner and then hand them over to the state.

What are the techniques they use in fighting?

They depend on deceiving others, and whenever they want to shed blood, they wear military and security uniforms to be able to join the military and security forces and attack them.

It's a big mistake that the militants can obtain the military uniform easily. I call for military officials to prevent such things by closing down shops that sell military uniforms.

Where do you think they get the military uniform, particularly after changing the uniform of several military units?

I don't know exactly, but you can ask security, intelligence or military officials to clarify that.

Do the National Security, Political Security and military intelligence provide you with information?

No, we don't take information from them. However, we take information from the military units positioned in battlefields. We also give information about the militants to the military.

Do you provide food for the military during battles when the roads are blocked?

No, these are rumors aimed at decreasing the soldiers' morale. But, in case, we are ready to provide that, and it isn't a shame. So far we give information to the military and cooperate with them to do tactics and patrolling.

Regarding rations, the minister of defense pays enough attention to that. Even the wounded get their rations daily according to doctors' instructions.

Can you describe a battle you had with Ansar Al-Sharia?

I can't describe that, but they are a group of deviants who know nothing but killing and destroying everything. They kill children and women. They are against human instinct. I have never seen such a group like Ansar Al-Sharia worldwide.

Is there disagreement between

“**They [Ansar Al-Sharia militants] depend on deceiving others, and whenever they want to shed blood, they wear military and security uniforms to be able to join the military and security forces and attack them.**”

“**It's a big mistake that the militants can obtain the military uniform easily. I call for military officials to prevent such things by closing down shops that sell military uniforms.**”

“**Moqbel Al-Wad'i, a late religious scholar, and other scholars explained the risk of this terrorist group, warned Yemenis of them and their deviant thoughts and showed how they attracted uneducated youth fifteen years ago.**”



Armed men of the People's Committees' in Lawdar of Abyan, in south Yemen.

the commander of the 111 Brigade and the governor of Abyan?

You have to ask them, but I don't think so.

How many fighters do you have in the People's Committees'?

We have many fighters, and all Yemeni youth can join the People's Committees'.

Are there training camps for the people's committees?

No. Yemenis are great. Prophet Mohammed, Peace be upon him, described them as the people of faith and wisdom and they don't need training. They are additional fighters that fight alongside the military to defend Yemen.

What are the areas the army and you recaptured?

We recaptured Yasooif, Qatin, Lawdar, Al-Khodaira, the area around the electricity station, Aden-Abyan road, Shabwa, Modea road and Al-Beida'a.

Moreover, 40 militants were killed when they tried to attack us and control Akad, Al-wade', Al-Ain, Al-Arqaob, Jaar and Al-Meniasah.

When purging these areas, landmines were found. Where they made in Yemen? And who removes them?

The militants laid mines against troops and military vehicles in main roads and other areas we controlled. They were all made in Yemen and were removed by military experts.

Why do Ansar Al-Sharia militants moved from the north of Yemen to the south?

We destroyed their strongholds in the north and controlled all the areas there. So they had to move to the south. We are positioned in the northwest to battle them.

Many militants were captured after clashes in the area around the electricity station. Does the military interrogate them or you?

We don't interrogate them.

Do you think they get local or foreign support?

I don't know but I think that they get illegal support.

Have you received new weapons?

Yes, we received sniper rifles, machine guns and other weapons.

Are the troops positioned in the areas you recaptured enough to counter any surprise attack of Ansar Al-Sharia?

Yes. The military and the People's Committees' are working together.

Did the Counterterrorism Unit, the Publican Guards and the Special Forces participate in the last battles?

Yes, and also, other military units and the fighters of the people's committees participated. Moreover, some sheikhs cooperate with the army.

Do Mohammed Ali Ahmed, [a southern opposition figure], and his fellow tribesmen fight alongside the People's Committees'?

Yes, and there is mutual coordination between us.

Do you think that Tariq al-Fadhli, prominent leader from South Yemen, cooperates with Ansar Al-Sharia?

His son fights by their side.

Do the Yemeni clerics fulfill their duty in holding conferences and seminars to enlighten the Yemeni youth?

Moqbel Al-Wad'i, a late religious scholar, and other scholars explained the risk of this terrorist group, warned Yemenis of them and their deviant thoughts and showed how they attracted uneducated youth fifteen years ago.

It is the clerics and the Ministry of Endowment's duty to warn youth not to be attracted by the militants, but the ministry didn't fulfill its duty.

Are there fighters in the People's Committees' from other areas than Abyan?

Yes, there are. Moreover, fighters from different areas were killed and wounded.

From which governorates exactly do the volunteers come?

They come from Yafea, Al Dali', Lahj and Al-Beida'a.

Do you have volunteers from the northern governorates?

Yes.

Did the Bakeel and Hashid confederations' sheikhs send volunteers to back you?

No, they didn't.

What is the difference between those who cut power lines, block roads and Ansar Al-Sharia?

They are all alike because they disrupt people's interests. Ansar Al-Sharia knows that it is not permissible to kill civilians and shed blood, but they continue killing civilians in

Abyan. They deceive other people, too, saying that these acts of sabotage are at the core of Islam.

How did you receive the news of the suicide bombing carried out by operatives of Ansar Al-Sharia before the Day of Unification?

This heinous crime is forbidden in all religions and laws. It was carried out by people who find joy in seeing blood everywhere. Never had such a crime happened before.

“**It is the clerics and the Ministry of Endowment's duty to warn youth not to be attracted by the militants, but the ministry didn't fulfill its duty.**”

What is your message to the families of those killed in the suicide bombing and the security forces?

Through the Yemen Times, I would like to console families and relatives of the killed soldiers; may their souls rest in peace in heaven.

I assert that we will continue battling those militants and mercenaries until they are completely defeated, whatever the sacrifices are.

Besides this, my message to the security forces is they have to investigate the matter, sentence the responsible about the suicide bombing to death as well as purging the military institutions of mercenaries and secret agents.

The state has to pay attention to the families of killed soldiers.

What is your message to the Yemenis, particularly the youth?

They have to establish committees to defend their country of these terrorist groups and help the military to counter them. They should also work together to remain stable, putting aside their own interests.

The case for Yemen joining the GCC

Ali Al Shihabi
alarabiya.net
First published on May 31

Yemen continues to be a security problem for Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states. Since the 1962 revolution which saw the overthrow of its ruling family, and Egyptian President Nasser's subsequent enthusiastic support of that revolution, Yemen has constituted a problem that requires active management by Saudi leaders.

As part of a wise and sustainable approach to dealing with "the Yemen problem," the late King Faisal allowed the Yemeni labor force virtually unlimited access to the Saudi market and even extended those

workers labor rights similar to those that Saudi citizens received. This created millions of jobs for Yemenis and contributed massively to Yemen's economy.

While this policy was somewhat unpopular in Saudi Arabia (where Saudis sometimes saw the Yemenis as competition), it inherently recognized the danger posed by an unstable Yemen to the security of the Arabian Peninsula.

Unfortunately, this all came to a screeching halt with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and Ali Abdullah Saleh's open support of Saddam Hussein. The Saudi government retaliated by expelling all Yemeni labor from the country. This would prove to be an unfortunate decision.

Yemen, from that time on, began

a rapid decline to where it is today: a failed state by any standard. Not just any failed state, but one with a population of 20 million, critically short of water and at material risk of starvation — a citizenry that is also heavily militarized, harboring insurgents and terrorists, and inhabiting a country that is surrounded by the sea and only the GCC.

The point I make here is that Yemen's problems can only overflow into the GCC and nowhere else, and consequently the GCC is stuck with Yemen and her destiny.

Yemen will crumble, and when this happens, the Yemenis will then climb over the walls into Saudi Arabia and the GCC. Nothing and no one will be able to stop them when they do. The implications of this

should be painfully obvious to all.

To avert such a disaster, the GCC should immediately admit Yemen and give the Yemenis full access to all GCC labor markets. After all, the GCC states, which already host over 25 million foreign workers, have a huge absorptive capacity for labor. Not only will the Yemenis provide a more "natural" source of labor for these countries, but also Yemen, in turn, can then begin to grow into a large domestic market for GCC industrial goods and services.

Yemen should also immediately be supplied with massive amounts of aid. With the vast financial surpluses the GCC states now hold, the act of drowning Yemen quickly in wealth, even at the high risk of the inefficient distribution of that wealth, is probably the smartest

use of GCC surplus capital. Time, after all, is now very short.

The analogy of the United States and Mexico, while not perfect, provides an interesting lesson here. Mexican immigration has been the nightmare of American conservatives for decades, as Mexicans slowly overwhelmed the border states to such a degree that Samuel Huntington (of The Clash of Civilizations fame) saw this Latino "invasion" as putting America's Anglo-Saxon civilization at risk.

How did America address that problem? It established NAFTA, which to a large degree has turned Mexico, with all its problems, into a growing and vibrant economy. Today, for the first time, the numbers are beginning to show reverse immigration from the United States

back to Mexico (in other words, more Mexicans are returning home than are coming into America, legally or illegally).

The GCC should take this lesson to heart and realize that integrating Yemen is the best and probably only way to protect itself from a Yemeni collapse.

Those who argue in favor of keeping 20 million poor Yemenis "with Kalashnikovs" out of the GCC are focusing on the trees and ignoring the forest.

Ali Shihabi is a graduate of Princeton and Harvard and the author of "Arabian War Games". He blogs at alishihabi.com where this article was first published on May 29, 2012.

U.S. drone targets in Yemen raise questions

Greg Miller
washingtonpost.com
First published on, June 3

There is little doubt among U.S. intelligence officials that Kaid and Nabil Al-Dhahab — brothers who reportedly survived a U.S. airstrike in Yemen on Memorial Day — are associated with the Al-Qaeda insurgency in that country. Less clear is the extent to which they are plotting against the United States.

"It's still an open question," a U.S. counterterrorism official said. The siblings were related by marriage to Anwar al-Awlaki, an Al-Qaeda operative killed in September, but they have not been connected to a major plot. Their focus has been "more local," the official said. But "look at their associations and what that portends."

The quickening pace of the U.S. drone campaign in Yemen this year has raised new questions about who is being targeted and why. A review of strikes there so far suggests that the Obama administration has embraced a broader definition of what constitutes a terrorism threat that warrants a lethal response.

In more than 20 U.S. airstrikes over a span of five months, three "high-value" terrorism targets have been killed, U.S. officials said. A growing number of attacks have

been aimed at lower-level figures who are suspected of having links to terrorism operatives but are seen mainly as leaders of factions focused on gaining territory in Yemen's internal struggle.

News accounts from inside the country — which vary in their reliability — also suggest that U.S. airstrikes have hit military targets, including a weapons storage facility near Jaar, a city in southern Yemen. In some cases, U.S. strikes appeared to be coordinated with Yemeni military advances on Al-Qaeda positions in the southern provinces of Abyan and Shabwa.

Current and former U.S. officials familiar with the campaign said restrictions on targeting have been eased amid concern over Al-Qaeda's expansion over the past year. Targets still have to pose a "direct threat" to U.S. interests, said a former high-ranking U.S. counterterrorism official. "But the elasticity of that has grown over time."

The adjustments in the drone campaign carry risks for the Obama administration, which had sought to minimize the number of strikes out of fears of radicalizing local militants and driving them into Al-Qaeda's ranks. Growing unrest in Yemen has blurred the boundaries between Al-Qaeda cells plotting terrorist attacks and a broader insurgency that operates under the terrorist network's brand.

A White House spokesman said the U.S. mission in Yemen remains narrow.

"We're pursuing a focused counterterrorism campaign in Yemen designed to prevent and deter terrorist plots that directly threaten U.S. interests at home and abroad," said Tommy Vietor, spokesman for the National Security Council. "We have not and will not get involved in a broader counterinsurgency effort."

But other U.S. officials said that the administration's emphasis on threats to interests "abroad" has provided latitude for expanding attacks on Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), as the Yemen affiliate is known.

In early May, a U.S. attack killed an operative, Fahd Al-Quso, tied to the latest AQAP plot to smuggle explosives-laden underwear onto a flight to the United States. But officials said the campaign is now also aimed at wiping out a layer of lower-ranking operatives through strikes that can be justified because of threats they pose to the mix of U.S. Embassy workers, military trainers, intelligence operatives and contractors scattered across Yemen.

Asked about the reported March 12 attack on the weapons site, a U.S. military official said, "That sounds like a counterterrorism target."

That official, and others, spoke

of the condition of anonymity, citing the sensitive nature of U.S. operations in Yemen. Spokesmen for the CIA and Pentagon declined to comment.

One of the U.S. objectives in Yemen has been "identifying who those leaders were in those districts that were Al-Qaeda and also in charge of the rebellion," said a former senior U.S. official who was involved in overseeing the campaign before leaving the government. "There was a little liberalization that went on in the kill lists that allowed us to go after them."

The nerve center of those operations is a joint targeting cell on the outskirts of Sana'a, the capital. Inside, teams from Yemen's Special Forces and the U.S. Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) comb through intelligence to identify targets and coordinate which side should carry out strikes.

The effort nearly ground to a halt last year amid a political crisis that finally forced Yemen's leader for three decades, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to step down. As he fought to cling to power, U.S. officials said they became concerned that he was trying to direct U.S. strikes against his adversaries under the guise of providing locations of supposed terrorist groups.

"There were times when we were intentionally misled, presumably by Saleh, to get rid of people he wanted to get rid of," said the former U.S. official involved in overseeing the campaign.

Since Saleh was replaced by Abd Rabo Mansur al-Hadi, the target-

ing work has resumed, and U.S. military advisers who had been pulled out of the country have returned.

U.S. officials said the U.S. presence in Yemen has included members of SEAL Team 6, the unit used in the Osama bin Laden raid. The rules of engagement allow U.S. special operations forces to get no closer to the enemy than the "last position of cover," meaning the final staging areas from which Yemeni units mount assaults.

The airstrikes in Yemen this year have been split fairly evenly between operations carried out by CIA Predators and those conducted by JSOC using Reapers and other drones as well as conventional aircraft, U.S. officials said.

The CIA had pushed for an expansion of the targeting rules in Yemen, seeking to replicate aspects of its drone campaign against Al-Qaeda in Pakistan. President Obama recently authorized the agency and JSOC to carry out "signature strikes" that are based on patterns of suspicious behavior, even when the identities of those who would be killed are not clear.

According to the Long War Journal, a Web site that tracks drone activity, there have been 22 strikes so far this year in Yemen, more than in the previous ten years combined. U.S. officials said the pace has accelerated even though there has not been a proliferation in the number of plots, or evidence of a significantly expanded migration of militants to join AQAP.

The group has been linked to a

series of high-level plots, including the attempt to bomb a Detroit-bound airliner on Christmas Day in 2009.

That attack and others prompted a shift in resources to the region by the CIA, the National Security Agency and other spy services. U.S. officials said the spike in the number of drone attacks this year has been driven in part by intelligence gains and the ability to identify more targets.

The disruption of an underwear-bomb plot last month illustrated the extent to which the CIA, along with partners including the spy services of Britain and Saudi Arabia, have been able to penetrate AQAP.

But the expansion of the campaign is traced mainly to rising concern over AQAP's territorial expansion. The group and its Ansar al-Sharia wing have seized control of cities including Jaar, potentially providing sanctuary for the planning of terrorist attacks.

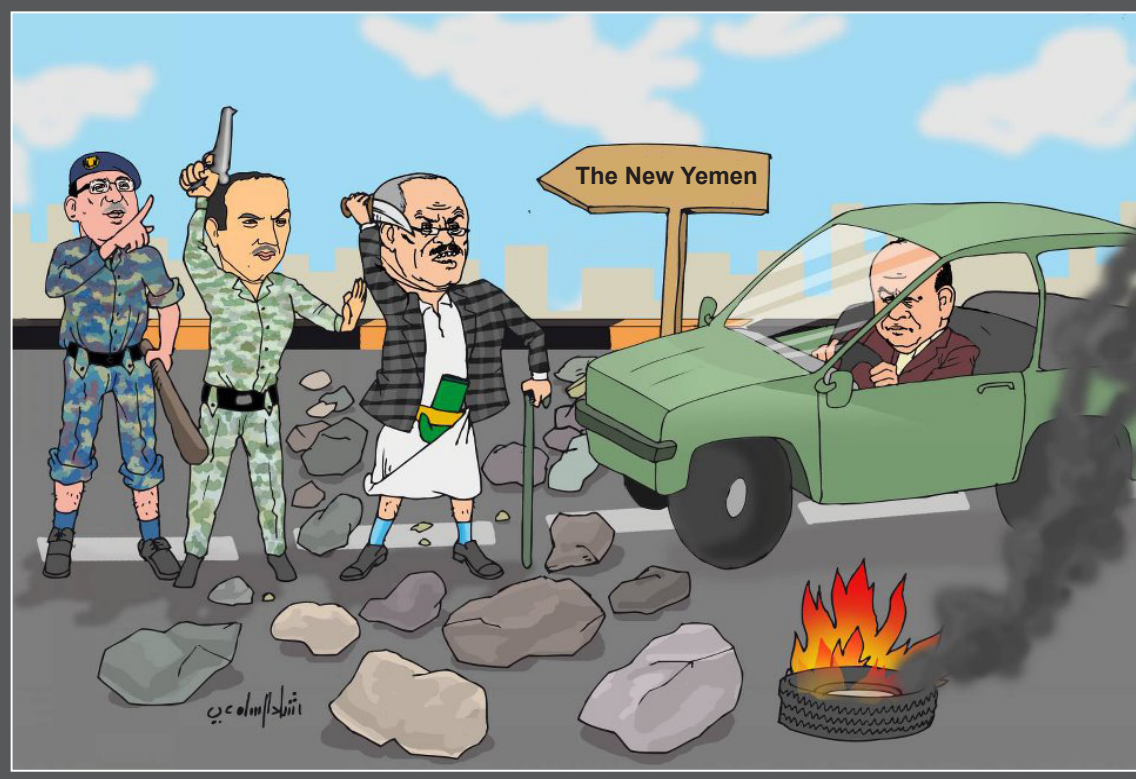
The Dhahab brothers are examples of the murky overlap between the regional and transnational factions of AQAP.

Their feud-divided family had seized control of the city of Rada' earlier this year. Their sister had been married to Awlaki, the U.S.-born cleric and operative who was killed in a CIA drone strike.

They are primarily seen as leaders of an Al-Qaeda insurgency in Baydah province, but the U.S. counterterrorism official said there is concern that their roles have grown "possibly beyond that."

SKETCHED OPINION

By Rashad Al-Samei



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African refugees face obstacles in Yemen

Muaad Al-Maqtari

Sibli Yhonis, 30, holds her refugee card in Sana'a. But she isn't happy. She wants to leave for another country.

She sleeps with a group of Ethiopian refugees under a sign for the Ministry of Human Rights. No help is provided to find them a place other than the pavement where they are subjected to police attacks.

With the other refugees, Yhonis discusses the continuous repression of the police during their daily sit-ins at the Ministry of Human Rights, where they accuse Minister of Human Rights Houriah Mashour of delaying meeting their demands.

Her refugee card stipulates that anyone bearing the card is not necessarily qualified to receive financial support or lodging in another country. This is applicable to the 215,000 refugees Yemen recognizes.

In Yemen, more than half a million of its displaced people in the south and north suffer from food insecurity in addition to the quarter million refugees who arrived on the coast during last year's political crisis.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sana'a reported that they targeted 1,300 refugees for relocation to another country. Only 389 have been transferred.

Sibli is not the only one frustrated with the wait. Regional Manager of UNCHR in the Middle East and North Africa Yaqoob Al-Hilwa said only 2 percent of refugees took advantage of lodging in another country.

The refugees dream of a new life. However, their dreams have brought them painful tragedies because information indicates that more than 11,000 Ethiopians remain immobile along the Yemen-Saudi Arabia border.



Around 300 African refugees had set up their camp off the UNHCR premises in 2011 for more than 20 days demanding solutions for their bad conditions impacted by Yemen's unrest.

Al-Hilwa said the situation for Ethiopians in Sana'a is more complicated compared to the situation for Somalis. Few claim asylum, and the rest resort to smugglers to help them sneak into southern Saudi Arabia.

According to Al-Hilwa, "It is difficult to know the authentic number of immigrants who arrive at Saudi Arabia due to the unlawful

trafficking gangs' work."

He added that refugees on the border of Yemen and Saudi Arabia are at the mercy of smugglers who sexually and financially manipulate the stowaways.

Al-Hilwa said 103,000 Africans reached Yemen in 2011, and among them were 75,000 Ethiopians. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia doubled surveillance on borders in the

course of the yearlong chaos in Yemen and deported the African immigrants.

Hilwa said the international community and Yemen deem the Ethiopians as stowaways; not refugees, which means they do not have the right to claim asylum.

According to Hilwa, many Ethiopians indicated that it is difficult to eke out a living in their country because of political repression and economic recession, in addition to a drought that has become rampant across the Horn of Africa.

Crosses to escape

Africans are smuggled through two crosses. The first is the Gulf of Aden, starting from the Bosaso Strait located southeast of Somalia. The second cross is the Red Sea, beginning from Obock, Djibouti. Al-Hilwa asserted those who cross the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden face considerable challenges during their journey from their home country to the Yemeni coast.

He added, "The immigrants are liable to arrest, psychological, physical violence, human trafficking, the lack of basic services such as food, water, education and health care, let alone the restrictions on their movements and unemployment."

A report released in February by the Ministry of Interior said 170 Africans were subject to detention, punishment and mistreatment by criminals in the Hard District on Yemen-Saudi border from January 2011 to February 2012.

The report also said the victims were composed of 91 youths, ten women, 50 children and ten seniors, and most of them were exposed to beating, burning and blows to the face, resulting in vision and hearing impairments.

The assessments conducted by UNHCR pointed out that the Ethiopians are unaware of the circumstances that they will be facing in Yemen. During the assessments, the Ethiopians said, had they known the difficulties they would face, they would not have headed toward Yemen.

Concerns and restrictions
The Somali refugees have a better chance of claiming asylum once they arrive in Yemen. Once asylum is claimed, refugees are confined to a specific location. Thus, they are not free to move around the country. Moreover, UNHCR indicated that 27,000 Somalis arrived through the Gulf of Aden in 2011.

The Somalis make up the highest ratio of refugees in Yemen. An estimated 200,000 live in refugee camps for an extended period after fleeing their country because of drought, poverty and continuous

civil strife.

The UNHCR reports indicate that in addition to the Somalis, there are other groups of refugees in Yemen, namely the approximately 5,000 Ethiopians. The 5,000 Iraqis and 1,000 Eritreans make up the second and third largest groups of refugees. Of the Eritrean refugees, many are afraid to return home for fear of repression because some were soldiers who escaped the compulsory service time.

The Reception Network, an organization along the Yemeni coast, receives Somalis and transfers them to the Kharaz refugee camp in Lahj. Some refugees continue traveling to urban areas.

Some Ethiopian immigrants refuse to return to their country. UNHCR expressed concern about the suppression that Ethiopians face because of their political affiliation in Ethiopia. Yet Yemen does not deal with them as refugees.

The Haradh branch of the International Organization for Migration offered voluntary returns for more than 5,000 Ethiopians in 2011, but it is unknown how many

of them chose to return home.


UNHCR in Yemen said that it, too, conducted a voluntary return program. Unfortunately, few people benefited due to their social background in areas of Ard Somal and Bont Land in Somalia.

Most of the Somalis in Yemen are from the South Middle Region. Thus, the UNHCR cannot send them back due to the civil strife.

Furthermore, UNHCR employees and the assessment team located in Sana'a face hindering security restrictions when they try to approach the Red Sea to address the problems faced by the refugees; the coastal area of the Red Sea is a military area that is restricted for civilians.

African refugees are a touchy issue in Yemen. Yemen faces a similar shortage crisis as the crises in countries such as Somalia and Ethiopia, yet it is the only country in the Arabian Peninsula that endorsed the United Nations' 1951 Refugee Convention.

"The United Nations should perform its duty to help Yemen endure the crisis," Al-Hilwa said.



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Private hospitals profit from recommending C-sections at birth



Amira Nasser

A new trend has appeared in the last few years within private hospitals, doctors delivering children through caesarean-sections (C-sections). This procedure is very expensive, and it's becoming a heavy burden for families to bear.

An employee in the information division of a private hospital in Sana'a stated, "Out of all our childbirths, C-sections are used for about 70 to 75 percent of them."

"Sometimes parents celebrate

their child's first birthday while they are still paying off the debt from the C-section," Salwa Sallam, a teacher who works in the University of Sana'a, said.

Some women avoid going to private hospitals when going into labor and attempt to deliver the baby at home simply due to fear of the procedure.

"I prevented my sister from going to a private hospital when she was in labor because I know that doctors would have told her to have a caesarean-section. They would have said it was an emergency" Hamoda, a housewife, said.

In private hospitals, it all comes down to cost. "Is it cheaper for a hospital to wait six or seven hours for a natural birth or to finish everything within thirty minutes with a healthy profit for the hospital?" she said.

"The cost of the procedure is approximately YR 180,000 in a private hospital," Samira Ahmed, a doctor in a private hospital in Taiz, said. "These accusations are an affront to doctors and hospitals. If you compare the rate of infant mortality before using C-sections to the results now, you would see that complications causing the

baby or mother's death, rupture of the uterus, labor obstructions and other types of complications are all clearly reduced by the extensive use of C-sections. Doctors know the circumstances where a C-section is needed, and they're saving lives by using it."

According to the World Health Organization, statistical reports show that Yemen has the highest childbirth mortality rate in the Middle East. Data from 2010 shows that for every 10,000 infant born, there are 43 mortalities.

Public hospitals

The situation is different in public hospitals, where people are usually not being pushed to have a C-section. However, their more pressing fears are that they will receive sub-standard medical care.

"There is an apparent lack of doctors in public hospitals. For instance at night, there might be only four doctors responsible for more than 40 women in labor. Therefore many of the children end up being delivered by nurses," Amani Al shar'abi, a medical trainer in a public hospital, said.

"Sometimes doctors are forced to turn away women in emergency situations because the equipment hasn't been disinfected because of an electricity blackout. Some of these women end up having the baby in the car, on the street, or in the hall while they try to find a hospital that will admit them," she said.

When asked about C-sections in public hospitals, she replied that they're only performed under extreme circumstances and only after a specialist is consulted.

A number of mothers consider the current situation in private hospitals tantamount to extortion, from the first moment of pregnancy until the last minutes of labor.

"When you enter the clinic, you have to pay YR 1,500 for admission, YR 2,500 for the ultrasound, YR 700 to be examined, and if you are in rush, there's an extra YR 1,500 to pay," Sara Karim, an expectant mother, told Yemen Times.

"When you are about to deliver, they tell you that you need a C-section when you really know that it would just take longer to give birth naturally. Then you are forced to pay between YR 150,000 to 200,000. How we can we live after that?" Karim said.

Dr. Samira Ahmed pointed out that a C-section is sometimes necessary in various situations, but she also stated that it is always a choice, and if the family doesn't feel comfortable with it, they can check with other hospitals to be sure.

"In the end, the family makes the decision. It's always their choice."

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

CONSULTANCY SERVICES

DEVELOP AWARENESS STRATEGY ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND AWARENESS RAISING MATERIALS

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Pilot Program for Climate Resilience

CONSULTING SERVICES

Grant No. TF097544

Project ID No. P122687

Expressions of interest

This request for expression of interest follows the General Procurement Notice (GPN) for this project that appeared in dgMarket on 10 November 2010.

Yemen is one of the pilot countries of the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR), under the Strategic Climate Fund (Climate Investment Funds). The PPCR is composed of two phases; phase I of the PPCR will allow the country to develop the Strategic Program for Climate Resilience. This preparatory phase will inform the design and ensure the development of key interventions under Phase II. One of the main activities of Phase I of the PPCR program is to develop awareness climate change strategy and to design and develop awareness materials aiming at enhancing and raising awareness of stakeholders and target groups at different levels in Yemen.

The request for expressions of interest is for consulting services to develop awareness strategy on climate change, to design, develop and produce awareness raising materials, and to conduct activities related to this assignment which include for example consultation meetings, visits and workshops at national and sub-national levels.

The Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) within The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) of the Republic of Yemen now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers (May 2004 Revised October 1, 2006 & May 1, 2010 edition).

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours from 0900 to 1500 hours.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the following address, no later than June 19, 2012.

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Beside Yemen-German Hospital

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Sana'a

Republic of Yemen

Telephone: +967 1429 071

Facsimile: +967 1 413 404

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HEALTH WATCH

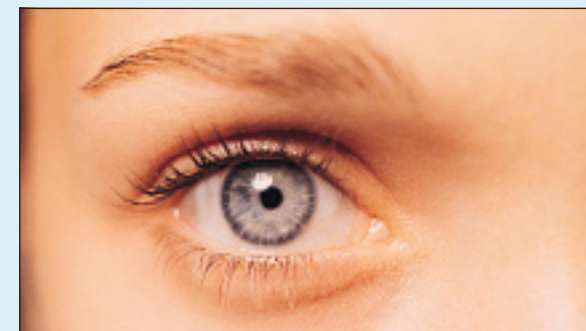
By: Dr. Siva



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.

Nutrition for Healthy Eyes

We all know that if we intend to keep our body in good shape then we have to do some form of physical exercise regularly as well as be careful with what we eat. If we only eat junk food then our bodies, and our health, will seriously suffer. What we tend to forget is that this goes for our eyes as well.



Every aspect of the human body relies on certain nutrients to function properly and to maintain good health, and the eyes are no exception. Good nutrition begins with understanding the vitamins that keep our eyes healthy. Vitamins A, C and E are the primary contributors for healthy eyes. All three assist in the prevention of macular degeneration. Vitamin A prevents night blindness, while Vitamin C acts as the protector of eye health and Vitamin E has been associated with the prevention of cataracts and the delaying of cataract growth. The good news is that all of these wonderful vitamins can be found in food. The following are good sources of healthy vitamins for the eyes:

Carrots: Carrots contain a carotenoid called beta-carotene. Your body converts beta-carotene into Vitamin A which is an antioxidant. Antioxidants such as Vitamin A are essential to eye health.

Sweet Potatoes: Sweet potatoes are a great source of Vitamin A which is essential for healthy eyes.

Fish: Salmon, cod and mackerals (bhaga) contain Omega-3 fatty acids, which are associated with a lower risk of age-related macular degeneration.

Spinach (sabanah): It is real eye-protecting stuff. It has a rich source of Vitamin C, beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin. All these ingredients are very good for healthy eyes and eyesight.

Broccoli: Broccoli is rich in Vitamin C, which is an important antioxidant for the treatment of cataract and macular degeneration.

Almonds: They contain Vitamin E, which helps slow the progress of age-related eye disease and helps prevent cataracts.

Yogurt: It contains zinc, which helps the body absorb antioxidants such as Vitamin A.

Eggs: They contain Vitamin A, which helps the retina to function properly and lessens the risk of age-related macular degeneration and cataracts.

Garlic & Onions: They are rich in sulphur, which is necessary for the production of glutathione, an important antioxidant for the lens of the eye.

Raspberries, Blueberries and Grapes: They contain Vitamin C, which reduces the risk of cataract formation.

Flaxseed oil: It contains Omega-3 fatty acids which are of high importance for healthy vision.

So if you are concerned about maintaining good eye health, think orange and green. By simply adding some color to your diet, you can greatly enhance your sight.

Eye care tips for computer users

The computer age has given us many wonderful things such as online ticketing, information on demand, entertainment as you wish, etc. But, with the dramatic increase in home and office computer use, complaints of eye fatigue and discomfort have also become common.

The interesting thing to point out is that research has established that computer monitors emit little or no hazardous radiation, such as x-ray or ultraviolet rays. So, the fatigue is not directly caused by the exposure to the computer screen but rather by the environment surrounding the computer screen, such as poor illumination or improper positioning of computer equipment and computer furniture. Excessive strain on eyes—Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)—can lead to itchy or burning eyes, blurred or double vision and headaches. All of these symptoms can lead to frustration, increased irritation and an inability to complete work as efficiently as one might without proper eye care.

Fortunately, there are a number of steps that you can take to protect your eyes from the strain and fatigue. Here are a few suggestions:

- Keep the monitor at a distance of 20 to 30 inches, or about an arm's length, from your eyes.
- Place the monitor in such a way that the top of the monitor is at a level slightly below the horizontal eye level.
- Tilt the top of the monitor away from you at a 10- to 20-degree angle to create an optimum viewing angle.
- Change your lighting to lower glare and harsh reflections. You can also use glare filters over your computer screen. A good test is to turn off the monitor and see what is reflected in the screen. Adjust the angle or position of the monitor to have no competing light or reflections.
- The background wall or structure behind the monitor should not be too loud or shiny as it will distract you and cause more strain trying to focus on the screen.
- Adjust the brightness to have a good contrast between letters and background. Replace the monitor if you notice any flickering.
- Keep the monitor screen clean from dust and finger prints.
- Preference an LCD over a CRT monitor as LCD screens are easier on the eyes and usually have an anti-reflective surface.
- If you spend long hours entering data or reading long documents, try using a larger monitor so you can see the print on your computer screen better. You can also try increasing the font size to reduce eye strain.
- Use a proper adjustable chair to fine tune your eye level with the screen.
- Visit your ophthalmologist every year, especially if you are more than forty years old.

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Battle for “hearts and minds” as Yemen crisis deepens

IRIN

The conflict between Yemeni government forces and the militant Ansar Al-Shariah group in southern Yemen has worsened the humanitarian crisis in a country where nearly half of the population is facing food insecurity and almost one million children are acutely malnourished.

On 21 May, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported that it had “treated over 50 people over the last week amidst increased violence and fighting in southern Yemen,” noting that “all patients are civilians suffering from bomb-blast injuries.” In Lawder, in the southern governorate of Abyan, MSF staff “have been unable to refer patients to other health facilities as road blockages have made travel impossible.”

The conflict started in May 2011 when militants stormed Abyan’s capital, Zinjibar, about 30km from Aden. A pitched battle raged throughout the summer before demoralized Yemeni ground troops retreated, leaving the fight to Yemeni warplanes and US drones.

By the time jihadists had overrun Zinjibar in late summer, tens of thousands in Abyan had fled their homes, further destabilizing surrounding areas and raising fears that Aden, the country’s biggest port, could be Ansar al-Shariah’s next target.

To date, more than 150,000 Abyan residents have been displaced, according to Teddy Leposky, a spokesman for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) sub-office in Aden. “About two-thirds of these internally displaced persons [IDPs] have fled to neighbouring Aden,” he told IRIN.

On the cusp of an all-out military offensive in Abyan by US-backed Yemeni ground troops and warplanes, the UN’s April Humanitarian Bulletin said “74 schools [in Aden] are fully occupied by IDPs [and] public services have already reached the point of collapse.”

Now in its third week, a government military campaign is reported to have taken back Zinjibar and Lawder, a militant bastion on Abyan’s eastern fringe. But the fighting has only worsened already dire humanitarian conditions. Only a handful of relief groups—the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Organization for Migration, MSF and local NGO Charitable Society for Social Welfare—have been given sufficient security assurances to work in the warring province.

“The militants have made clear that international aid workers are not welcome in cities like Jaar,” Abdul-Hakeem Al-Ofairi, deputy director of Partners-Yemen in Sana’a, told IRIN. The militant group, he added, may feel threatened by the relief workers, as “their work in those areas undermines Ansar Al-Shariah’s efforts to gain the trust of the people because the international aid is directly related to the needs of the people... It touches their hearts and minds,” he said.

The conflict has intensified at a time when the humanitarian crisis in Yemen has worsened.

“New assessments this year document that conditions continue to deteriorate,” the UN humanitarian coordinator in Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, told a meeting of Friends of Yemen in Riyadh last week.

“Increasing food insecurity is one challenge, rapidly increasing mal-

nutrition is another. A breakdown in health, water and sanitation services is a third; new flows of internally displaced people is a fourth.”

According to the Danish Refugee Council, the country is on the brink of a large-scale food crisis. “Armed conflict and widespread instability has led to a massive need for food aid in Yemen,” it warned on 23 May. “Nearly every second person in Yemen is now estimated to be affected by the lack of access to food - with 10 million Yemenis undernourished and half of them in need of emergency assistance for their survival.”

Ansar Al-Shariah

The roots of the insurgency can be traced back to April 2011. Three months after anti-government protests engulfed Yemen’s major cities and three weeks after Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) seized the southern hamlet of Jaar, AQAP’s chief Yemeni cleric, Abu Zubayr Adil Al-Abab, unveiled a new brand of jihad.

“Ansar al-Shariah [Partisans of Islamic Law] is what we use to introduce ourselves in areas where we work to tell people about our work and goals, and that we are on the path of Allah,” he said to a roomful of brothers in a jihad web forum.

“We have moved our work from the elitist work to the populist,” he said. “The largest problem that we face here is the lack of public services such as sewage and water, and we are trying to find solutions.”

The mutinous year since the cleric’s cyber sermon, the AQAP-affiliated Ansar Al-Shariah has made inroads into numerous towns near Jaar, staking claim to much of the governorate of Abyan, where tribes

Photo by Shafiq Jamal



More than 150,000 Abyan residents have been displaced to Aden and Lahj because of the fierce ongoing battles between Al-Qaeda militants and the army in Abyan.

and central government are exceptionally weak.

Yemen’s new president, Abd Rabu Mansur Hadi, has faced security threats from the new Al-Qaeda affiliate as well. An hour before his 25 February inauguration ceremony, suspected Ansar Al-Shariah militants detonated a car bomb outside the presidential palace in southern Yemen, killing some 21 Revolutionary Guard soldiers and injuring nine others.

Later that day, Hadi pledged “unwavering resolve to keep the fight against Al-Qaeda,” vowing that his administration would “chase them to every cache until they are eradicated, no matter what the cost is going to be.”

He followed through on the pledge beginning early May by deploying some 25,000 troops from eight brigades to Abyan. At the same time, US air strikes carried out by conventional forces and unmanned aerial vehicles have reached their highest levels ever in Yemen.

Suicide bombs

In response to the strikes, Ansar Al-Shariah deployed a suicide bomber to a large military gathering in the capital Sana’a on the eve of National Unity Day. At the conclusion of morning parade rehearsals on 21 May, while the young cadets were saluting their officers, the bomber infiltrated their ranks and detonated his explosives.

The blast killed at least 90 soldiers and wounded more than 200, dealing a devastating blow to Hadi’s bid to eradicate Al-Qaeda from Yemen. On its official Facebook page, Ansar Al-Shariah claimed the attack, citing “retaliation” against “crimes” committed in Abyan over preceding weeks.

During IRIN’s March reporting trip to Jaar, it appeared that Ansar Al-Shariah had accomplished some of the Al-Qaeda cleric’s populist-oriented goals. Many residents claimed that their “new government” had provided access to a steady supply of food, water and electricity. There are even reports

that the group has sent Shariah legal scholars to rural courts backlogged with cases.

This air of gratitude suggests that the new governors may be making headway towards another goal set out in Abab’s springtime talk: “We hope that when the people see us meet their demands, they will accept the methodology of the mujahideen and accept the implementation of Shariah,” he said.

But the paradox of Ansar Al-Shariah’s two-pronged strategy—cozying up to local populations through the provision of public services while recruiting some of them to fight—is that winning the hearts and minds of locals requires putting them at risk of military bombardment.

Nasser Arabyaee, a political analyst in Sana’a, told IRIN: “The most important factor in south Yemen’s spreading war is not how many Al-Qaeda operatives are there, but how many sympathizers are there. The most dangerous thing in Yemen is the sympathizers.”



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٠١/٤٢٧٩٩٣	الشركة اليمنية الإسلامية للتأمين
٠١/٣١٢٤٠٠	شركة أمان
٠١/٤٤٥٩٧٠	الجزيرة للتأمين وإعادة التأمين
٠١/٥٠٦٥٧٤	مدرسة روضة واحة الأطفال
٠١/٥٠٦٠٣١	مدرسة رينبو
٠١/٤٤١٠٤١	مدارس صنعاء الدولية
٠١/٤٤١٠٤١	مدرسة التريكة الدولية
٠١/٤٤١٠٤١	مدرسة منارات

فنادق

٠١/٢٤٦٩٦٧-٦٦	فندق ميركوبور صنعاء
٠٢/٢٢٨٦٦٦	عدن
٠١/٤١٨٥٤٥/٧	صنعاء
٠١/٥٤٦٦٦٦	فندق شمير
٠١/٥٤٦٦٦٦	فندق موفمبيك
٠١/٥٤٦٦٦٦	فندق لازوردي
٠١/٤٣٢٠٢/٣٠/٤٠	فندق تاج صيدة زردينيس
٠١/٤٣٢٠٢/٣٠/٤٠	العالمية للفندق - صنعاء
٠١/٤٣٢٠٢/٣٠/٤٠	فندق شهران - صنعاء

تأجير سيارات

٠١/٥٠٦٣٣٣	زاوية (Budget)
٠١/٢٤٠٩٥٨٠	فرع شيرتون
٠١/٢٧٠٧٥١	فرع عدن
٠١/٥٥٩٨٥٥	فرع شيرتون
٠١/٥٨٩٥٥٥	فرع عدن

الوزارات

٠١/٢٩٠٢٠٠	رئاسة الجمهورية
٠١/٤٩٠٨٠٠	رئاسة الوزراء
٠١/٥٥١٣٣٣	وزارة الأشغال العامة والطرق
٠١/٢٧٤٤٣٩	وزارة الإوقاف والأرشاد
٠١/٥٣٥٠٢١	وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
٠١/٢٦٨٥٨٣	وزارة القوة السمكية
٠١/٢٧٤٤٦٠	وزارة الثقافة
٠١/٢٩٤٥٧٩	وزارة الخدمة المدنية والتأمينات
٠١/٢٧٦٤٠٤	وزارة الدفاع
٠١/٢٨٢٩٦٣	وزارة الزراعة والري
٠١/٢٦٢٨٠٩	وزارة الشؤون الاجتماعية والعمل
٠١/٤٠٢٢١٣	وزارة الشؤون القانونية
٠١/٢٥٢٢١١	وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان
٠١/٤٧٢٩١٣	وزارة الشباب والرياضة
٠١/٢٣٥٤٦٣	وزارة الصناعة والتجارة
٠١/٢٣٥١٢٢	وزارة العدل
٠١/٢٢٠٠٥٠	وزارة السياحة
٠١/٤٠٢٣٥٤	وزارة المغربيين
٠١/٢٠٢٣٠٩١٠	وزارة النفط والمعادن
٠١/٢٨٩٥٧٧	وزارة شؤون الداخلية
٠١/٢٦٠٩٠٣	وزارة النقل
٠١/٤٤٤٤٣١	وزارة حقوق الانسان
٠١/٣٣١٤٦٠	وزارة الاتصالات وتقنية المعلومات
٠١/٢٢٧٢٤٢	وزارة الادارة المحلية
٠١/٢٧٤٠٠٨	وزارة الاعلام
٠١/٢٥٠١٠١	وزارة التخطيط والتعاون الدولي
٠١/٢٣٧٢٣٢	وزارة التربية والتعليم
٠١/٥٣٧٩١٤	وزارة الخارجية
٠١/٣٢٢٧٠١	وزارة الداخلية

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Coffee Break

Sudoku Easy

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

Sudoku Intermediate

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

Sudoku Difficult

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

Chess

Black plays and wins in the 3rd move

Solutions

Chess: Rxh2+

Yemeni Messi victim of political clashes

Ashraf Al-Muraqab

Malek Al-Shuaibi, 10, a promising young Yemeni footballer who was branded "Messi of the Arab World" at the 20th Gulf Football Championship hosted in November 2010 in Aden, is facing an uncertain future due to Yemen's political crisis.

Al-Shuaibi is still awaiting an opportunity to fly to Spain to improve his football skills after Moamar Al-Eryani, the Yemeni Minister of Youth and Sport, pledged to facilitate the trip.

Al-Shuaibi's father said the care and attention of Minister Al-Eryani boosted the morale of all members of the family.

But after losing their home during last year's clashes that broke out in Al-Hasaba area, the Al-Shuaibi family has been forced to leave Sana'a, moving to the country-



Malek Al-Shuaibi, 10, showed extraordinary football skills during the 20th Gulf Football Championship.



Al-Shuaibi is still awaiting an opportunity to fly to Spain to improve his football skills.

side in Dhale'a.

A representative of the family told the Yemen Times that a thief recently broke into their house and stole all the furniture purchased with

the money Al-Shuaibi received as a reward for his participation in the inauguration ceremony of the 2010 Gulf Championship.

During the tournament, millions in Yemen and from around the Arab world watched in awe as Al-Shuaibi displayed his natural gifts on the field.

At that time, Al-Shuaibi was very happy with the media attention lavished on him. Journalists revealed his talent to people worldwide and sports analysts predicted a bright future for him.

Presidential orders were even issued at the tournament to take Al-Shuaibi to Spain to join a club in FC Barcelona to improve his skills and fulfill his ambition to be a famous footballer like Lionel Messi, an FC Barcelona player in Spain.

Soon after the Gulf Championship, however, political clashes erupted across Yemen, upending the central government and sidelining government promises to Al-Shuaibi.

Now, while transitional government is tackling a host of new and urgent crises, the "Messi of the Arab World" continues to wait for his opportunity to represent Yemen on the world stage.

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