

## Women to make up 30 percent of NDC

**Mohammed Al-Samei**

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — The Preparatory Committee of the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) said the majority of tasks have been finalized, and there will be 565 participants representing different factions in the country, of which 30 percent will be women.

In a press conference Saturday, the committee announced it would finish its work by the end of November.

The committee refuted rumors about the deferral of the NDC, explaining a report would be submitted to President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, who will determine the conference dates.

Dr. Abdulkareem Al-Eryani, the committee head, said the security situation is not an obstacle in going forward with the conference, as participants can go to their governorates and meet with political powers to discuss issues.

Al-Eryani said the integration of the army is a fundamental step at present and the "technical busi-

ness" could take years to complete.

The committee also said there continues to be international and local efforts to convince Southern Movement factions to partake in the dialogue. It was asserted that the dialogue has no conditions or ceiling.

Political Researcher Thabet Al-Ahmadi said to Yemen Times that

the NDC would most likely go forward on time, though the South's reactions are mixed. He affirmed the dialogue is the sole way to help resolve the Southern issue.

Sultan Al-Atwani, the deputy head of the Technical Committee, said Hiraq—or the Southern Movement—is not representative of the South in its entirety.

"It is for the good of the country that all groups participate in the dialogue and discuss all national issues in a comprehensive national

dialogue," he said.

Al-Atwani said everything will go in line with a national orientation to find innovative solutions that help realize security, stability and the building of Yemen into a modern civil state.

Commenting on Al-Atwani's statement, Abdu Al-Ma'atar, the Spokesperson of the Southern Movement, said a dialogue without the participation of the South will be just ink on paper and, futile amounting to little more than a farce.

## Yemenis march in solidarity with Gaza

**Story and photo by Samar Qaed**

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — Hundreds of Yemenis in Sana'a held a demonstration Sunday to affirm their solidarity with those under siege in the Gaza strip.

As the Israeli offensive in Gaza intensifies into its fifth day, a spokesman for the Ministry of Health said the death toll has risen to 52, with more than 560 people injured.

After beginning in Change Square, the demonstration marched to the local Hamas' office—an Islamic resistance movement—in Haseba district.

Protestor Abdul-Rahman Al-Bahri called on Arab leaders to support Gaza and to make tough decisions to prevent Israel from carrying out crimes against Palestinian civilians.

"Israel has initiated brutal aggression against the Palestinians," he said. "This country only uses lethal and hateful language. They don't care about innocent people or international human rights' conventions and humanitarian expectations."

Abir Al-Sa'adi, another demonstrator, said a policy of war will not help

peace process in the Middle East and will not contribute to achieving democratic goals in the area.

"This war again demonstrates the Palestinian greatness and their stubborn resistance against their enemy," she said.

For his part, Manea Al-Matari, a member of the Organizing Youth Revolution Committee, said Israel renewed its attacks on Gaza under feeble pretexts.

"These attacks confirm that Israel pursues aggressive policy against Palestinians and Arabs in general," he said.

He added, "It (Israel) insists on impeding the process towards peace and the establishment of Palestinian state."

Israel contends that the attack is in response to a major increase in the number of rockets being launched into Israeli airspace since the assassination by Israel of Ahmed Al-Jabari, the military leader of Hamas controlled Gaza on Wednesday. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that they are prepared to intensify their military operation against Palestinian militants in Gaza.



A demonstrator, fist clenched, marches through the Sana'a streets in support of Gaza strip residents.

## Unidentified men kill soldier in Sana'a

**Ahmed Dawood**

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — Khaldoon Yahya Bin Malik, a Yemeni soldier,

was shot Sunday by unidentified men who fled the scene. Bin Malik later died.

According to the Defense Minis-

try's website, unknown men fired at the soldier, a member of the Central Security Forces, as he departed his home in the Al-Qa'a neighborhood of Sana'a.

The website said the injury was serious, and he was immediately hospitalized in Al-Jamhori in intensive care, where he later died.

Mohammed Al-Shami, a resident in Al-Qa'a neighborhood, said the bullet hit the soldier's head, and he passed away 30 minutes after arriving at the hospital. He said the soldier was a son of a social digni-

tary in the neighborhood.

Al-Shami also said a forensic team quickly arrived at the scene of the shooting and commenced investigating.

This past year, unidentified men, often operating with motorbikes, have targeted a number of military and security officers. Numerous statements by security apparatuses accuse Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula of engineering such attacks, particularly after being pushed out from Abyan by Yemeni military in June.

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# Qat use by government officials under siege

Story and photos by  
Nadia Haddash

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — The Iradat Watan Bila Qat (Will of a Nation without Qat) Association, in co-operation with several other qat-free campaigns, organized a protest in front of the Parliament on Sunday to show support for the passage of a law that would ban qat chewing during working hours in government facilities.

Many youth activists participated in the protest, calling on Parliament to adopt the law that they say would lead to more efficient use of time by government employees and set a good example for Yemeni citizens.

Hind Al-Eryani, an activist and anti-qat campaigner, said, "We don't demand banning qat everywhere, just in government

institutions. This campaign is the first step towards gradual, positive change. Yemenis usually tend to accept gradual change."

"We are here to prove that our campaign won't stop until a law that bans qat in government institutions is implemented. We started from scratch and had no one to support us, but now multiple bodies and youth institutions support us. We are sure that Parliament knows it is time to pass the law," she added.

Abdulwasea' Hail Saeed, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Yemen without Qat Association, calls qat a waste of time, money and underground water.

He says the money squandered each day on qat could be used to establish a factory that employs 500 people.



If passed, the law would prohibit government officials from chewing qat during working hours.



Qat use is often defended by proponents using cultural justifications.



Young women have been particularly active in the campaign against qat.

## Family businesses seen as way to improve economy

Samar Qaed

SANA'A, Nov. 17 — The Yemeni Businessmen Club, with the backing of several major Yemeni and Gulf corporations concluded the Third Family Business Conference on Sunday. The event was held to shed light on the role of family businesses in improving economies in Arab countries.

The conference was held over a two day period, with around 250 participants. Conference contributors included: local, regional and international economists; businessmen; members of prominent business families and specialists from multinational corporations.

Fathi Abdulwasea' Hael Saeed, head of the Yemeni Businessmen Club, said family businesses are fundamental not only for economic development, but also for the successful transfer of skills from one generation to the next.

The conference highlighted organizational and behavioral founda-

tions necessary to make family businesses successful. Challenges relevant to restructuring and reorganizing administrations were also discussed.

In the conference's opening speech, Yemen's Prime Minister Mohammed Salem Basindawa, asserted the importance of creating business agreements that guarantee establishments' inheritance by the next generation. He said this ensures stability and continuity and avoids conflicts that often arise when there is no clear agreement.

"We are aware of the economic impact and the negative effects of these disputes and so we attempt help them as soon as they arise," he said.

For his part, Mohammed Abdu Saeed Ana'am, head of the General Union of the Commerce and Industry Chambers, called on the state to fulfil its duty to assist family businesses and help them grow to provide more work opportunities in the country.

## Students denied university exams



Parallel system students refuse to pay fees that they claim are put to poor use by the university's administration.

Story and photos by  
Ashraf Al-Muraqab

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — The first day of exams have been canceled as protests against the parallel policy continued Saturday and Sunday, with hundreds of students at Sana'a University's College of Mass Communication demonstrating in front of the dean's office.

These latest demonstrations

follow more than two weeks of uproar about the practice, which allows for the admittance of students with lower than acceptable grades at the university on the condition that they will study—often at a high cost—with private instructors until graduation.

The students accuse the college's administration of refusing a decree by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi that calls for a 50 percent cut in fees for parallel

system students.

Salah Al-Janadi, an organizer of the protests, said protests will continue until the administration does away with what he calls "unjust fees" and guarantees free education for all. Students argue that the supposed benefit of the fees — generating income for the university — is squandered by the administration and not reinvested into improving the school.

Anger over the contentious

practice reached a boiling point when the University Presidency office recently issued a general notice to all colleges in the university stating that parallel system students with outstanding fees should not be allowed to take exams.

Last week, Radwan Masood, the head of the Preparatory Committee for electing a new union head at Sana'a University, called on students to stop paying fees under the name of the parallel system.

Now, parallel system students have refused to pay the tuition fees, and the college administration has acted on their notice and prohibited the students from taking required exams, according to Dean Abdu Rahman Al-Shami.

Mansour Al-Muntasir, a teaching assistant at the College of Mass Communication, said a group of students broke into examination halls, destroying test papers and forcing General System students out of their classrooms.

Al-Shami said college administration attempted to facilitate the process of paying by means of installments, "yet the students resorted to chaos."

"As a result, the college administration found it compulsory to suspend the examinations until the problem is resolved," he said.

The Students' Union at Sana'a University, which supports free education for all students, has stated that a peaceful struggle will persist until demands are met.

## Human rights groups call for the protection of marginalized communities

Amira Nasser

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — Human rights and anti-discrimination organizations have condemned the repeated killing of people from marginalized communities, calling on security forces to bring perpetrators of such crimes to trial.

Last Monday, a retired 50-year-old soldier in Hajja killed one person and wounded three others from the same family after the victim's donkey entered the ex-soldier's farm. The victims were from marginalized communities, Mojahed Al-Hazzora, the Security Manager in Shares District, said.

Hadi Wardan, a member of the local council in Shares District and a lawyer who has followed the case, said the defendant, Mohammed Hayes Tvian, entered the victim's house at noon and shot more than 15 bullets. He went on to repeatedly hit the victim with his jambiya, leading to his death. The victim's brother was injured by a bullet and is currently in Sana'a seeking medical treatment.

He then threw a hand grenade into the victim's house, injuring three people, Wardan said.

Several youth in the village caught the accused and handed him over to authorities.

On Saturday, Sana'a Organization for anti-discrimination con-

demned the 'repeated targeting' of marginalized people, calling for an end to social discrimination of specific groups.

The organization said it has monitored similar attacks in different areas.

Khalid Al-Mahdli, a 30-year-old resident in the village, said the accused is the only one who annoys people. He noted that it is not the first time that he has had problems with the village residents.

"Tvian believes that we are insects, and we have no right to defend ourselves" he said.

Al-Hazzora, said that Tvian was held in the central prison in Hajja, and the case will transfer to prosecution services.

People from marginalized community repeatedly complain about the discrimination they receive from other people, especially those who are influential.

Mohammed Rashed, one of the marginalized people in the Hasaba area of Sana'a, told the Yemen Times that one member of a marginalized community was murdered on Friday by armed groups. "We tried in vain to bring the murderer to justice."

He added, "Our people have always been killed and attacked and nobody care about them or defend them."

# Yemeni businesswomen guide next generation



Workshop attendees receive advice from women who have already made great strides in breaking down gender barriers.

Story and photo by  
Nadia Haddash

The Mini Microfinance Projects Development Agency held a four-day workshop last week that partnered experienced Yemeni businesswomen with budding apprentices. A total of 23 participants took part in the event that discussed the trials and tribulations of working as a female in the business field.

Participants were offered advice on how to open their own company, expand their business or overcome negative societal attitudes towards women in business.

**“The state doesn't encourage internal investment. It always complicates procedures, particularly if it is a female owned project.”**

“I want to know what is new in my [business] surroundings particularly if I am going to open my own foundation dedicated to caring for animals. This workshop helped me,” said Amira Abdulbari, an advisor at the Agricultural Animal Botanical Development Foundation. “My participation allowed me to benefit [from] and exchange exist-

ing project experience.”

Dr. Hwaida Haider, a gynecologist, also said she benefited from the workshop's guidance. It helped her determine how to improve her small business.

“I want to develop my project and make my clinic larger. However, a big problem is the narrow space in which I am working. The contents of the feasibility study [that was presented at the workshop], highlights the importance of choosing a business's location strategically.”

Hania Rajeh, a workshop participant who has been dabbling in many small business projects since 2006 said the workshop was a nice refresher course for her.

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# Southern leaders - a stumbling block for NDC

Ahmed Dawood

So far, one of the major challenges facing the National Dialogue Conference (NDC), scheduled to begin later this month, is the boycott of Southern Movement factions.

Although President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and U.N. Special Envoy to Yemen Jamal Benomar have both been exerting extensive efforts to persuade the Southern factions to participate in the NDC, the positive indicators of Southern involvement in the dialogue remain nonexistent.

The Southern Movement is diverse in viewpoints because the movement includes multiple factions, commonly referred to by the names of their leaders.

Former president of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) Ali Salem Al-Beidh leads a hard-line faction.

Al-Beidh signed the unity agreement with former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh on May 22, 1990, thus unifying North and South Yemen. However, a war between the two halves of the country broke out in 1994. The battle ended up in the victory of Saleh and the departure of Al-Beidh to Oman.

Today Al-Beidh is still calling for a separation of the South from the North. Al-Beidh has said the NDC will be futile unless it discusses secession.

The second faction is led by former Southern President Ali Nasser Mohammed and the unity govern-

ment's former Prime Minister Abu Bakr Al-Atas. This faction doesn't openly call for secession. However, they assert the importance of addressing the Southern issue head on and completely solving it, in addition to reviewing the shape of the state. The faction is a proponent of federalism.

Both Al-Beidh and Mohammed currently reside overseas.

Furthermore, there is still a third faction represented by Hassan Baom, who was subjected to many detentions that led to the deterioration of his health. Baom demands secession as well.

### Extensive efforts

On Friday, Benomar held a meeting in Cairo with Southern Movement leaders including Mohammed and Al-Atas. Al-Beidh did not attend.

In the meeting, Benomar urged the faction leaders to take part in the dialogue. On Tuesday, Al-Atas said in a statement to the Seventh Day Egyptian newspaper that the bulk of the Southern Movement faction representatives in Egypt refused to participate in the dialogue. Al-Atas said to the newspaper that the majority of the factions have demands that Yemeni leadership should seriously take into account if they want Southerners to participate in the dialogue. Among these demands, according to Al-Atas, is the right to self-determination and that the dialogue should be held between the North and South but held outside Yemen under international patronage.

Abdul Hakim Helal, the managing editor of Al-Masdar newspa-

per, said what leaders proposed in Egypt is in line with previous conditions. He said the conditions of the NDC include no preconditions.

Helal told the Yemen Times that huge complications with regard to the Southern issue might postpone the NDC.

He said it's possible to start dialogue without the participation of the Southern Movement. At the same time, the conference must be held as soon as possible before the end of the year, based on the stipulations of the Gulf Initiative.

He said strong efforts are being made to persuade leaders of the Southern Movement who reside in Yemen to take part in the conference in case the major opposition leaders don't participate. However, according to Helal, this plan won't succeed because the dialogue won't achieve the sought-after success if influential Southern leaders don't attend.

Thabit Al-Ahmadi, a columnist and a political researcher, said there are indicators for the success of the upcoming NDC, regardless of the obstacles made by some political bodies.

On Tuesday, Al-Ahmadi told Yemen Times Radio that Benomar's meeting with Southern leaders in Cairo is an indicator of the success of the conference.

“The majority of Southerners support unity, and the popularity of those who call for secession isn't large in the South,” Al-Ahmadi said.

He also said former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Al-Beidh are responsible for the current,

turbulent situation in Yemen.

### A final attempt

Following the meeting that took place in Cairo between Benomar and Southern leaders, Hadi immediately left Yemen for the Gulf region, with scheduled trips to meet with leadership in Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Some political analysts said Hadi's visit aims to gain the support of these countries to put pressure on Southern leaders to participate in the dialogue, because of their

strong ties with them.

Hafed Al-Bukari, a political analyst, said Hadi's visit to these countries has two aims. The first is to guarantee these countries will continue their financial and political support for Yemen, as they are the main brokers of the Gulf Initiative. The second is to persuade GCC countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, to influence decision makers, particularly in south Yemen.

“If the matter is tackled seri-

ously, the Gulf countries will be more able to persuade the Southern leaders to take part in the NDC and guarantee that the Southern issue will be dealt with seriously,” Al-Bukari said.

Hadi appears determined to make the conference successful.

“All count on the outcome of the NDC, because it will specify the future, will instill security and stability in Yemen, will reassert the unity and will help build the new Yemen,” Hadi said.



## Invitation for Expression of Interest

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# Choosing neighborhood leaders a controversial practice

Amira Nasser

**S**ocial leaders work throughout almost all neighborhoods in Yemen. They play a crucial role in representing residents regarding a range of issues, from renewing ID cards to solving minor neighborhood disputes or taking serious issues to the police.

But the process of selecting a social leader—a neighborhood representative—remains hazy. Often, the son of a social leader is the automatic heir to the position, which raises questions about nepotism and leadership rights.

Soltan Al-Mohsenni, 32, asked how the son of the social leader inherits his father's position after his death. He said the selection process should be more transparent and based on merit not genetics.

"How is it that the son of a social leader goes on to become a social leader himself?" He asked. "We want to understand what the selection procedure is."

Khalid Al-Dhobaibi, 25, said that the social leader of his neighborhood has stayed the same, with his son filling in when he is sick.

"Even the president has changed his position, but only death changes neighborhood social leaders," Al-Dhobaibi said.

## How to choose a social leader

Omar Al-Akwa'a, the General Manager of Neighborhood Affairs in Sana'a, said potential candidates are chosen based on a vote by neighborhood residents. The neighborhood boundaries are defined within specific areas known to both residents and to the Secretary of the Capital, Abdulqader Helal.

To progress in the application process, potential social leaders should gain votes from at least 50 percent of the neighborhood residents and the acceptance of the neighborhood sheikh.

From here, the procedure moves from the neighborhood to the local council, where successful candidates submit a request to be chosen as the social leader of his area. In the local council, a committee chooses potential candidates, who are then forwarded to a further committee consisting of the First Deputy of the Capital's Secretary and the General Manager of Neighborhood Affairs.

## Social leader requirements

Ali Naji Al-Sallami, a social leader in Al-Hossaini neighborhood, Khawlan Street, said potential candidates should own and not rent a house in the neighborhood, be able to read and write and have

a good reputation among people in the neighborhood.

If the candidate has a pending criminal case, then they are immediately disqualified.

Social leaders are removed if they misbehave or if they have an accident that prevents them from fulfilling their duties. If the social leader leaves the neighborhood they also forfeit their position.

Al-Akwa'a said that when a social leader dies, the role should become open to new candidates.

Speaking on how social leaders change, Araf Al-Botairi, a social leader from Al-Qadessia neighborhood in Al-Sabeen said proof needs to be provided that they are incapable of continuing their job or have been involved in criminal activity.

He said the most important thing in choosing the social leader is his dedication to serving the residents. He said there is no problem in selecting the son of a social leader to take the place of his father if there is acceptance from the residents of the neighborhood and he fulfills all the requirements that the position demands.



Children play as a resident walks down an alleyway in the old city in Sana'a, an area where the role of social leaders is crucial for social cohesion and development

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# Malaysian universities fed up – Yemeni government fails to pay students' fees

Mohammed Al-Samei

It has been nearly two weeks since Yemeni students began a sit-in outside the Yemeni embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and there seems to be little head way between the protestors and their government representatives. The frustrated protestors are angry because the Higher Education Ministry has not paid their promised tuition fees for three years at Malaysian universities they attend, prompting the universities to not allow the students to attend classes.

"We are deprived of study to date. The students should receive funds from the government instead of relying on cultural exchange [programs] because there is no cultural exchange [option] between Yemen and Malaysia," said Mohammed Abdu Al-Fatah Al-Samei, a spokesperson for the students.

"On the fourth day of the sit-in, the Minister of Higher Education issued a decision ordering the ministry to pay the university fees for the students at the Malaysian universities. However, the orders have not been enforced so far. The Minister of Higher Education and the

**“**  
*We have lost our classes and our hope for the future. What we were aspiring towards has been devastated.*

Minister of Finance met with one another regarding this matter. The latter agreed to supply the money to the Ministry of Higher Education, yet the employees of the ministries neglected this and intentionally put aside our issue," he added.

Al-Samei explained that this has been a long running problem that dates back to the former regime's Minister of Higher Education, Saleh Basara. Three years ago, the students were sent to Malaysia under the pretense that they were



Outside the Yemen embassy in Kuala Lumpur, students congregate to await word on whether the Yemeni government will pay their student fees.



Students, who can no longer attend classes in Malaysia, have gained support in Yemen by posting information and pictures on social networking sites like facebook.

participating in a funded exchange program. However, Al-Samei says that no such program exists and the Malaysian universities were allowing students to attend classes on the word of the Yemeni government that fees would be paid. Recently, the universities' patience ran out and they discontinued allowing the Yemeni students to attend classes.

Mohammed Al-Yafeai, a student protestor said the universities began threatening to cut students off about six months ago, at which point nervous scholars staged an initial sit-in. Al-Yafeai says they met with the cultural attaché in hopes of finding a solution.

"We thought our attaché and ministries would take action about our situation, but there was no re-

**“**  
*Hey officials in the country, you have made our present painful so don't kill our future.*

sult," he said. "There were no tangible solutions or a ray of hope."

"Now we are on the 14th day of our sit-in," Al-Yafeai said. "We have lost our classes and our hope for the future. What we were aspiring towards has been devastated."

A number of revolutionary youth have expressed sympathy towards the Yemeni students in Malaysia through publications on social media networks.

One such supporter is Husam Al-Deen Al-Samari. He said in a facebook post, "Hey officials in the country, you have made our present painful so don't kill our future."

The Yemen Times attempted to contact the Minister of Higher Education, but phone calls were not returned by press time.

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# US-Yemeni terror obsession will not solve Yemen's woes

Ibrahim Sharqieh  
Thenational.ae  
First published Nov. 13

Among the world leaders who congratulated President Barack Obama for winning a second term last week was the Yemeni president, Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi. From the Yemeni leader's point of view, the most important aspect of Mr. Obama's reelection is perhaps the issue of the continuation of a U.S.-Yemeni war on terrorism.

In the congratulatory cable, President Hadi "reiterated that the Yemeni-American partnership will continue to advance and the cooperation in the fight against terrorism will progress". Mr. Hadi praised his American counterpart's "achievements in curtailing the threat of terrorism and highlighted the linkage between global interests with the performance of the U.S. administration". No other Yemeni subjects were raised in the cable.

The prominence given to antiterrorism efforts in the U.S.-Yemeni relationship recalls the days of the old regime. Under Ali Abdullah Saleh, there was consistent controversy about whether the former president was sincere in his fight against Al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP), or was just manipulating the cause to secure more military aid and support to his regime.

This is not to suggest in any way that Mr. Hadi is manipulating the security cause, but to mention "terrorism" twice in a short note of congratulation raises questions about Mr Hadi's approach to the challenges facing Yemen and his

strategies for moving the country forward.

Mr. Hadi's appetite for tighter collaboration on security and antiterrorism seems to be motivated by his successes in the Abyan province, where AQAP militants have been driven out of several cities they'd controlled during the uprising against Mr Saleh (including Lawdar, Ja'ar, Zinjibar and Shaqra).

AQAP moved into the remote province during the uprising in Sana'a, taking advantage of a collapse of security beyond the capital. Then, for probably the first time in its history (it was formed in 2009), AQAP abandoned its traditionally secretive approach and expanded into civil governance in Abyan. AQAP controlled police stations, regulated traffic and solved local disputes. A collaboration of Yemeni boots on the ground, along with American drones overhead, led to the decisive collapse of this experiment in AQAP governance.

It also brought promises of even more antiterrorism funding from the U.S. The Washington Post reported in July that to consolidate this U.S.-Yemeni security collaboration, "the U.S. military is preparing to give more than \$100 million in counterterrorism and security aid to [Yemen] this year".

Before President Hadi reiterates his commitment to taking security collaboration to the next level, he, along with the U.S., should be assessing to what extent the collaborated effort has indeed been successful.

First of all, the collapse of AQAP governance in Abyan does not weaken the organisation in terms of its ability to attack. It only returns the organisation to its previous state, as a clandestine group

that plans and hits selected targets, either in Yemen or abroad. Governance has never been part of organisation's mandate. Renouncing its hold on Abyan may actually even end up strengthening AQAP, as it relieves the group from the burden of governance.

Furthermore, the Yemeni army did not provide the full protection needed after the fighting and left the local tribes who fought as part of the alliance with the U.S. military vulnerable, in particular to retaliatory attacks from AQAP. In fact, AQAP responded in August with a suicide bombing that targeted a funeral in the city of Ja'ar, killing 45 people.

If the Yemeni-American security alliance does not address the needs of the local tribes, it is unlikely they will be around when the next fighting begins. In other words, providing security and maintaining order takes more than just drone attacks with no strings attached.

In north-west Pakistan, the same model has led to the alienation of local communities and turned them to easy recruiting targets for Al-Qaeda. In Yemen, an estimated 200,000 people displaced by the fighting are still unable to return to their homes.

President Hadi's emphasis on "the Yemeni-American partnership in the fight against terrorism" should deal with the root causes of the problem rather than treating it merely as a matter of military aid and arms. That is the failed model that his predecessor used for years.

At the top of the list of root causes for the spread of terrorism is poverty. The U.N. World Food Programme reports that food insecurity in Yemen had doubled in the last

two years, leaving approximately 45 percent of the population short of food. An estimated 300,000 children are facing malnutrition, while unemployment exceeds 46 percent.

Equally important are the challenges facing President Hadi on the political front. The political settlement - or GCC initiative - that brought him to power is facing serious obstacles almost one year on from its signing in Saudi Arabia. Loyalists of the former president are still actively advancing their own agenda. The national dialogue process that was supposed to take place months after the signing has not even started. And there is now talk of the Southern movement boycotting the dialogue. Unless the political settlement produces result soon, Yemenis will begin to question where the political process is really taking them.

The results the Yemeni people expect are definitely not those emphasised by President Hadi in his cable to the American president. Rather, the focus from both Mr. Hadi and his American counterparts should be on meeting serious development objectives.

Yemenis need to see hope, not drones. Failure to reorient the U.S.-Yemeni relationship in this way will only add further pressure to the fraught political settlement, and bring its collapse one step closer, an outcome that would damage the ability of both the U.S. and Yemen to advance security, stability and development in the country. Ibrahim Sharqieh is a foreign policy fellow at the Brookings Institution, deputy director of the Brookings Doha Centre, and adjunct professor at Georgetown University in Qatar.

# Where is Yemen heading?

Mohammad Ali al-Samawi  
Al-monitor.com  
First published Nov. 10

Recently things seem more complicated than ever before: Problems are spreading, deepening the gulfs dividing the Yemeni people and the Islamic Umma [community], exacerbating the differences among them. We have come to live in state of exceptional uncertainty as the way in which we conceive of the future and our place in it has suffered from a decided lack of vision. Whether one is rationalistic about it or not, it is no longer possible to distinguish between the correct course and the mistaken one. This we may ascribe to the latent contradictions of the public arena.

“Problems are spreading, deepening the gulfs dividing the Yemeni people and the Islamic Umma

toshopped pictures, deepening the divide between members of the same faith, adherents of the same religion, and citizens of the same country.

No sect or denomination has been spared this strife or these conflicts. The Houthis, for one, are in conflict with their fellow Shiites. This conflict has caused the death of many of their compatriots and the displacement of others. Here in Yemen, Mohammed Abdel-Aziz Al-Houthi's comments on Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi are still fresh in our minds. For that matter, what do the Sunnis of Al-Qaeda have to show for themselves? Other than the killing of many sons of the People's Committee, soldiers and members of the security forces, and the displacement of thousands of Sunnis from their homes?

Many problems "solved" by the state, including ones that lie directly within its core functions and upon which its prestige depends are — whether legally or not — actually decided upon and resolved through the tribes. Indeed, we still live at the mercy of these tribes. In many regions of Yemen, citizens lose power when the tribes target the electricity towers — and regain them when the tribes move in to repair them!

Arms deals have not ceased: A steamboat filled with weapons comes from Iran and another from Turkey. The arms dealers in Yemen do not sleep except on pillows of bullets, while Yemen has been transformed into a battlefield where the only rule is "survival of the fittest" and the big devour the small. Soon enough, even the world "coexistence" will be eliminated from the dictionary of Yemenis.

“The arms dealers in Yemen do not sleep except on a pillow of bullets

Regarding the crucial religious and sectarian disputes, it is as if we were in the Stone Age when strife between members of the Islamic Ummah deepened under the guise of the so-called madhahib [rival schools of Islamic jurisprudence], legitimated by the slogan "Differences of opinion in my nation are a sign of God's mercy" [Hadith]. However, the bill for this slogan was paid for on credit and we are paying for it today. Yet nowadays the cost does not come in the form of a proverb, a line of poetry, or even a sectarian polemic. Neither will it be manifested as some rhetorical flourish, brawling, or clashes with sticks and batons. No, this time the price will be paid in blood. This time, it will require the further loss of life, the killing of innocent women and children, the demolition of homes, and curses that will haunt us for all time.

Yes, modern technology has played a prominent role in this regard by feeding sectarian and religious conflicts that have injected the people with regular doses of hatred for one another, leading to a widespread desire for vengeance. This has been done through written, audio and visual media of various kinds (television channels, radio stations, newspapers and websites), the purpose of which is to produce programs, written reports, graphics, or fake and pho-

# Why Yemen is the scariest challenge facing Obama abroad

Bruce Riedel  
Brookings.edu  
First published Nov. 9

Obama will have to face the growing menace of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the failing state in Yemen that it thrives on. The response must be nimble and careful because AQAP's real goal is to drag America into another bleeding war in the Muslim world, this time hoping it will spread into the oil rich deserts of Saudi Arabia. Luckily, Gregory Johnson has written the best new book on Al-Qaeda in 2012 and the best book on Yemen in years.

The Last Refuge: Yemen, Al Qaeda and America's War in Arabia is a detailed narrative account of the development of AQAP. It is also a great read; Johnson is a very good storyteller. The story is fascinating, this is a group that was virtually destroyed in 2004 by drone attacks and effective counter terrorism operations, and then it recovered, helped immensely by the Arab world's anger over the American invasion of Iraq. In 2009 it rebranded itself with new leadership

composed of Saudis and Yemenis, several of whom had been prisoners in Guantanamo Bay. It's number two, Saeed al Shihri, spent five years before being released to Saudi Arabia in 2007 where he fled into Yemen. A drone had allegedly killed him last month, then he reappeared alive in a message threatening more attacks on America.

Since 2009 AQAP has tried to attack the American homeland at least three times. On Christmas Day 2009 it almost succeeded. I served as an expert witness to the trial of the suicide terrorist who successfully penetrated American security and got a bomb on a Detroit bound flight that day. President Obama was absolutely right when he said after the fact "we dodged a bullet, but just barely" because the bomb failed to detonate properly. Johnson reveals that AQAP's master bomb maker, a Saudi named Ibrahim Asiri has now built a bomb with two detonators so it can't fail.

The Arab Awakening came to Yemen in 2011 with a vengeance and has left the country completely fragmented. AQAP has thrived. Yemen has always been a difficult

and inhospitable place. Its most desolate region, where Osama Bin Laden's family comes from and Shihri was nearly killed, is the Hadramawt which means "death has come" in Arabic and is said to contain the gate to hell in one of its wadis. Today Yemen is running out of oil and water, more than half the population is under 18, half goes to bed every night hungry and the national government barely controls even parts of the capital.

For over a decade America has been trying to fight Al-Qaeda in Yemen without getting dragged deeper and deeper into its internal dysfunctional politics. Johnson's book provides a gripping account of the American war and its key players. The U.S. ambassadors on the scene are portrayed vividly and their counter terrorism bosses back in Washington. So are the tensions between them over how to deal with AQAP and the complex politics of Yemen.

America's key ally in this war is Yemen's bigger and richer brother, Saudi Arabia, the real prize in the struggle. Bin Laden and his protégés in AQAP have always had their focus on the Kingdom and the House of Saud. Johnson details

just how deeply the Saudis have become involved in the war in Yemen including how its intelligence service has foiled two AQAP plots against America and its Royal Saudi Air Force is now flying bombing strikes against AQAP targets deep inside the country.

AQAP entitled the video it produced about the Christmas Dayplot "the Final Trap." Shihri was one of the narrators. What the title meant was that Al-Qaeda hopes to draw America deeper and deeper into a quagmire with more and more boots on the ground in Yemen. It wants another Iraq, another Afghanistan. An attack in America that killed hundreds would force America to take on the challenge of rebuilding Yemen with our own hands, a final trap that would bleed America's military, our economy, and our morale.

President Obama has wisely avoided the trap for the last four years but the Yemeni threat has not gone away and the slow collapse of the Yemeni state offers little hope that it will. Washington has a long-term challenge in Arabia. Greg Johnson has written an excellent guide to the scary conundrum that we face.

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International Association of Operative Millers  
Mideast & Africa District

## 23rd Annual IAOM Mideast & Africa District Conference & Expo in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Yemen Times - TAIZ

The 23rd Annual IAOM (International Association of Operative Millers) Mideast & Africa District Conference & Expo will be held from 5 - 8 December 2012 in ADNEC (Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Centre), Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The event is hosted by Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority (ADFCA) and AGTHIA Group Company, Chaired by H.H. Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Presidential Affairs-Chairman.



This year's conference topics on management issues will focus on current volatile market, which would aid millers in reducing their business decision risks. Also we will present you the latest technology in milling practices and quality control. The three-day Conference and Expo is an opportunity to address these issues and promote new trend and innovation in the milling industry.

The IAOM is considered to be the largest gathering of milling industry professionals in the Middle East and Africa Region.

The exhibition is expected to have 100 participation from various countries. The exhibiting companies will come from various countries representing grain traders, machinery manufactures, food processing and packing companies, and other experts from the industry.

The overall interest to participate in the conference & expo is estimated to be higher than the previous years. The organizer expects more than 600 delegates from 50 countries will attend this event, representing multi-trade grain houses, flour millers, government authorities, commodity traders and machinery suppliers.

"Abu Dhabi, one of the seven sheikhdoms that make up the United Arab Emirates, is the largest geographically, occupying more than 80 percent of the U A E's total area. Distinctive Arabian hospitality, mystique and world-class infrastructure make Abu Dhabi an enchanting destination for our forthcoming Conference & Expo." emphasizes Merzad Jamshidi, District Director of IAOM.

The IAOM Conference & Expo is held annually, rotating between the Middle East and Africa region.

For more information, please check the website [www.iaom-mea.com](http://www.iaom-mea.com)  
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مشروع الصحة والسكان - منحة رقم (H640-RY)  
مناقصة عامة رقم (17)

يسر وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان - مشروع الصحة والسكان أن يعلن عن رغبتة في إنزال المناقصة العامة رقم (17) لسنة 2012 م لشراء وطباعة الدليل العمل الميداني الفعلي وإستبيانات المسح الوطني الصحي الديموغرافي للعام 2012 - 2013 م

والتي سيتم تمويلها من هيئة التنمية الدولية (IDA)

وعلى الراغبين المشاركة في هذه المناقصة التقدم بطلباتهم الخطية خلال أوقات الدوام الرسمي

إلى العنوان التالي مشروع الصحة والسكان - مبنى البرامج - شارع مازدا حي الحصبة - صنعاء تليفون رقم 234559 - 234556 فاكس رقم 234572.

- لشراء واستلام وثائق المناقصة نظير مبلغ وقدره 50 دولار امريكي لا يرد .
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- 2. صورة من شهادة ضريبة المبيعات + البطاقة الضريبية سارية المفعول.
- 3. صورة من شهادة مزاوله المهنة.
- تستثنى الشركات الأجنبية من تقديم الشهادات والبطاقات المشار إليها أنفاً ويكتفى بتقديم الوثائق القانونية المؤهلة الصادرة من البلدان التي تنتمي إليها تلك الشركات
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يسر وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان - مشروع الصحة والسكان أن يعلن عن رغبتة في إنزال المناقصة العامة رقم (18) لسنة 2012 م لتأجير (56) سيارة للعمل في المسح الوطني الصحي الديموغرافي للعام 2012 - 2013 م والتي سيتم تمويلها من هيئة التنمية الدولية (IDA)

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# Ibb governorate an attractive tourist destination

Photo Essay by Ashraf Al- Muraqab

In the past few years, Ibb governorate has welcomed numerous tourists, both Yemeni and international, in Ibb, a lush and mountainous town. The unstable security situation in other parts of the country has made Ibb an attractive tourist destination for those who want to vacation in a safer, less volatile environment.

In addition to the town of Ibb, the governorate is home to Al-Sadda, Al-Nadera and Hamam Damt, all well-known tourist stops where green grass, waterfalls, and flowing torrents can be found.



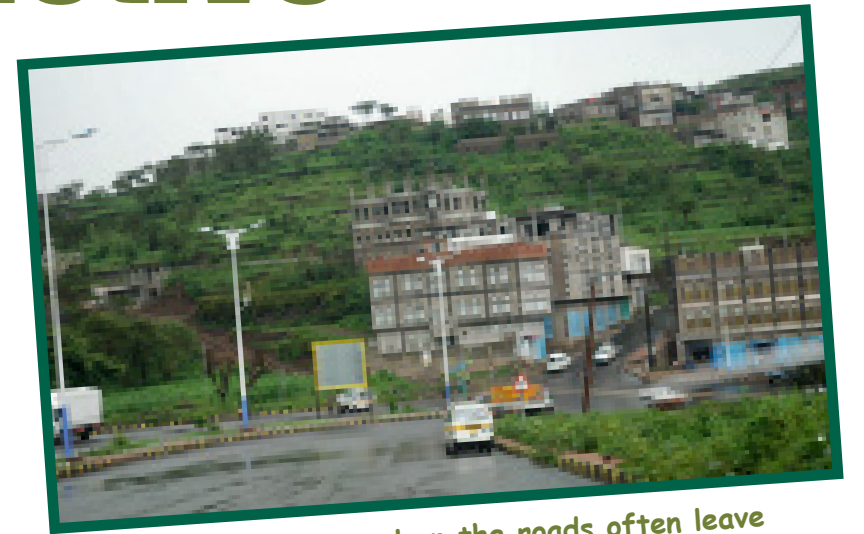
In Ibb, there is a prevalence of old house and castles nestled in the mountains, but tourists face difficulty in reaching them.



Visitors often stop by Wadi Bana to enjoy the flowing waterfalls and warm weather.



The waterfalls in Ibb are one of the big attractions for those visiting the governorate.

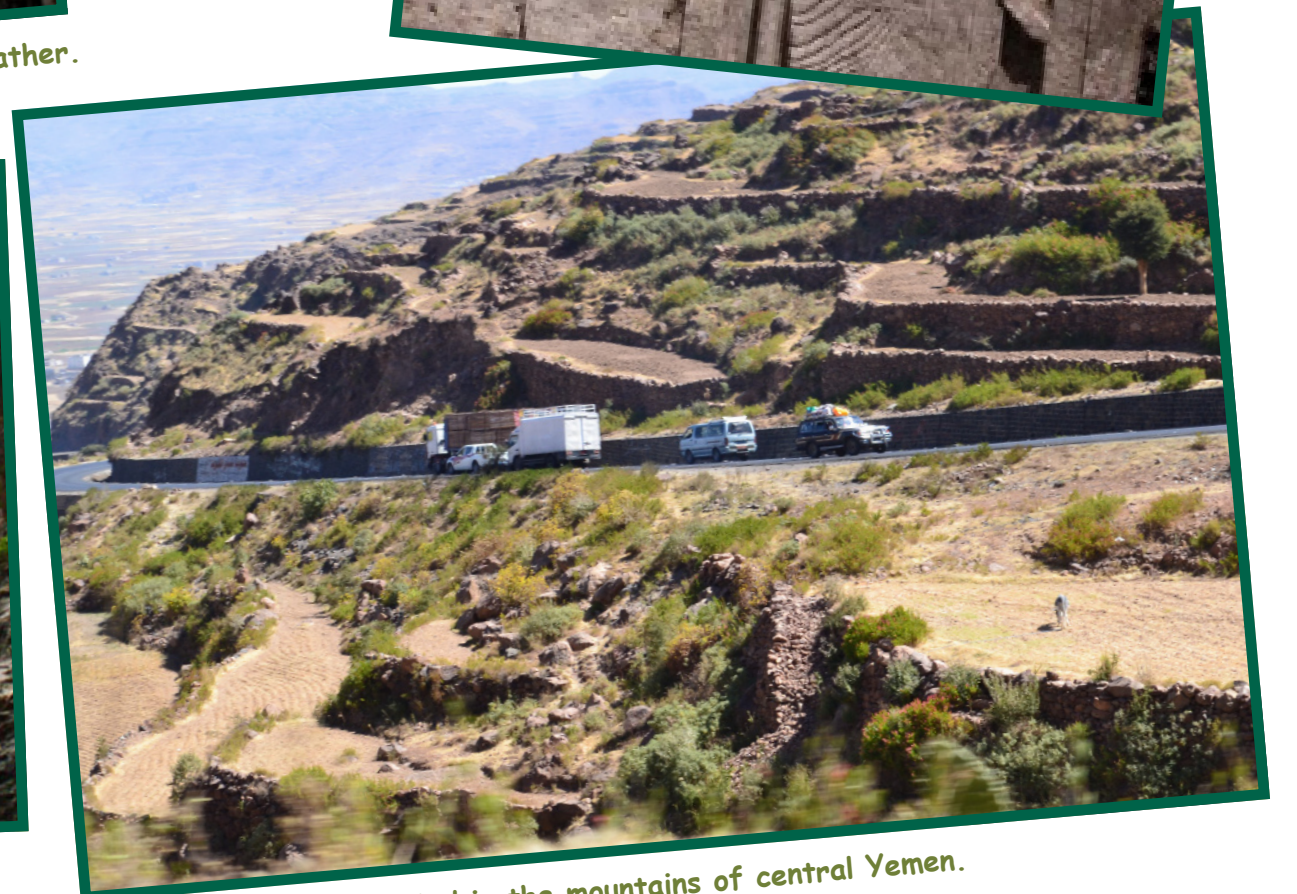


A lack of traffic control on the roads often leave drivers confused about where they are traveling.



Ibb governorate, known for all its greenery, became a more popular tourist destination as its heritage, and its more secure environment, were made known.

This statue, located in Dafar village, is representative of the area's trade center past.



Ibb governorate is nestled in the mountains of central Yemen.





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# Obstacles affect Military Pension Fund for Defense, Interior Ministry military

Samar Qaed

According to Yemeni law, Military Pension Funds controlled by the Defense and Interior Ministries provide salaries for military personnel of all ranks.

A recently study entitled "Investments' effectiveness for the Military Pension Funds, the practical alternatives and the future perspectives," conducted by Dr. Ali Saif, Assistant Professor of Economy at Sana'a University, finds that in spite of the establishment of two funds in 1981, they remained frozen until 1992's decree number 33, which made amendments to the salaries and bonus' given to armed and security forces.

Saif said throughout this period there is still no information about the financial management of the two funds. Current investments remain opaque.

"Although there is an Investment Director, I didn't find the investment administration on the ground

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*Colonel Yahia Al-Seraji said more than 96 percent of the investments in the fund are invested in unproductive markets.*

during my visit to the Defense Ministry's fund, which indicates that the concerned authorities don't pay enough attention to the investments made," Saif said.

Following the two funds, Saif found they invested in buying stocks in Yemen Mobile, a government-owned mobile company, or by buying the treasury bills of the Yemen Central Bank.

Saif said that contrary to Article 74 stipulations in its establishing law, the fund isn't independent.

Moreover, its resources can't be invested and managed without the intervention or agreement of the Defense Ministry. Since the fund functions under a military leadership, the administration can't risk investments because it fears the consequences.

"The government intervened and forced the fund to move from buying treasury bills that make 23 percent annual profit to the ones that make 7 percent per year without paying attention to the loss that could happen, which assures the funds success," he continued.

He said fund reserves are decreasing due to the deficit caused by bad investments and, consequently, it is necessary to take funds out from the reserves to bridge the gap. The reason behind the deficit is that those who were dismissed after the 1994 war in Yemen were reinstated in 2007 for political reasons and then made to retire, which burdens the fund.

"The reinstated military men didn't pay contributions, and the government didn't pay for them as well, so their monthly dues paid to them came directly from the fund causing a deficit."

"The same thing applies to the personnel of Al-Salam Military Camp who weren't included among the soldiers who receive salaries from the pension funds. Multiple civilians used nepotism to be transferred to the fund and receive a monthly salary."

Colonel Yahia Al-Seraji, head of the Budget Department in the Defense Ministry's fund, said that the deficit in the fund is about YR400 million (\$1.8 million) due to the gap between resources and expenditures. The total funds accumulated in the reserves amount to approximately YR40 billion, with about 96.5 percent invested in treasury bills and deposits whilst the remaining 3.5 percent is invested in stocks of Yemen Mobile.

Al-Seraji said more than 96 percent of the investments in the fund are invested in unproductive markets, which make fixed returns and could cause capital losses. Also, the returns from Yemen Mobile's stocks are unstable and are likely to decrease by 50 percent this year because the company will pay off taxes.

He said some of the money taken out from the deposits was used to pay the salaries of people who weren't entitled, as they have never paid contributions to the fund. If the state doesn't intervene to cor-



In a May 22, 2011 march, dissident soldiers of the First Armoured Division, part of the Defense Ministry, demonstrated in Sana'a.

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*If the state doesn't intervene to correct the situation, the fund won't be able to pay salaries in the future, Al-Seraji said.*

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He also said the Military Pension Fund in the Ministry of Defense can profit from those who were ordered to retire by a political decree before reaching retirement age by establishing appropriate projects and making them work to alleviate the burden on the fund.

According to Abdullah Al-Kabodi, head of the Military Retirement Department in the Defense Ministry, the fund's main problem is the high inflation of the salaries which followed a selection of decrees, which stipulated boosting the salaries by YR2000. This issue was further intensified by the 2005 Wages and Salary Strategy.

Al-Kabodi said the amount of money added to salaries were subjected to the insurance premium only for a short period. Moreover, the pension given to retired people is based on the last salary they have received. Retirement laws stipulate that pensions should be based on an average salary the person used to receive a year or two prior to the retirement. This all added increasing strain to the fund.

Concerning the Interior Ministry's Fund, Saif said, "It is not independently administered and lacks qualified financial and political professionals that have a specific investment and political visions. However, it remains better off than the Defense Ministry's fund since it has about YR68 billion as accumulated reserves."

He said the fund wasted multiple investment opportunities that follow the Social Services' Fund in Aden such as the Biscuits Factory because these projects were privatized after the 1994 war instead of restructured.

Doctor Fatima Mashhoor, Deputy of the Yemeni Center for Social Studies and Labor Research, said about YR4.5 billion is taken by departments in the Ministry of Defense each month from the salaries of soldiers and officers. The money is taken as contributions and paid to the fund, but it's not enough to pay salaries for the retired men, those killed during wars and injured people.

Mashhoor said the Finance Ministry covers about YR 500 million to pay for the salaries, saying this

is a deficit in the fund because it already pays the salaries of 148,500 people.

According to Mashhoor, there are no statistics within the fund that distinguish those injured or unable to continue working, those who died naturally and those killed.

For his part, Nasher Al-Absi, a social insurance's consultant, said the labor law applicable to the funds doesn't specify an age for natural

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*Labor laws for the fund don't specify retirement ages for women, social insurance consultant Nasher Al-Absi said.*

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*Since the fund functions under a military leadership, the administration can't risk investments, Dr. Ali Saif said.*

retirement and early retirement for women, though there are women soldiers in the military troops and security forces, women employees and nurses in military hospitals and some women employees in technical positions at military hospitals in several governorates.

"The law permits non-compliance with a certain age during war based on a presidential decree and allows soldiers who have served for 20 years to ask for retirement regardless of whether they have reached the legally required age or not while they get a whole salary. Moreover, in need, it is possible to sign contracts with those retired people," he added.

The obstacles presented by the Salaries and Bonus Law issued in 1992 are represented in applying its terms for two decades without applying the implementing regulations yet to be issued, according to Colonel Khaled Abdullah Al-Seraji, Head of the Legal Department of the Interior Ministry's Pension Fund.

Al-Seraji said the current organizational and administrative of the funds forces the executive manager to follow the instructions of the Interior and Defense Ministries and consequently dictates and restricts the policy of the fund to the general plan of the ministries.

Al-Seraji called on the executive authority to take the initiative and start separating each fund from the ministry it follows, as well as issuing regulations for the funds to transform them into financially and administratively independent institutions or public authorities.

"It is necessary to start working to increase the efficiency of institutional and individual performance through a moral and financial support that presents a comprehensive vision for a better pension system. By adopting the amendments demanded on the Salaries and Bonus Law number 33 of 1992 and the amendments applied to it in the law number 8 of 1994, the funds financial returns will improve and insure that all the participants get their rights."



A retired soldier lays out his uniform, proudly displaying his years of service in the military.





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# Yemenis march in Sana'a streets to support Gaza Palestinians

Photos by Samar Qaed



Men march as a group, raising their arms in solitude with the Palestinians in Gaza, where Israel has launched daily air strikes.



Young Yemenis show support for the Palestinians in Gaza, who have been subject to regular air raids by Israel launched in retaliation of Hamas rockets landing in Israeli territory.



Sana'a residents join the worldwide solidarity movement, standing with the people living in Gaza.



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Printed by Yemen Times Est. for Press, Printing & Publication  
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