

Pilots murdered and massive explosions at Yemen's largest airbase

Al-Qaeda believed to be behind attacks

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

LAHJ, May 8 — Three pilots from the Al-Anad airbase in Lahj governorate were shot and killed at 7:00 a.m. Wednesday morning by armed men who appear to be linked to Al-Qaeda, Colonel Adnan Al-Asbahi, the commander of the base said. The suspected men fled the scene,

avoiding capture.

Colonel Talal Shihab, Colonel Mohsen Al-Baghdadi and Colonel Nasser Mohammed Abdu were returning from leave, on their way back to the army base, when two armed men on motorcycles fired on them, Colonel Ali Qasim Muthana, deputy commander of Al-Anad base, said.

It is unclear whether this attack is directly related to a massive explosion which occurred on Monday morning at the base, but both appear to have been carried out by Al-Qaeda, Al-Asbahi said.

On Monday morning, three gas tanks—containing 6,000 liters of fuel—exploded, sending huge plumes of smoke into the sky, jour-

nalist Mohsen Basaleh said.

Al-Asbahi said this was a clear case of arson and at this point they believe Al-Qaeda to be responsible. No casualties were reported.

Al-Asbahi told the Yemen Times the fire took place at 4:40 a.m. and consumed three separate gas tanks. Firefighters put the flames out before the fire could reach the under-

ground stores where over 220,000 liters of gasoline are kept.

Al-Asbahi said that if the fire had reached these stores, it would have been a "catastrophe."

President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and the Interior and Defense Ministries formed a fact-finding committee to investigate the explosion, Al-Asbahi said.

Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed Qaed, an officer in Brigade 90 stationed at Al-Anad base, told the Yemen Times this was not the first attack on the base.

At the end of 2012 there was an attempted bombing on American

troops who are stationed inside the base. American troops have been operating drone strikes from the base since 2012, Qaed said.

"Since the American drones were brought here, we're always busy. We have to defend them from Al-Qaeda attacks. The drones are always taking off," Muthana, said.

Al-Anad airbase is located in Lahj, 60 kilometers to the north of Aden and is the largest military airbase in Yemen.

On Sunday, a drone strike was carried out on alleged Al-Qaeda strongholds in Marib governorate, causing several casualties.

Step forward with access to information law

Information commissioner chosen, journalists celebrate move

Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANAA, May 8 — About one year after approving a law that grants citizens and journalists alike the right to request public information from government ministries, President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi appointed Samir Amin Noman as the information commissioner on Monday.

The appointment is an essential step to implement the law as the information commissioner will be the point of contact for anyone who is denied requested information by the government. Noman's office, which is an independent ministry and has its own budget, will receive complaints of violators of the law.

"The commissioner can question any officials including ministers," said Parliamentarian Abdul-Moez Dabwan. He urged the commissioner to exercise his "great powers" to boost the culture of social accountability.

Official military information is off limits to citizens and journalists. Yemen is the second Arab country to approve a law of this kind after Jordan.

Noman is an information systems specialist and previously worked for the Social Fund for Development. He graduated in 1994 from a university in the United States with a degree in computer sciences.

Noman is excited about his new role but foresees challenges.

"We need to establish information units in every governmental institution," he said. These units would be the point of contact for anyone seeking public information.

This will be expensive Noman says and take time.



Journalists and human rights activists have been the biggest supporters of the right to information law, which requires all government ministries to disclose requested public documents.

"No institutions allocated budgets for these units this year," said the new commissioner, who is temporarily running his office from the presidential compound until he receives official offices.

Several activists and journalists welcomed Noman's appointment, saying he will help the public gain access to needed information.

"Information had been hidden for years and this contributes to the spread of corruption," Ahmed Al-Zikri, the chairman of Yemen Or-

ganization for Promoting Integrity (OPI) said. "Officials considered information a secret of the state."

Al-Zikri indicated the new appointment will empower citizens to observe and question the officials and urged Yemenis to take advantage of the law and Noman's appointment.

For more than four years, a law regarding the right to access information was fiercely debated in Parliament as General People's Congress (GPC), one of Yemen's major

power players knocked it down.

Noman is not without his critics though. "We need a strong information commissioner who can put pressure on the governmental institutions to expose information," said Mostafa Nasr, a journalist and the head of Studies and Economic Center, who added that Noman is not well-known in the media community.

"We would keep observing his performance during the next days," Nasr said.

Conference officials remain optimistic but public interest is floundering

Story by Ryam Al-Qadi

SANAA, May 8 — In a little less than a month, on June 18, Yemen's National Dialogue Conference will be half way over. This reconciliatory meeting of over 500 representatives from all over Yemen is meant to draw a road map for Yemen's future including the drafting of a new constitution and laying the groundwork for national elections in early 2014.

On the day of the conference's inauguration on March 18, there was hardly a television channel or radio station in Sana'a that wasn't tuned into the broadcasting of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and the rest of the representatives' opening speeches.

Although the ongoing NDC sessions continue to be televised on a daily basis, the fervor and enthusiasm to tune in has waned, locals say.

Um Hitham, a 30-year-old who lives in Sana'a, is one such resident.

"I was optimistic and eagerly awaited the opening session because the NDC will determine our future and the future of the generations to come," she said. "However, the disputes, objections and withdrawals that happened during the first session made me pessimistic and reluctant to watch the rest of it."

Um Hitham's opinion is shared by many.

They say they feel disconnected from the nine major issues being tackled at the conference including talks about unity, a lack of government control over an armed group of Houthi rebels in the country's North, state construction and questions of the nation's security.

One source of complaint is a lack of confidence in the representatives to tackle such concerns. Khalid Mohammed, a 34-year-old who lives in

Sana'a, said the dialogue is lacking committed individuals.

"I occasionally watch them, but I feel disappointed because the hall is almost vacant. So, who is going to determine our future?" he asked.

According to conference officials the daily meetings have an average attendance rate of 87 percent. Currently there are 556 members out of the 565 seats that were originally stipulated by the conference's Preparatory Committee. The conference has for the most part maintained its original conditions of the breakdown of seats: 50 percent Southerners, 30 percent women and 20 percent youth. Currently 52 percent of representatives are from the South, women make up 28.5 percent and youth are at 17 percent.

Some have praised the positive byproducts of the ongoing debates held at the Movenpick Hotel in Sana'a. Since the conference began, checkpoints have been erected all over the city. There is more stability and a sense of pride in the state, said university student Mohammed Nasser, but he is not completely convinced.

"This is not enough to make us believe the dialogue will succeed and safety and security will be [completely] restored. Perhaps the country's [unstable] situation will be improved once the dialogue is over."

Nasser says he is no longer interested in the daily details of the conference but he does occasionally read articles about it in newspapers and on websites.

"We await the outcomes," he said.

The NDC formed a media committee to keep people abreast to the conference's latest developments via an information center. The committee is also currently carrying out a plan to mobilize community participation.



One university student says that he is fed up with the daily details of the conference. He is waiting instead to hear about "the outcomes."

Ahmed Sinan, a political analyst who closely follows the NDC, said the conference's nine working groups will be making field visits May 12 to the 17 in governorates nationwide in order to meet people, engage them in the conference's developments and receive feedback.

Sinan admits people may have pessimistic views of the conference but he attributes this to past dialogue-esque meetings that were considered failures.

Political parties in Yemen have tried more than once to reach a consensus about power-sharing via mediations. After North and South Yemen unified in 1990 then President Ali Abdullah Saleh and former Southern President Ali Salem Al-Biedh struggled for control. Despite negotiations brokered by King Hussein Bin Talal, the Jordanian king at the time, disagreements between the two leader culminated in the 1994 Civil War, which lasted a few short months and ended in a northern victory.

Another more recent example

of failed negotiations happened in 2009 when the ruling General People's Congress Party's opposition, the Joint Meeting Parties, formed a Preparatory Committee for a dialogue conference to solve what they said was a deteriorating situation in Yemen. Yemen's current Prime Minister Mohammed Salem Basundwah, an independent, came up with a National Salvation Plan for Yemen. The dialogue never materialized into anything as critics said it was not inclusive (the GPC was not invited) nor practical as it required more than 2,000 people to agree on debated issues.

"Past dialogues were only for show," Sina said. "There was never a comprehensive dialogue like what is happening today."

Sinan is optimistic about the potential effect of the dialogue on the country.

"This dialogue gives a space for community participation and the participation of the experts," he said, adding that their number one goal is to keep Yemenis feeling like they are a part of the dialogue.

Yaseen Saeed Noman, deputy chair of the NDC, secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party and former prime minister of Yemen, said negative media coverage is contributing to people's disillusionment with the conference.

He said coverage focuses on the disputes happening in the daily sessions instead of the positive steps being made.

"People are looking forward," Noman said.

Yemen's current leader President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi has on several public appearances continued to stress his confidence in the nation's state-building process. At the Arab Leaders Summit in Doha in March, Hadi delivered a speech reassuring high-level international officials of his country's dialogue.

"The world will be surprised with a unique, new model of reforms and sought after change that will be achieved through dialogue," the president said. "Dialogue will help build a modern civil state in which all Yemenis will enjoy freedom, justice and equal citizenship."

Protest in Al-Dailami Air Base in Sana'a leaves four injured

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANAA, May 8 — On Tuesday, four soldiers from Yemen's air force were wounded following an exchange of gunfire with the personal bodyguards of Brigadier Abdul Malik Al-Zuhairi, the chief

of staff of the air forces and protesting soldiers. The gunfight took place at Al-Dailami Air Base in Sana'a.

Prior to the shooting, dozens of soldiers had been calling for the release of salary bonuses which had been promised to them by the

Ministry of Defense, said Lieutenant Colonel Abdulrahman Al-Helaly. What began as a verbal argument with Al-Zuhairi escalated into something more violent, Al-Helaly added.

Abdulaziz Al-Lakama, one of the protestors, said Al-Zuhairi's bodyguards were the first to fire.

General Rashid Al-Janad, the commander of the air forces, told the Yemen Times there were "some mistakes" when the bonuses were distributed, and it was not an intentional slight that these soldiers were not paid their extra salaries.

"We controlled the situation. The fight lasted for about half an hour," Al Janad said. "But they are our sons and we will fulfill their demands."

Committees have been formed to review their complaints as well as give the soldiers their pay, Al-Janad said.

He added that there are some who want to "create anarchy" among the air forces, taking advantage of what happened on Tuesday.



Soldiers at the airbase were upset about not receiving bonuses.

As the administration has met the soldiers' demands, the "troublemakers" will be unable to seize this opportunity to "spark chaos," Al-And said, but he would not name those in question.

Al-Dailami Air Base is one of the biggest airbases in Yemen, overlooking Sana'a International Airport and home to the Air Police Brigade and the Air Defense Brigade.

NDC Update

- The 22 members of the Consensus Committee, which is comprised of nine people from the Presidium, the nine heads of the working groups in addition to four members of the Preparatory Committee will hold its first meeting at the president's house next week. The Consensus Committee is in charge of coordinating between working groups and mediating between participants. The four additional members from the Preparatory Committee who were just named are Hussien Arab, a Southern Movement representative, Raqiya Humaidan, who is an independent youth, Hussam Al-Sharjabi, a Northerner and Dr. Mohammed Al-Amiri who is head of the Salafi Rashad Party.
- President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi appointed Yasin Makkawi as the newest Hirak representative of the Presidium.
- The Sa'ada Issue Working Group threatened to suspend their work on Wednesday as they still have not agreed on their groups' two deputies and rapporteur. Representatives from the Houthis and the Islah Party are at odds regarding the candidates.
- The Southern Issue Working Group has commenced its work under the leadership of Mohammed Ali Ahmed on Tuesday as a replacement for the group's former leader, Ahmed Bin Fareed.
- The NDC Secretariat sent letters to the governors of all provinces in the country to inform them of the participants' field visits in the coming days. Beginning Friday, a team of logistic, security and media personnel will visit Taiz, Aden, Hodeida and Mukalla to prepare for the delegates' visits next week. The rest of the country will be visited later this month.
- NDC participants held a protest in the lobby of the conference's venue on Wednesday against the recent appointments of individuals to leadership positions in the Central Authority for Control and Auditing. All appointees belong to the Islah Party.



ADVERTORIAL

A Porsche and many other prizes in the Surprise Card Awards draw

Sabafon, Yemen's first and largest Telecom Company in Yemen, carried out the draw for its Surprise Card first award, a Porsche, last Sunday in front of a huge crowd Aden. Lucky winner Amjad Faraj Saeed Al-Tamimi won the car which was handed to him in a festive ceremony in the company's headquarters in Sana'a.

This Award Program is considered one of the grandest in the telecommunication market and continues as the sixth draw will take place early June with a sixth car in addition to many other prizes worth millions of rials.



Men from the Al-Marakisha tribe in the Batees district of Abyan governorate kidnapped two Egyptian engineers on Monday, who had been working as managers at the Al-Wihda Cement Factory. The head of the Intelligence Department in Abyan, Brigadier Mohammed Bin Mohammed, said the Egyptians were kidnapped as leverage so security forces would arrest a man they say killed a member of their tribe. Mohammed said negotiations with the tribesmen are underway.

The Executive Office in Hajja governorate permanently shut down 70 private hospitals, health clinics and laboratories that are operating without state licenses. Dr. Ayman Madkour, the manager of the health office in Hajja, said the health facilities did not have qualified staff and were illegally dispensing medicine. According to most recent statistics from the Health Office in Hajja, the governorate has 496 private and public health facilities.

Security authorities in Hodeida governorate confiscated 300 kilograms of hashish last week. The drugs were discovered in Al-Jarahi district. Brigadier Mohammed Al-Makaleh, the security manager of Hodeida, said that it appears that the drugs were smuggled through Mocha Port and were bound for Saudi Arabia. After launching intensive campaigns over the last month, Hodeida security have captured wine, drugs, and fireworks.

All of the post offices in Al-Dale' were closed on Tuesday, a day after armed men attacked the main office in the governorate on Monday. Mohammed Ghaleb Al-Etahi, the secretary general of the local council in Al-Dale', said that 50,000 people benefit from salaries, pension and social welfare provided through the post offices, making them targets for robberies. National money transfers are also conducted through the post offices.

Electricity towers in the Nihm area of Sana'a were attacked on Tuesday, cutting power in the capital. Sheikh Hamam Murait, one of the Sheikhs in Nihm, took responsibility for the attack. Murait told the Yemen Times that he hoped the attack would lead to the release of fellow tribesmen who have been arrested on murder charges.

Reporting by: Nasser Al-Sakkaf and Samar Al-Ariqi



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

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The legitimacy of international intervention in Syria

Abdul Wahab Badrakhn
English.alarabiya.net
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After chemical weapons have been used in Syria, the international community, particularly the U.S., seems to be searching for formulas on how to coexist with this reality. The U.S. seems unwilling to confront it and punish those behind it, considering that chemical weapons are used for genocides and that keeping silent on their usage means an agreement to this genocide and a frank disregard of using prohibited weapons.

And even before that, has anyone been able to make an effective rejection or international attempt to prevent shelling residential areas using ballistic weapons which are also categorized as "weapons of mass destruction," like the Scud missiles which are also prohibited? Of course not. International powers overlooked these missiles then coexisted with them as if they are everyday realities.

There has been an American president who fabricated the lie of weapons of mass destruction to invade Iraq. When Barack Obama said using chemical weapons is a "red line," in addition to Iran and Hezbollah's interference later, he meant to propose legitimate reasoning to intervene in Syria. But his steady hesitation will lead to losing this legitimacy.

Turning a blind eye

There is also a Russian president who turned a blind eye and decided to regain the glories of his great country at the expense of Syrian corpses. He is doing so because he was raised to despise his own people and not care about any other people or their aspirations. He is also an old ally of a ruler who imitates him in what

he did in Chechnya or is even doing worse. For Russia and China, there is no doubt that the Syrian regime is fighting a war on their behalf to prove that breaking people's will is possible.

During his recent meeting with a delegation of "Lebanese allies," Bashar al-Assad said that Russia "considers the battle to defend Damascus as one that defends Moscow's position and interests" and that "Americans side with the winner at the end" – meaning with him.

But the difficult part is yet to come. He knows very well that he has not won this war yet and that he will never win it even if he limits it to Damascus. However, he persistently attempts to surround the capital with burnt land and massive destruction. Meanwhile, the Iranians and the Russians are making pressure so the regime alters the field formula soon or rather alter it by mid-June, the date of the meeting between the Russian and the American president at the G-8 Summit in Ireland.

Although Assad is not sure of what he may achieve, even with using chemical weapons, he argues that his regime is what will influence this summit, believing the summit will not impose its rhythm on him, since both presidents [Obama and Putin] are waiting to observe how the situation develops on the ground in Syria in order to decide on action.

Supplying lethal arms

What Assad knows well, but did not say, is that arming the opposition and the Free Syrian Army faces challenges due to renewed suspicions over the al-Nusra Front and similar groups.

Why has the supplying of weapons to opposition fighters recently lessened? Al-Nusra's stupidity and the revelation of its connection to al-Qaeda, and not

Syria, maybe the most important of reasons.

However, the Istanbul meeting was the most important Friends of Syria conference which pressured the opposition to take the path towards a political solution. This suggestion is still on the table for the opposition coalition and it will finalize it during its meetings in Istanbul to elect a new chief and look for means to expand its representation. This issue is also linked to the meeting of Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin.

The essence of their discussions will be a political solution on the basis of evaluating the situation of all parties on the ground in Syria. Putin has dispatched his envoy Mikhail Bogdanov to Beirut for an accurate mission of figuring out the possibilities of using Lebanon as a "bazaar" for the crisis and.

If the Russian president will only base his acts on what the Damascus battle will achieve, then he and Assad are betting on a naivety they assume is present in Obama and thus they are expecting the U.S. president to translate his pragmatism by admitting that the regime is still strong and steadfast. Therefore, the solution must reflect the balance of military powers. But Obama and his allies already know that the regime still represents a coherent front and that the opposition is getting more divided as it was not possible to unite it under one strong political military entity.

Solidarity with Assad

The Russians and the Iranians displayed strong solidarity with Assad. But the Friends of Syria have committed a lot of mistakes as they "aided" the opposition in organizing and uniting itself. The situation remained more complicated than the image that the Syrian and Russian presidents are trying to market. Assad's regime is not like China's which suffocates Tibet and buys the West's silence through trade. It is also not like Russia's regime which isolated Chechnya crushing its people and led to having the Americans bargain and admit Russia's control over it.

Russia holds on to the idea that the dirty brutal war which the regime is fighting does not bother it or push it towards altering its stances for moral considerations. Therefore, it observes developments on field. And it can wait and wait.

Now if this war really annoys the U.S. and its allies, then they have two options. The first option is that they make all possible efforts to alter the military formula. However it does not seem that they are inclined towards making this choice due to the presence of Al-Qaeda, even if the media exaggerates its presence and does not reflect it accurately. The second option is that they endeavor to end the crisis through a political solution. In this case, they must deal with the current givens, that is they must depend on the regime considering it is the only present "leadership" capable of achieving a political solution.

There are no doubts that this logic is being thought of a lot by the Americans, Europeans and Arabs because they are aware of the importance of ending the crisis before it extends to outside Syrian borders and before extremist groups gain strongholds. But the weakness in the Russian logic lies in its imbalance and its absolute overlooking that to achieve the "political solution" there are preconditions that must be met especially if the means to achieve this solution is through dialogue between two parties or even among more parties.

Throughout the entire phases of the Syrian crisis, it has not been clear whether the regime informed Moscow of concessions it is willing to make to provide suitable circumstances to launch dialogue. It's almost been a year now since the Geneva Agreement. Ever since this agreement, it gets clearer that Moscow deceived all parties by its continuous support for the Assad regime in carrying on with a military solution. Russia does so in order to impose its vision of the "transitional phase."

So, it can be said that talks are now about a political solution which its circumstances are not yet available and may never be available. Even if Washington admits this fait accompli and even if it attempts to impose it on the coalition, neither the latter nor the armed opposition inside Syria can move forward towards a political solution that reproduces the regime as if it is one that did not commit war crimes or crimes against humanity or as if it is one that did not displace people, destroyed cities and adopted a genocide approach.

Even if we assume, and just assume, that succumbing to pressure to end the regime's surge which aims to divide the country, the opposition inside and outside Syria does not guarantee that the revolution parties will unite to carry out what they are forced to do.

Abdul Wahab Badrakhn is a Lebanese journalist, who writes weekly in London's Al-Hayat newspaper among other Arab publications.

YT vision statement



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OUR OPINION

"On our knees" for Yemen

The concept of national reconciliation in Yemen should have started long ago. It is a mind-set that needs to dominate the minds of both politicians—we have had enough and we want to let the past go.

Today, unfortunately whether it is in the National Dialogue Conference or in public sessions, everyone still wants to blame each other and sometimes even seek revenge.

For example, many of the youth in the NDC who used to protest in squares during 2011 are still carrying that attitude. Some are even still questioning the immunity deal we gave Saleh.

There are so many people involved in the acts of yesterday. In a way, no one who was in a position of authority is innocent. If we continue to engage in the blame game, we would have to shoot everyone and then the last man/woman standing would have to shoot themselves.

But we don't want any more killing. This is why national reconciliation has to begin immediately and take form outside the NDC.

We need something like what Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic said last month on national television, "I am on my knees and asking for a pardon for Serbia for the crimes that was committed in Srebrenica."

In Yemen, Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar has been relatively smart about this and professed his "regret" about the actions of the past.

Regret is good, an apology is better, but redemption is what we seek.

We need a national wave of apologies from everyone for the crimes individuals and institutions committed against the public.

Yemenis are forgiving people and this can lead to a proper reconciliation process. The generation of today cannot be trapped in the mistakes of yesterday, they need to move on.

Currently we have a major problem in the NDC especially in the Transitional Justice Working Group.

This problem begins with a misunderstanding of what transitional justice means. Many Yemenis think of transitional justice as if it is about trials and punishment. This mind-set will not help the reconciliation and will definitely not help make the offenders show remorse if they are feeling cornered. It will not help the victims either who now need to learn forgiveness and let go.

The problem is worse in the Transitional Justice and National Reconciliation Working Group in the NDC. This groups' member think of themselves as investigators, who are responsible for accusing and bringing to justice those who committed crimes in the past. Maybe we should change their name to National Reconciliation and take out the transitional justice part to avoid confusion.

This misconception is very dangerous especially since their work is so complicated. The people involved in the group should have criteria regarding neutrality and professionalism that they currently do not.

This is a great risk to the success of the entire transitional process not just the NDC because moving towards the future requires reconciling and coming to terms with the past, which we will never do unless we really let go.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

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Rusty and forgotten:

The oldest textile factory in Yemen

Story and photos by Ali Abulohoom

The buildings at the Spinning and Weaving Factory in Sana'a lay vacant. Stockrooms and warehouses are empty. Scattered in the sun-bleached lawn are broken-down and rusted machines.

There are no sounds of industry here—only the distant voices of the security guards.

Work stopped here eight years ago, in 2005. The factory—the oldest of its kind in the country, built in 1964—used to be the main producer of textiles in Yemen, specifically the fabric used in army uniforms. In the 1990s, the factory produced 1,000,000 yards of cloth a day.

As well as military uniforms, the factory made school clothes, gauze and bed sheets for hospitals and mattresses, pillows and curtains.

However, facing a rapidly glo-

balizing market and an influx of cheaper fabrics coming from China, Pakistan and Indonesia, the factory wasn't able to compete like it did in the past.

In 2005, the administration of the factory decided it was time to upgrade.

A six-month break was given to install new machines bought from China. However, it took around three years for installation. During that time, other parts of the factory fell into disrepair. Now they are covered in rust.

There isn't one person or party responsible for this lag in installation, Dr. Mohammed Al-Bukhiti, the assistant director of technical affairs for the factory, says.

It seems to be a combination of mismanagement and bad timing.

Abdulatif Al-Alami is the director of the stations in the factory. He started working there in 1989 and saw it in its heyday.

The factory used cotton and polyester to produce textiles—the

cotton came from Hodeida, and the polyester was imported from Iran.

While the new equipment from China was being installed, other machinery began falling apart.

"The weaving, designing and dyeing machines broke down," Al-Alami says.

"There was no maintenance."

In 2008, the machines were finally installed. Some employees received training from Chinese experts. But the factory could not move into production mode because the other departments weren't ready to use the threads made in the spinning department.

Reviving the factory

Al-Bukhiti, also an academic at Sana'a University's Engineering College, was appointed to his position in 2007 and has been tasked with reviving the factory, restoring its former glory.

But the main obstacle is a lack of funding, and the fact that the fac-



The factory used to provide housing for its workers. It's the same building that housed the original construction crew that built the factory in 1964. No renovations have ever been made on the building.



The factory was also a victim of Yemen's 2011 popular uprisings. Factory walls are covered in bullet holes.



Some machinery still sits outside damaged by the sun and rain.

tory is YR8 billion, over \$37 million, in debt.

"We used to have deals with the Yemeni Economic Corporation. They would buy the products of the factory.

The government hospitals, too," Hassan Al-Adeeb, general manager of the director's office for the factory.

Al-Bukhiti sees three possible solutions. Either the company should become a nationalized factory, a joint stock company—between both state and private companies—or should privatize completely.

"But the people in charge aren't industrialists," Al-Bukhiti says.

Hopes to operate again

In 2011 the Yemeni government set up a new power station—at the cost of almost \$1.6 million—which will supply electricity to the factory.

"In the past, we used to operate one sector and stop another because we had only 880 kilowatts. We needed 2,000 kilowatts of power at that time. Now we have electricity—but the factory isn't open," Al-Alami said.

Al-Bukhiti said once he was appointed, he conducted a comprehensive study based on the available sources represented by the factory, its sections, the ready clothes sewing compound and the

cotton factories in Hodeida.

Al-Bukhiti said through his study he found if the production lines were improved and new machines were added in the weaving and designing departments, he might be able to get things up and running again.

As it stands, the once-bustling factory is locked and quiet, forgotten by many. Traces of the 2011 uprisings are here. Windows of the factory have been shot out and shattered. The walls are spattered with bullet holes.

"It was the pulse of Yemen's national industry," Al-Alami reflected. "But the heart stopped beating."

CONSULTANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 19/2013

If you are a committed, creative Yemeni professional and are passionate about making a lasting difference for children, the world's leading child rights organization UNICEF would like to hear from you.

Title of post : Communication for Development (C4D) Consultant.
 Purpose : To support the planning and the implementation of C4D activities at the field level.
 Duty Station: Sana'a
 Duration : 6 months

SPECIFIC TASKS
 Under the supervision of Chief, Communication for Development Unit the consultant will:

- Assists UNICEF field offices in developing district level integrated C4D plans.
- In close collaboration with the C4D Unit, provides need-based technical support to the implementing partners on behavior change communication activities for achieving key family care practices including hand washing, IYCF, Immunization and maternal health outcomes
- Provide support to field offices district based partners related to C4D activities, including preparation of monthly monitoring reports, finalization of local level communication and advocacy materials and coordination with the government and civil society counter parts.
- Technical support and on-site coaching to field offices and implementing partners through regular field visits
- In collaboration with government officers and UNICEF technical specialists, takes the key role in designing and testing of localized communication messages on key family care practices messages.
- Contribute to designing C4D training materials/ modules and participate in facilitating the training workshops at the governorate and district level for field offices and community volunteer networks.
- In collaboration with government officers and UNICEF technical specialists, takes the key role in designing and testing of communication materials (posters, brochures, PSAs, video...) for nutrition, immunization, maternal health, WASH and their appropriate implementation and coordinates the evaluation of all C4D material produced and in use.
- Supports in knowledge enhancement for social variables and C4D data to inform local level planning and messaging.
- Monitor and evaluates the appropriate and timely dissemination of programme communication materials to target audiences, and participate in the evaluation of their impact. Monitors the public perception of UNICEF in the country and recommends appropriate action to maintain a positive image for the organization.
- Monitors implementation of community based communication activities by reviewing progress and identifying constraints through field visits, consultation with government counterparts, partners and community and UNICEF staff.

Expected Background and Experience

- University degree in Development Communication, Public Health, Sociology, Business Administration or any other relevant field
- At least 5 years work experience in the field of social mobilization and behavior change communication in key health practices (Maternal health, Infant feeding, Immunisation, Water and sanitation) Experience in social mobilization, social marketing, training and material development and participatory approaches
- Knowledge of current theories and practices in communication for development;
- Reasonable knowledge in generating social data
- Proven ability to effectively manage relationships with partners and government officials specially in hard to reach areas ;
- Excellent oral and written communications in Arabic and English;
- Excellent facilitation, communication and interpersonal skills, knowledge of mass media will be advantage.
- Good computer skills at least of MS-office application
- Good knowledge of gender mainstreaming into programmes

COMPETENCIES REQUIRED:

<p>i) Core Values (Required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment Diversity and Inclusion Integrity 	<p>ii) Core Competencies (Required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Working with People Drive for Results 	<p>Functional Competencies (Required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing Relating and Networking Deciding and Initiating Action Applying Technical Expertise
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If you meet the requirements stated above, please send your application, enclosing comprehensive curriculum vitae, duly completed United Nations Personal History form (which can be downloaded from www.unicef.org/employ) stating telephone number, email address and detailed contact address quoting the vacancy number to: yemenhr@unicef.org, not later than 10 days from the date of this publication. For additional information on UNICEF, please visit our website: www.unicef.org

UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages qualified female and male candidates, including persons living with disabilities, to apply to become a part of our organisation. UNICEF is a smoke-free environment.

Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

VACANCY ADVERTISEMENT

The World Bank country office in Sana'a is seeking to recruit a **Receptionist/Office Assistant.**

Summary of Major Accountabilities:

- receptionist duties including answering phone, operating switch-board, receiving visitors, being first point of contact for clients and counterparts;
- handling incoming and outgoing mail and office pouch;
- maintaining up-to-date database of key government officials, donors, civil society, business community and contacts related to sector work;
- assisting in organization of high-level missions;
- using basic keyboard and word processing skills to assist in preparation of short documents, memos, letters, spreadsheets, databases, etc;
- in-charge of visiting missions coordination and maintaining VM chart for internal use and sharing with counterparts;
- informing office guards about all visitors to the office on daily basis.
- any other ad hoc duties assigned by the Supervisor.

Essential Specialized Skills/Knowledge/Competencies

- Dedication to the World Bank mission, respect to diversity, ability to work in multicultural environment.
- University degree and experience in similar position for at least 2 years.
- Good team player with pleasant personality able to project good organizational image.
- Basic knowledge of computer applications (Word, Excel, mail, internet) and ability to prepare simple documents. Ability to operate office equipment.
- Demonstrated ability of function under pressure and handle multiple tasks in fast-paced environment.
- Accuracy and punctuality in work and ability to complete tasks according to specific instructions with attention to detail.
- Knowledge of FCS (Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations) Context and FCS Behavioral Skills: adaptability, resilience, determination, sound judgment, etc.
- Native Arabic speaker with good knowledge of English, able to interact tactfully and effectively with internal and external clients.

Interested candidates should apply via the World Bank site www.worldbank.org/jobs Section: "employment opportunities" job number **131133**, where you can find full particulars on the vacancy. Closing date for this job is **May 16, 2013**. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Sana'a's Quran collector, on a mission to salvage holy books

“I work for the sake of my creator.”

Story and photos by Samar Qaed

Qanaf Badi leaves his home every day at dawn just after his morning prayer. It all began five years ago when he found six Qurans, Islam's holy book, discarded in a trash pile.

“I felt utterly sad,” said the quiet man who is in his '70s. “Since that moment, I decided to lift the name of Allah [wherever I found it].”

And so he does. Badi spends his days rifling through trash looking for abandoned papers, books, decorative plates or any other material that carries the name of Allah, or God in Arabic.

“In the beginning, I went to the imams of mosques, speaking to them in order to educate people about this matter. But that was not enough,” he said. So now the

retired textile factory worker lives with his wife, three children and the estimated 3,000 Qurans he has plucked from trash heaps.

Many Islamic scholars consider any sort of “stain” to the Quran like throwing it in the trash an act of apostasy, which can be punishable by death.

In 2009 a man in Sana'a accused of tearing and stomping on a Quran had his home destroyed by religious leaders as a punishment for disrespecting the book.

According to Ibrahim Al-Jabri, the general manager of Guidance and Instructions at Yemen's Ministry of Endowment, the governmental body that deals with religious affairs, it is disrespectful to throw holy books away. The generally accepted methods of disposal of Qurans is burial and burning.

But Badi cannot bring himself to burn the books he has collected. He

would rather they be reused so he tries to give them to schools and mosques.

The man's aged face might betray his energy. His daily routine doesn't seem to tire him. However, his work comes at a cost. His wife and family have mixed feelings about his unique hobby.

“There are books and papers everywhere,” Badi's wife complained. “Even the wedding invitation cards that contain Quran verses are gathered. This is unreasonable.”

Their shared home has only a couple of rooms and Badi's wife says the clutter obstructs the already poor ventilation in the small structure. Guests must work their way around the stacks of books and cabinets overflowing with material he has amassed.

Because Badi has run out of storage space, the family's roof is now covered with books and materials protected from the rain by tarps and containers.

Clearly annoyed by her husband's obsession, Um Shukri said her husband will blow off accompanying her to the hospital to instead root through garbage.

“Sometimes the rain and the wind blow the papers [on the roof] everywhere. My husband collected them again. It is really exhausting for us,” she said.

On the other hand, Shukri, one of Badi's sons, just chuckles at his father's amassing of books and stubbornness to stop. Although some neighbors have called Badi crazy, Shukri sees the good he does.

“Schools fall short of religious books,” he said. “My father [gives them] the books.”

The primary school next to Badi's home sometimes sends students if



In addition to holy books, Badi collects newspapers, wedding invitations and pamphlets—any material on which the name of God has been written.

they do not have enough reading material.

“When I see the school students standing in front our door, I feel my father does a great job,” Shukri said.

One of Badi's daughter, Samah, also supports her father's endeavors. She helps him organize and cover his collection on the roof from wind and rain and is thinking about raising money to build a small storage space for his books.

“My father is pure and functions according to Prophet Mohammed's saying, ‘Keep God. He will keep you,’” she said.

The Ministry of Endowment has no specific authority tasked with monitoring discarded Qurans but

the ministry is aware of Badi's work and praises it.

“We should cooperate with him,” said Ibrahim Al-Jabri, the general manager of Guidance and Instructions at the ministry.

Badi has given the Ministry of Endowment some of the holy books he collects and they in turn have promised to speak to religious leaders about educating the public about proper disposal of the Quran.

The manager of the cleaning sector in Sana'a, Jamal Juhaish, said they have never found discarded Qurans in the trash that he knows of but the mayor's office has installed a few metal boxes on electrical posts throughout the city where people can place papers and books

containing Allah's name.

“When these boxes are filled with papers or books, we burn them,” Juhaish said. “Unfortunately, some people just throw trash in these boxes.”

Juhaish says in order to create more clean spaces to collect holy papers and books, they community needs to cooperate and use them appropriately.

Despite his wife's objections and the disapproving scrutiny of some around him, Badi says he is now committed to his work more than ever.

“I will not stop lifting the name of Allah,” he said. “I don't work for my own self, but I work for the sake of my creator.”



Badi has filled his home with thousands of Qurans and other books, salvaged from dumpsters and trash heaps.

Republic of Yemen
Ministry of Water & Environment
Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project
IDA-Grant No. H449-RY

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT for Financial Manager Position (FM)

Source of Fund of the Position:

International Development Association (IDA-Grant No. H449-RY), Water Sector Support Project (WSSP) – Urban Component

Background:

The Government of Yemen represented by The Ministry of Water and Environment & The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has received a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Water Supply and Sanitation Project (WSSP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this grant to hire for its services a highly organized, energized and experienced professional Capable of operating effectively in a very demanding post-conflict environment, to serve as a Financial Manager (FM) for Project Management Unit (PMU), Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Subsector (UWSS), Water Sector Support Program (WSSP).

Function of the Project Management Unit (PMU):

The Project Management Unit is the implementing agency at the central level consisting of professional staff, whose contracts are renewable annually for the duration of the Project, based on their performance evaluation. PMU operates under the guidance and supervision of the Minister of Water & Environment (MWE) and in strict cooperation and coordination with MWE AUs/LCs, which are generally responsible for routine project implementation of its activities and operating the projects after -completion.

The PMU has the primary role for overall project oversight, coordination, and dissemination of best practices and operates autonomously from undue interference, particularly in the areas of procurement and financial management.

The PMU carries out the planning, procurement, financial management, Audit, M&E and social & environment activities according to the legal requirements resulting from the credits/ grants agreements, donors' guidelines and government regulations.

OVERALL RESPONSIBILITIES OF FINANCIAL MANAGER:

Under the general direction of the PMU Manager, the Financial Manager (FM) is responsible for the financial management of the PMU's Activities as well as the activities of IDA and other donors who support NWSSIP, in accordance with the signed financing agreements, donor's guidelines and government regulations. He will be responsible for the preparation of periodic reports to the General Manager on the progress of activities.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES WILL INCLUDE:

The Financial Manager will be responsible of, but not limited to the follows:

- Ensure that the financial and accounting manual of policies and procedures is appropriately applied in managing the project funds;
- Implementing and managing the financial and accounting system of the PMU;
- Supervising the Project Accountants;
- Preparing the quarterly interim financial reports of the project and interpreting the variances when compared to the project budget;
- Preparing annual project financial statements and submitting them for audit;
- Coordinating with the MOF to ensure availability of budget for the project funds and the counterpart financing for implementation;
- Regularly reviewing the internal control system to ensure compliance with the agreed mechanisms, procedures, and systems;
- Compiling all project activities and monitoring PMU's operating costs;
- Preparing the yearly budget of the project in cooperation with the Donors and Government of Yemen;
- Preparing disbursement schedules and financial forecasts for the project;
- Maintaining adequate records of authorized appropriations and ensuring that all sums expended pursuant thereto are properly accounted for;
- Maintaining adequate records of all procurement and consultant contracts; and following up on the bid performance securities, validity and renewals;
- Verifying payments to ensure that the expenditures have been properly budgeted, authorized and recorded;
- Verifying, on a regular basis, the petty cash expenditures to ensure that these are properly authorized and recorded with all supporting documentation;
- Close monitoring on the advances through following up and clearing them promptly when the advance purpose is complete.
- Managing the cash accounts designated for project use to ensure the efficient use of funds, through following up on the signed contracts and all committed funds;
- Verifying withdrawal applications for the disbursement of the Grant funds on direct payment and reimbursement basis;
- Establishing central policies and procedures for the safeguarding of project assets and supporting project

documentation;

- Communicating and cooperating with the project external auditor and the government audit bureau; and
- Performing any other project-related duties requested by the PMU Manager.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

The Financial Manager should have:

- A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in accounting/finance;
- A minimum of seven years of private or public sector financial management experience, preferably with donors funded projects;
- The ability to translate planned activities into concrete budgets, analyze and report them for the purpose of recommending improvements in operations;
- The ability to supervise accounting and other financial functions and report financial information usable to the various stakeholders: Government, World Bank, Donors and auditors;
- The ability to supervise accounting work and motivate accountants to achieve positive actions and results;
- General understanding of procurement concepts;
- Proficiency in the use of computers, accounting and other software applications; and
- Proficiency in Arabic and English.

Upon acceptance to occupy the position he/ she shall provide evidence of being no longer employed or on unpaid leave from any Government or Non-Government Organization, as he/she shall be a full-time employee.

Interested applicants' should send their Resume (CV) with copies of their certificates and supporting documents not later than Saturday, June 8, 2013 to the below mentioned address: (Applications received after the closing date will not be considered. Only short list candidates will be contacted for interviews).

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Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project,
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Large crossword puzzle grid with clues in Arabic.

Large crossword puzzle grid with clues in Arabic.



Yemen's first and most widely-read English-language newspaper



With the closure of cinemas, small-scale performances carry Yemen's entertainment scene



The Cultural Center Theater in Sana'a puts on live performances including the most recent, "And the End," which captivated audiences with its timely themes.

Story and photos by Amal Al-Yarisi

As the curtains pull back at the Cultural Center Theater in Sana'a, the crowd hushes. On stage, a group of men

appeared to be trapped in glass cages.

The performance is called "And the End," a provocative new play by Safwat Al-Ghasam that grapples with the events of the past few years, particularly the popular uprising of 2011.

Yemen's Theater Week began on May 2 and concludes Saturday. For the past three years, nothing like this has happened in Yemen.

"It's a positive step," said Al-Ghasam, who hopes to see more events like this soon. "It will encourage Yemeni theater after many

years of absence."

Formal cultural events—like poetry readings, theater or cinema—haven't been put on in Sana'a for the past few years.

Najat Saem, the manager of the Culture Office in Sana'a, said the reason behind the absence of cultural events is due to the economic downturn Yemen experienced during the past years.

Salem Mohammed came to watch the plays at Yemeni Theater Week. Mohammed is 16-years-old and has many talents. He's a singer and an actor and hopes to one day act on stage.

But Mohammed is disappointed with the situation of the theater in the country.

"We should restore the role of theaters and cinemas in Yemen," he said.

Several cinemas were closed over the few past years. Cinemas appeared for the first time in Aden during British colonization.

In the '50s and '60s, Yemen had 49 cinemas.

Today, there's only one—the Alahlia Cinema in Sh'ob, in the northeast corner of Sana'a.

Ahmed Al-Ezie, from Sana'a, says the cinema only screens old Indian movies, which he doesn't like.

Mohammed Al-Asdi, a short story writer in Sana'a, wondered if the absence of cinemas and theaters is reflective of the absence of an active artistic community. "How can we be a country of intellectuals when we have no cinema?"

Al-Asdi says he knows many actors, authors and talented young people in Yemen. They're just waiting for the opportunity to perform, he said.

But some residents don't want to see any cinemas or stages reopen.

Abdulmalik Ahmed, from Sana'a, says cinemas in Yemen were screening "indecent movies." There wasn't any control, he complained, or separate sections for men and women.

But Abdulfatah Al-Hamadi sees things differently. He says the country has changed since 2011. He wants to see more formal cultural events. For him, this most recent Yeme-

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ni Theater Week is a good sign.

The curtain comes down and the crowd applauds for the play "And the End." It was a challenging, provocative play, the director Al-Ghasam explained. He was in-

spired by the events of the past few years, the violence he witnessed in his own country.

But out of this destruction, he says, he found inspiration to create something new.

4U

Performances at the Cultural Center Hall in Sana'a

Date	Day	Play	Director
May 9	Thursday	Al-Farafer Play	Saleh Al-Saleh
May 10	Friday	Qatee' mn Alrejal (A pack of men)	Mansur Mutair
May 11	Saturday	Mahr Aldawdahia (Al-dawdahia's Dowry)	Mohammed Al-Rakhm



A cinema on Sana'a's main thoroughfare, Hadda Street, is one of Yemen's 48 movie theaters that have closed over the past 60 years.



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