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Despite illegality, fireworks market flourishes



A market in Dar Asslam area near the old city that is famous for selling fireworks.

Authorities can't seem to end fireworks use, despite noise and visibility

Story by Sara Al-Zawqari
Photos by Sina Al-Qubatti

Sana'a's dark nights have been lit during the past few months from a source other than electricity. Fireworks have been filling the sky, randomly dispersed around the city. If one misses these lights and sights in the sky, one cannot miss the sound of these fireworks, often mistaken for gunfire.

Use of fireworks increases during Eid and wedding seasons, and though they are intended as a form of celebration, they have resulted in many casualties. There are many kinds of fireworks available in local markets, however, most of them do

not come with instructions, and if they do, they are often in Chinese or Afrikaans.

Samer Mohammed lost his right index finger during a wedding last summer when a firework exploded in his hand.

"When one of my friends gave me fireworks [and asked me] to light them up, I did not know how to [use] them," he said. Samer tried to use the instructions but did not understand the language.

"I thought it was going to fly up to the sky, but it didn't," he said, hands in his pocket.

Eid is the ultimate time to do all your fireworks shopping. Abu Jamal owns a small fireworks shop in Bab Al-Yemen and eagerly awaits Eid, when he sells three times the typical amount of fireworks. His supplies range from small things that pop to fireworks that sound like a bomb just went off.

Though fireworks are prohibited by law, this is a rule the public does not follow.

Hassan Al Jamal and his friend gather in the Old City to celebrate events together by setting off fireworks.

"People shoot guns into the sky

during weddings and Eid. When compared to the [damage done by] guns, there is no comparison. The ban [on fireworks] is illogical," he said.

Interior Ministry media spokesperson Mohammed Al Mawry em-

phasized the fact that Yemeni law prohibits everything that disturbs the public order, and said that fireworks fall under this category.

Yemeni authorities have seized large quantities of smuggled fireworks at the borders. While the

Yemeni government tries to rein in smuggled fireworks, manufacturing plants have been discovered in the capital, Sana'a. Al-Mawry said that the authorities shut down two factories in Wadi Dahr in September alone.

There are no designated areas for people to use fireworks so people use them on the streets, light them from roofs, and from their cars. Though the law clearly calls for punishment for those who sell or use fireworks, authorities often have the perpetrators promise not to do it again. Punishments are typically doled out to sellers and manufacturers only.

Security analyst Saleh Asbahy said the reason behind the spread of fireworks in Yemen is a combination of the unstable political



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Thana Farouq: “Art makes life meaningful”

Benjamin Wiacek
La Voix Du Yemen

A tall and elegant young woman wanders around the room covered with large photographs. The artist stops and observes one of the pictures placed on the yellow stone-wall.

“This picture symbolizes one of my best memories. It was the next day after the attack on the Boston marathon,” recalls the young woman. “People were hugging each other. It was nice and the scene could have happened anywhere. Humanity really transcends borders.”

Thana Farouq is a 23 year-old Yemeni artist and photographer who recently returned to Yemen after studying in the U.S. Her photo exhibit, *Street life in the moment*, is hosted by the Raufa Hassan gallery in Sana’a, and shows a series of her pictures taken in Boston, Morocco and in Yemen.

The young woman then sits in one of the gallery’s wicker armchairs, and shares her love for art explaining that it is a passion since her childhood.

“I have always been passionate by colors and went to the few art exhibits happening in Yemen, even when I was 10 years old,” says Thana.

At the age of 16, Thana was granted a scholarship to finish high school in Canada. It was the first time she got the opportunity to study art. She began studying photography and later organized her first exhibit there.

Thanks to obtaining another scholarship, she then traveled to the U.S. where she studied at Clark University near Boston. There, she became a teaching assistant in the photo lab, allowing her to get more experience in her area of specialization.

“I was working in the dark room, showing the students how to develop pictures, and I also became a



“I love photographing quiet and peaceful moments, such as a mother with her child, a smile, people hugging each other. We live in a world full of chaos and I just want to give a more peaceful image.”

stage photographer during official events,” explains Thana.

Thana describes herself as an artist, not merely a photographer. Thus, despite this experience, she does not want to work in a studio or under the constraint of a predefined theme. She is more attracted by the unexpected aspect of the street that “decides” the fate of the photograph, the mood and the environment. She simply observes people and what they are doing until she feels the right moment to take a picture.

“I love photographing quiet and peaceful moments, such as a mother

with her child, a smile, people hugging each other. We live in a world full of chaos and I just want to give a more peaceful image,” she explains. “I also want to do something for fun, something meaningful and have stories where people could look at them and feel a connection.”

This philosophy is obviously what attracts her to people, and the human aspect of portraits, which has become the source of her inspiration. She says she has learned so much from people in the streets. “It is not about taking pictures of people and then leaving, it is about

building a relationship with them.”

Thana also explains that in intense circumstances it is easier to take interesting pictures, but that it is more difficult when everything is calm.

“In a demonstration, there is so much going on that it is not hard to capture what is happening. Many people can go there and take similar pictures,” she says. “But in the street, I design the moment, like a painter, but I don’t intervene. If I missed the moment, it is too late.”

Thana is not only an artist but also a young woman politically en-

gaged. She recently graduated with a Bachelors degree in International Relations, with a minor in photography. Her final year thesis focused on the issue of drones in Yemen, which surprised many of her classmates who were not familiar with her “political” side.

Thana is now back in Yemen, doing an internship at Resonate, a local NGO. She hopes to go back abroad to study photojournalism, as a means to sustain herself financially. She insists that even with photojournalism career, she will continue to engage in artistic pho-

tography.

Indeed, despite her passion for politics, her love for art is superior. She expresses her sadness when she hears people say that photography or art are not important.

“Without art, there is no life, because it is what makes life meaningful and interesting,” she explains. “Never say it is not useless because then how would you express yourself without art.”

Being a photographer in Yemen is not always easy. She explains how people’s reactions vary from one person to another: from the lack of attention by some to the extreme curiosity of others, patience becomes an essential quality. But she stresses that the kindness and friendliness of Yemenis is also prevalent, and once a relationship of trust is established, the majority love to be photographed.

As it is often the case, Thana’s family would prefer a different future for her. Her mother wishes she could continue in the field of international relations and that she finds a secure job. While she worries about her daughter’s choice of career, she is nevertheless encouraging her in her own way.

“She does not want to show it but I know she believes I can do it,” says Thana. “She is inspiring and so supportive.”

After her studies and in the long-term, the young woman plans to move back to Yemen. Even though the situation is not very stable, she keeps hope seeing the joy still present in the streets. She also feels responsible to give back after the opportunities she received.

“I was privileged to get a scholarship because people believed I could go back home and do something with it,” she explains. “The US or Canada do not need me, they have their own people. It is Yemen who needs me the most.”

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UN meeting highlights migration’s development benefits

IRIN
First Published Oct. 4

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon opened a High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at the UN General Assembly on Oct. 3 by outlining an eight-point agenda to “make migration work” for the world’s 232 million migrants, as well as their countries of origin and destination.

The meeting brings together migration experts and delegates from 150 countries to discuss ways to support the developmental benefits of international migration while reducing its economic and social costs.

Ban described migration as “a fundamental part of our globalized world” and “an expression of the human aspiration for dignity, safety and a better future”. His eight-point agenda included ending the exploitation of migrants, addressing the plight of stranded migrants, improving public perceptions of migrants and protecting their human rights.

The opening of the meeting coincided with news that more than 100 migrants had lost their lives after the boat they were traveling on caught fire and sank just off the coast of the southern Italian island of Lampedusa. The boat was carrying an estimated 500 passengers, many of them believed to be Eritreans, from Libya. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reported that 150 migrants had so far been rescued, leaving some 250 of the passengers still missing. Earlier this week, another 13 migrants drowned while

trying to reach Sicily. UNHCR estimates that in 2011 alone, 1,500 migrants died trying to reach Europe from Libya.

Ban and several other speakers at the meeting referred to the latest tragedy as further evidence of the need to commit to addressing the challenges arising from migration, particularly as the political climate in many countries remains hostile to migrants.

Research needed

“Too often, migrants live in fear,” Ban told delegates. “We need to create more channels for safe and orderly migration.”

But both Goldin and Ban, in his list of recommendations, highlighted the need to strengthen the evidence-base on the positive benefits of migration as one way to combat the political rhetoric that fuels negative perceptions of migrants.

“Migrants contribute greatly to host societies...They are doctors, nurses and domestic workers and often the unheralded heart of many service industries,” said Ban. “Yet far too often they are viewed negatively. Too many politicians seek electoral advantage by demonizing migrants.”

Fueling development

Much of the discussion on the first day of the meeting made a case for incorporating migration into whatever new set of goals replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are due to expire in 2015.

One compelling reason why migration matters for development is the estimated US\$550 billion that migrants remit to their families



A boat carrying sub-Saharan African migrant workers arrives in Lampedusa from Tripoli. Thousands of migrants have made the perilous journey

back home annually, according to the World Bank. The figure is more than three times higher than global aid budgets but could be larger still if transaction fees, which are often exorbitant, were lowered.

However, at a side meeting devoted to how to incorporate migration into the post-2015 agenda, speakers warned against framing migration and development as a purely economic issue.

“Migrants are not just commodities or conduits for financial remittances,” said the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay. “We must look beyond the

dollar value of global remittance flows and pay more attention to the conditions in which this money is being earned. Development won’t work where it’s accompanied by inequality, injustice and repression.”

While there is a greater understanding of the role migration plays in contributing to development now than in 2000, when the original MDGs were formulated, several speakers also pointed out that many people still view migration as a threat rather than a boon to development.

“From a political point of view, it’s a very hard sell,” said a delegate

from the Bahamas. “What do you do when people feel the economy is being under-cut and their identity swamped?”

The migration community has come late to the debate over the post-2015 development agenda, and there is unlikely to be a stand-alone goal associated with migration. Deputy Director General of the International Organization for Migration Laura Thompson advocated instead for trying to incorporate migration and the rights of migrants into a series of existing goals. “This would reflect the reality of migration as a cross-cutting

issue,” she said.

Ian Goldin, professor of globalization and development at Oxford University, referred to the meeting as “a ray of light... in what is otherwise an extremely cloudy environment for migration and development.”

Goldin cited a World Bank study that found that changes in national migration policies that increase the flow of migrants even minimally bring significant economic benefits to sending and receiving countries, in addition to transforming the lives of individual migrants and their families.

Women's rights advocates: Secure women's rights through the constitution

Abdulrazaq Al-Azazi

The Yemeni Scholars Body recently issued a statement condemning efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. As Yemenis enter a new transitional period following the end of the country's comprehensive National Dialogue Conference (NDC), women's rights activists say the time is now to push for guaranteed protections and equality of women. The way to do that, they say, is through the constitution, slated to be drafted following the end of the NDC.

The statement from the Yemeni Scholars Body said that a "woman cannot be a man's equal and the government should not adhere to Western calls that aim to corrupt Yemeni family morals, to spread vice, homosexuality and immoral relations," the statement said.

The statement objected to gender integration in schooling, compulsory education for girls and the restructuring of curricula to include gender issues in studies.

Though the constitution says that all citizens are equal before the law, article 40 of the constitution also says that the blood money of a woman is half that of a man, meaning if you unjustly kill a woman, you would only be obligated to pay her family half of what it would cost if you killed her brother.

Fatima Salah, a press and human rights activist, told the Yemen Times that "femininity is inferior

"Law enforcement lack vital skills and legislative frameworks to appropriately respond to complaints of domestic violence."

in Yemen. The law does not recognize that a woman has a soul like a man. The law does not recognize that women deserve the same blood money as a man."

Salah said this exists because entrenched customs and traditions view women inferiorly.

Dr. Ashwaq Ali Salem bin Buraik, assistant professor of international law at the College of Law at Aden University conducted an analytical study about discrimination against Yemeni women in the law.

She said the Yemeni constitution is the only guarantee of equality and that national legislation should not contradict the constitution or its principles, she said.

Rania, a Yemeni national married to a Sudanese man, says she has had many troubles stemming from her marriage to a non-national.

The Yemeni law does not entitle her two children to Yemeni na-

tionality and requires her to pay visa residency fees for them if she wishes to visit Yemen with her family. The children of a Yemeni man married to a foreign woman retain their father's nationality unless they choose to give it up for another nationality.

A Yemeni woman married to an Indian man discovered that she owed the Interior Ministry YR3 million (around \$14,000) when she and her family were preparing to leave for India. Non-nationals who overstay their visa owe the Yemeni government YR300 per day, about \$1.50. Interior Minister Abdulqadir Kahtan cancelled 90 percent of the fees, leaving the family to owe YR300,000, about \$1,400.

According to a report by the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), in collaboration with the Women's Forum for Studies and Training in Yemen, Yemeni law continues to discriminate against women. The report was prepared for the 75th session of the Human Rights Commission.

According to the report, some provisions in Yemeni law allow for domestic violence.

"Law enforcement lack vital skills and legislative frameworks to appropriately respond to complaints of domestic violence," the report said. "The dominant view amongst police officers is that women that report domestic violence cases are indecent. Several police officers who were asked their views about violence against women said that a respectable woman should toler-

ate assaults committed against her by family members, particularly by husbands. They also said that much of the violence is a result of women 'misbehaving'.

Since the issue of blood money was raised in 2010, the Women's National Committee (WNC) has worked hard to convince members of parliament to reform the law, but most have objected to any amendments.

Sana'a University law student Intisar Saleh told the Yemen Times that she feels that Yemeni women are treated like second-class citizens. Yemen has endorsed several international conventions and should respect that, she said.

"International law is supreme and we are optimistic about the committee established to reform the law following the end of the National Dialogue Conference," she said.

Another law student, Weam Abdulrahman, wondered if the government realized that the human rights conventions that it endorsed prohibited all discrimination against women.

"Even if the government understands these conventions, there are only a few political parties willing to support and implement them," Abdulrahman said.

Belquis Al-Salami, head of the Murooj Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, said the political mood towards women changes often, sometimes championing women and other times discriminating against them.

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Al-Salami said that women played a leading role during the popular uprising in Yemen but were marginalized following the reconciliation between political parties. "Women were given 30 percent representation in the NDC. We hope the Constitution Reformulation Committee will apply international conventions endorsed by Yemen—including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—to raise women's status. "We also call on them to apply

the provisions of the Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Violence Against Women, the Beijing Work Plan, the Elimination of Violence against Women Declaration and the SIDAW Agreement," Al-Salami said.

Experts say the time frame for pushing through legislation and rapid change could be narrow, and that the time is now to establish institutions to protect women and to guarantee those rights by enshrining them in the constitution.




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South wants independence, this time from the North

Southerners renew demands of October 14 revolution

Ail Ibrahim Al-Moshki

As Yemen commemorates the 50th anniversary of the October 14, 1963 revolution—chaos, disorder and calls for secession dominate the scene.

The 50th anniversary of the revolution coincides with the prominent position and priority given to the Southern Issue at the country's National Dialogue Conference (NDC). The commemoration coincides with an answer to the Southern Movement, also known as Hirak, which officially started in 2007. The Southern Movement is a movement against the central state, represented by the capital, Sana'a and the rule of former President Ali Abdulla Saleh.

As Southerners gather to commemorate the revolution on October 14 in the former capital of South Yemen, Aden, the revolutionary demands for the right to self-determination made 50 years ago sound remarkably similar to the demands being made today for a separate state and for the right of Southerners to rule themselves. That fight for self-determination ended in success when Southerners ended a 128-year-old occupation by Britain on November 30, 1967.

Sad Al-Deen Bin Taleb, Trade and Industry Ministry and NDC representative from Hadramout, told the Yemen Times that the current situation in the South is, to a great extent, similar to the South's situation in the 1960s. What's different, he said, is who they are demanding independence from.

"The only difference is that the North is now occupying us under



Hirak, or the Southern Movement, demands self-rule and an independent state.

the pretext of unity," he said. "The South and North came to unity together, but Southerners never expected that their rights would be trampled upon and their lands looted by Northern officials."

Taleb said that Northerner officials stole the wealth of the South and North and are still in power, even after the 2011 uprising that sought to end corruption. Taleb said the South must continue in the spirit of the October revolution to gain independence from the North.

Though the 2011 popular uprising ended the 33-year-rule of former President Ali Abdulla Saleh and resulted in the signing of the Gulf Initiative, which made the Southern Issue a priority—many Southerners are still wary of any solutions that

involve unity.

Bashraheel Hisham Bashraheel, editor-in-chief of the Al-Ayam newspaper—which was shut down in 2009 for covering Southern Movement protests—said Southerners who gave their lives during the October revolution could not have known that it would have ended this way.

"We have to respect the sacrifices they made and continue their struggle for an independent, honorable and dignified life," he said.

Head of the political sector of the Women's National Committee Intisar Sinan, who hails from Aden, said the situation in the South is unjust.

"To be slapped by a foreigner (the British) is easier than being

trampled by your own brother (North Yemenis) because injustice from your brother is [worse]," Sinan said.

"We tolerated the discrimination for a long time because we wanted to maintain unity, but we have realized that secession is the sole solution to end our torture by the North, especially from influential figures," she added.

Sinan said that prior to unification, the South had free education, electricity and health services, "but after we lost such things."

Sinan admitted that some Southern governorates flourished following unity, but that the wealth that was created went to Northern investors.

Hirak spokesperson Abdo Al-Ma'atari from Dhale, said there was no difference between British occupation and unity.

"It's as though there was no October revolution and British forces are still here," he said.

Majed Al-Shuaibi, also from Dhale, is the editor-in-chief of Al-Youm Al-Awal (The First Day), a weekly newspaper in Aden. He said the 50th anniversary of the October revolution is a renewal of their separation demands.

"The North violated unity's goals. It's their practices that have made us revolt," he said.

Al-Shuaibi said unity was im-



The October 14, 1963 revolution was the beginning of the end of British rule in South Yemen.

posed on the South by force following the 1994 civil war that lasted for two months. "The October revolution will aim to achieve its goals and gain independence."

Mukhtar Ali, a lawyer from Aden, said that Southerners rebelled during British rule and lost thousands of citizens in order to establish the Popular Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1967.

"Southern identity was obliterated following unity. It was the North that spread the weapons and tribal culture, nepotism, exclusion and marginalization which made Southerners feel as though they lost the values they had learned during British rule and Southern resistance," he said.

The mass protests, he said, are as

much against these harmful values as they are against Northern occupation.

Amongst the calls for secession, there comes a Southern voice every now and then that still has hope for a united Yemen.

Southerner, journalist and political activist Ameen Ba Rufaid said secession is often romanticized in the South.

"Yemen is a bird with southern wings and northern wings. The October revolution was inspired by the September 26 revolution in the North," he said. "Yemenis participated in and cheered for both revolutions. The South has its own warring factions and Southerners will be involved in a countless conflicts if there is secession."



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Fisheries minister: We will treat Eritrean fishermen like they treat ours

Families threaten to block Hodeida-Sana'a road if more is not done

Story by Samar Qaed
Photos by Sadeq Al-Wesabi

Thirteen months ago, brothers Saeed and Abdu Antar woke up early one morning to go fishing. Their mother was expecting them home for lunch after their trip to the fish market to sell what they had caught, but she hasn't seen her sons since.

Other fishermen have told her that her children are being detained in an Eritrean prison.

Abdu, 18, and Saeed, 15, are the only breadwinners in a family of 16, that includes 12 sisters, their mother and their paralyzed father. The family's financial situation has been devastated they said, and they worry about the safety of Abdu and Saeed.

"Our situation gets worse day by day," Um Saeed said.

There are 10 other families in the

rural Al-Ma'sala area of Al-Jaraheen district of Hodeida that have family members in Eritrean cells, according to residents.

The Yemeni government says that 600 Yemeni fishermen are being detained in Marsa, Fatima and Qadam prisons in Eritrea. Relatives say they have no way of contacting their imprisoned family members to enquire about their safety.

"Each day I pray to God to return my sons home safely. I haven't felt any happiness since they left," Um Saeed said.

Ali Al-Dhobibi, a 33-year-old fisherman from Hais district and a father of a two-year-old son, died in Qadam prison two months after being arrested in territorial waters, fishermen returning from Eritrea told his family.

"I was shocked, all I could do was scream and cry. I can't believe he died. I always tell myself that maybe someone else died—not my husband," his wife said.

Al-Dhobaibi was also the only breadwinner in his family, which also included his parents and four siblings, as well as his wife and child.

"Released fishermen who were

imprisoned with Ali told us he had died because of the hard labor he was forced to perform," she said.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced in the beginning of September the release of 1400 fishermen in Eritrea. The Fishery Cooperative Union says 1180 boats—the livelihoods of most fishermen—are still being held by Eritrean authorities.

Um Ahmed has been in black since she heard about her husband's death. Each time she hears of returning fishermen from Eritrea, she rushes to meet them to confirm her husband's death. All of them have confirmed, she said.

"My mother-in-law cried very much and lost her sight shortly after receiving the news," she said.

Eritrea has accused Yemeni fishermen of violating their borders, but according to an agreement brokered by France in 1995, Eritreans and Yemenis are to share fishing waters.

Fishery union member Salem Alyan says the government neglects fishermen and the issue of imprisoned fishermen in Eritrea.

"We will resort to international institutions for solutions," he said.

Fuad Mohammed's son is also detained in Eritrea, and has been there for over four months. There is nothing he can do to help release him, he said.

The Coastal Forces Authority (CFA), established in 2002, says its capacities are limited.

Shuja Mahdi, the operations department manager in the CFA said the authority does not have much of a presence on the Red Sea, Aden Gulf or Arabian Sea.

"We only have 13 patrols to monitor regional waters. This makes us mostly ineffective," Mahdi said.

Two months ago, the Yemeni government formed two committees—parliamentary and ministerial—to look into the issue. The committees were formed after the Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Abu Bakr Al-Qurbi went to Eritrea to discuss Yemeni-Eritrean ties.

Deputy Minister of Fisheries Abdulla Basanbl told the Yemen Times he is waiting to hear from the Eritreans to receive the two recently formed committees.

"The commander of the Eritrean marine forces is unwell, the diplomatic mission is awaiting his return," he said.

"If the Eritrean government does not respond, we will deal with Eritrean fishermen the way they deal with ours," Basanbl said.

Families have threatened to block the main road from Sana'a to Hodeida if more is not done.

The Foreign Affairs Ministry said the health conditions of detained Yemeni fishermen in Eritrean prisons was "good," according to Abdul-Il Al-Faqeh, the head of the African



The Yemeni government says that 600 Yemeni fisherman are being detained in Marsa, Fatima and Qadam prisons in Eritrea.

Department at the ministry.

The Yemeni acting ambassador to Eritrea visited Yemenis at the prisons. The ambassador told the Yemen Times that the prisoners were in good health and that he did not see any evidence of torture.

"We totally deny that there has been any torture in the prisons," said Mohammed Hamd, the Eritrean acting ambassador to Yemen.

"These were simply rumors circulated in the press." "There will be a joint ministerial committee with representatives of the two countries that will work to develop bilateral relations between the countries by the end of this year," Hamd said.

Three weeks ago, 70 families of detained fishermen traveled to Sana'a to protest in front of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi's home, calling for the release of their relatives. According to the union, Prime Minister Mohammed

Basindwa promised their relatives would soon be released, and investigations to look into the alleged deaths of five fishermen who were detained in Eritrean prisons.

Mohammed Al-Hassani was recently released from prison, but says his brother is still detained in Eritrea and has been there for a year.

He says conditions at the prison were poor. "We were like servants in Eritrea. We carried stones, dug holes and cleaned bathrooms," he said. "It was not a prison, it was a sheep pen. There was no ceiling to protect us against the sun or the cold. We slept on thorns."

Despite all Al-Hassani has been through, he says he will rent a boat and return to the sea to make a living. His boat remains in Eritrea. The relatives of the detained fishermen say they will escalate their protests if the government does not take action to release their relatives.



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Yemen's immunity law: Breach of international obligations

Extracts from the Amnesty International report

On 21 January 2012, the Yemeni authorities passed Law No. 1 of 2012 concerning the Granting of Immunity from Legal and Judicial Prosecution (hereafter "immunity law").

The law grants former President Ali Abdullah Saleh complete immunity from prosecution and provides his associates with immunity from criminal prosecution for "politically motivated acts" carried out during the course of their official duties. It was adopted following a power-transfer deal that was brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and signed on 23 November after negotiations that were facilitated by a UN envoy.

Amnesty International is concerned that the law will prevent victims of crimes such as torture, extrajudicial executions, and enforced disappearances from accessing justice, truth, and reparation. Amnesty International urges the Yemeni authorities to repeal the law and take any other measure necessary to ensure that no official in Yemen, regardless of his or her rank or affiliation, is immune from prosecution. It calls upon the international community, in general, to support these appeals and the GCC, in particular, to withdraw its support for immunity measures in Yemen.

Amnesty International has documented a series of incidents in Yemen in recent years that may constitute crimes under international law, including torture, extrajudicial execution, and enforced disappearances. Since 3 February 2011, the brutal repression of protests calling for reform have led to more than 200 protesters being killed and hundreds more being injured after security forces and government support-

ers repeatedly used live ammunition and other excessive and lethal force against largely peaceful demonstrations.

It has been repeatedly noted that impunity is the single most important factor contributing to the persistence of grave human rights violations. The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances has strongly argued that "perpetrators of human rights violations, whether civilian or military, become all the more irresponsible if they are not held to account before the court of law."

Amnesties for crimes under international law are prohibited
Amnesties for crimes under international law – genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture, enforced disappearance, and extrajudicial executions – are considered to be a violation of international law.

Furthermore, amnesties for grave violations of human rights and war crimes may also breach customary and treaty-based international law.

The prohibition of amnesties for crimes under international law and grave violations of human rights is based on the explicit duty of states to investigate and prosecute such crimes as well as on victims' right to truth, justice, and reparations. UN Special Rapporteur Louis Joinet stated that victims have the right to justice, which "entails obligations for the State: to investigate violations, to prosecute the perpetrators and, if their guilt is established, punish them."

Key international human rights treaties have made explicit the obligation of states parties to ensure effective investigation and prosecution of the crimes as well as the victims' right to judicial remedy, truth, and reparations. These conventions and treaties include: the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, In-

human, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture) (Articles 4.1, 4.2, 7.1, 14), the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances (Enforced Disappearances Convention) (Articles 3, 4), and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) (Articles 1, 4, 5, 6).

The Human Rights Committee, in an authoritative interpretation of Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) has confirmed that the ICCPR provides for the duty to investigate and prosecute (Article 2).

Amnesties for crimes under international law – genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture, enforced disappearance, and extrajudicial executions – are considered to be a violation of international law.

Similar views have been echoed in interpretations of regional human rights treaties, such as the American Convention of Human Rights (Article 1.1), African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Article 7), and European Convention on Human Rights (Article 13). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights also

provides for the right to an effective remedy by competent tribunals regarding violations of fundamental rights (Article 8).

Yemen is party to the ICCPR and Convention against Torture. Yemen has also incorporated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into its amended Constitution of 1994 (Article 6). Thus, the immunity legislation violates Yemen's international obligations to investigate violations of crimes under international law and other human rights violations, and where there is sufficient admissible evidence, prosecute those who are allegedly responsible for the crimes. The following section will discuss in detail obligations as well as victims' right to remedy arising from the ICCPR and Convention against Torture, in relation to the proposed immunity law.

ICCPR

The Human Rights Committee has repeatedly concluded that the ICCPR obligates states parties to investigate cases of summary executions, torture, and enforced disappearances; bring those responsible to justice; and provide reparations for the victims. In General Comment No. 20 on Article 7 of the ICCPR, the Human Rights Committee concluded that "States may not deprive individuals of the right to an effective remedy, including compensation and such full rehabilitation as may be possible." In its Concluding Observations regarding El Salvador, the Committee expressed:

The Human Rights Committee had raised concerns regarding the amnesty granted in 1994 to civilian and military personnel for human rights violations committed during the civil war in Yemen in May to July that year, stating that amnesty laws "contribute to an atmosphere of impunity."

In relation to Haiti's amnesty law, the Committee expressed its concern stating that "despite the limitations of its scope to political crimes" the amnesty provision might impede investigations of allegations of human rights violations, such as summary and extrajudicial executions, disappearances, torture and arbitrary arrests, rape and sexual assault committed by members of the armed forces and security services.

The Committee has reaffirmed this view regarding amnesty laws passed in other states, including Chile, France, and Lebanon.

Convention against torture

The Convention against Torture also imposes an unambiguous duty to prosecute the acts defined in the Convention as criminal. Article 4 states that states parties must "ensure that all acts of torture are offences under [their] criminal law," and establish jurisdiction over acts specified by the Convention under particular circumstances. These offences must also be made "punishable by appropriate penalties" which take into account the gravity of the act.

The express duty set forth by the Convention against Torture to institute domestic criminal proceedings, or extradite the suspect when requested by another state party, precludes states parties to the Conventions from enacting or applying amnesty laws to the crime of torture. In its third periodic review of Peru, the Committee against Torture has expressed concerns over the use of amnesty laws "which preclude prosecution of alleged torturers who must, according to articles 4, 5, and 12 of the Convention, be investigated and prosecuted where appropriate."

The Committee recommended that "amnesty laws should exclude torture from their reach," without citing any extenuating circumstances under which exceptions could be made. The Committee has criticized amnesty laws in other States as well, including Senegal, Croatia, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan.

Furthermore, amnesties for torture in armed conflicts constitute a violation of customary international humanitarian law. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) stated "state practice establishes this rule as a norm of customary in-



The historic moment of signing the GCC initiative agreement in Riyadh where Saleh surrendered power in return for impunity.

ternational law applicable in both international and non-international armed conflicts." The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) echoed this view by stating that an amnesty for torture would be "internationally unlawful."

UN and the immunity law

The power-transfer deal which led to the immunity law was facilitated by the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Jamal Benomar. Benomar's involvement in the deal directly contradicts the UN's policy against amnesties for crimes under international law and grave violations of human rights. Specifically, a UN Secretary-General's directive explicitly prohibits brokering peace agreements which grant immunity for crimes under international law. The Secretary General's report The Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies clearly states that "United Nations-endorsed peace agreements can never promise amnesties for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or gross violations of human rights."

Benomar has subsequently criticized the immunity law, arguing that the immunity law neglects the "rights of victims". Benomar further noted that "the UN in principle stands against this type of blanket immunity."

UN Security Council resolution 2014 on Yemen, adopted on 21 October 2011, sends conflicting messages regarding the UN's position on amnesties for crimes under international law and grave violations of human rights. While the resolution stresses "the need for a compre-

hensive, independent and impartial investigation consistent with international standards into alleged human rights abuses and violations, with a view to avoiding impunity and ensuring full accountability," it simultaneously reaffirms its support for "the engagement of the Gulf Cooperation Council" and its view that the implementation of "a settlement agreement on the basis of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative is essential" for political transition in Yemen, and "calls on all parties in Yemen to commit themselves to implementation of a political settlement based upon this initiative." According to the text of the law, Article 3 of the initiative required the Yemeni parliament to pass legislation granting "the President of the Republic and those who worked under him during his rule immunity from legal and judicial prosecution". Support for an agreement based on an initiative containing such a provision and commitment to ensuring accountability for grave human rights violations are mutually exclusive.

Other UN officials have publicly criticized the immunity law and urged Yemeni law-makers to repeal the provision. Specifically, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay has stated in relation to the immunity law that:

"International law and the UN policy are clear on the matter: amnesties are not permissible if they prevent the prosecution of individuals who may be criminally responsible for international crimes including war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and gross violations of human rights."

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Post Title: Managing Director
Organisation: National Microfinance Foundation (NMF)
Location: Sana'a
Duration: Full time, including 3 months probationary period
No. of Post: 1
Date Announced: October 03rd, 2013
Closing Date: November 03rd, 2013

Background

The National Microfinance Foundation was established by the **Social Fund for Development** in 2004 as a non-governmental organization that aims at improving the economic and social conditions of the low and limited income Yemenis, by providing them with a variety of financial services they cannot obtain from the mainstream banking sector.

Currently, NMF is one of the largest microfinance institution in Yemen, and as of August 30th, 2013 NMF had more than 14,800 active clients served through 13 branches and 4 offices spread across the cities and governorates of Yemen.

The NMF seeks a Managing Director to provide leadership, supervise staff, manage everyday activities, identify problems, provide solutions, prepare and ensure effective implementation of the Foundation's five-year strategic plans.

Specific responsibilities:

The Managing Director will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Develop the institution's strategic plan and ensure its implementation so that it meets the institutional goals.
- Pursue and supervise NMF's overall operations as well as manage its growth and profitability.
- Manage the branch network through middle management and conduct regular field visits.
- Ensure qualified personals for the top management positions as well as secure the development of all staff
- Develop the NMF's capacity and infrastructure to prepare it for the transformation into a microfinance bank in the future.
- Undertake regular reviews of policies and procedures, and advise NMF's Board of Directors on actions to be taken.
- Monitor the performance, development and portfolio quality.
- Supervise 120 + employees in the headquarter and branches.
- Assist NMF in mobilizing additional resources for TA or funding from local and international donors/investors.
- Develop and maintain relations with shareholders, creditors and local authorities.
- Ensure effective communication and coordination with the Board of Directors, donors, and other competitors and stakeholders.
- Ensure compliance with the laws of Yemen, the requirements of authorities and norms defined in the Charter of NMF, including implementation of effective internal controls.
- Represent the institution locally and globally.

Qualifications and skills

The Managing Director must have the following qualifications and skills:

- A Bachelor Degree as a minimum (Masters Degree preferred) from a reputable university in business, finance, management, economics, accounting, or any other related field.
- At least 5 years' professional experience in a bank or financial institution, of which at least 3 years were in management positions
- Proven track record in dealing with international donors or investors, research agencies and government institutions, etc.
- Good knowledge on Microfinance and the main parties that support the Microfinance industry locally and globally.
- Strong communication, public relations, organizational, and leadership skills.
- Mature, energetic, creative, and dynamic personality.
- Possess the ability to produce accurate and precise strategies, working plans, and reports to NMF's Board of Directors, donors, and other parties concerned.
- Competent with the use of computers.
- High proficiency in written and spoken Arabic and English.
- Willing and able to travel across the country and abroad.

Salary, benefits and others:

- Attractive salary (including social security), according to working experience and qualifications.
- Training opportunities will be available.

Submission guideline:

The application should comprise of a **one page** cover letter explaining the applicants' interest and suitability for the position, indicating earliest joining date if selected, and a **CV** with at least two **significant** references.

Interested candidates should submit their application by email to: smedhr@sfd-yemen.org no latter then 03rd of November 2013. Applications received after the closing date will not be considered. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews.

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Yemen polarized by Syria conflict

Farea al-Muslimi
Al-monitor.com
First Published Oct. 1

Amid talk of the role of Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) — two pro-al-Qaeda groups—in Syria, Al-Qaeda in Yemen committed a heinous massacre involving three separate attacks against members of the Yemeni security forces in the south of the country. Although some do not see this as indicative of a link between the activity of al-Qaeda in the two countries, when the battle between different factions and President Bashar al-Assad's regime began in 2011, al-Qaeda in Yemen was trying to tighten its grip on several regions. It even declared two Islamic emirates in Abyan and Shabwa, in the south of the country, before the Yemeni army regained control. This was an attempt to fill a power vacuum in the country and establish an Islamic state.

Recently, when the United States, Britain and other countries threatened to strike Damascus, the stances of different Yemeni factions changed vis-a-vis the Syrian situation. Those Yemenis who had maintained a moderate or even uninterested stance toward Syria became more involved in the course of events there. While the main parties were divided between the Muslim Brotherhood, which supported the revolution against Assad, and the Houthis' completely opposing stance, another stance appeared: that of the regular people, who despise radical fanaticism in favor of one party or the other. This third category saw the situation from a different perspective, one stemming from a common national feeling between the Arab countries and based on the historical background of Western-Arab relations.

It takes into consideration the bias of the West, especially the United States and Britain, in favor of Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is still the pivotal Arab cause. At the same time, the subliminal talk of extremist groups calling for jihad in Syria could be heard in the pulpits of mosques, reminding us of jihadists' work in Afghanistan during the past century against the Soviet Union.

An elderly man sitting in a coffee shop on one of the narrow side streets of Sana'a recalls that Syria and China were the only countries that did not close their embassies during the blockade on Sana'a in the 1960s. He notes, "Can any rational person compare the stances of Syria and any other country—like Saudi Arabia, for instance?"

His friend, sitting beside him, adds, "We do not need to go far. It is enough to restore the punctured Arab memory to reinterpret the Iraqi incidents ... it is the same as the current scenario in Syria. Didn't the United States destroy the Iraqi army using deceptive and fake pretexts?"

Some Yemenis believe that Syria is the first country in the confrontation with Israel. After the fall of the Iraqi army and considering the impartiality of the Egyptian army based on the Camp David Accord, the Syrian army was the only one that maintained a defensive national stance and maintained good training, even if it did not match the power of the Israeli army. Moreover, Syria still aims to destroy the Israeli army, according to this group, which cites the support of the West for the Syrian opposition including al-Qaeda (Jabhat al-Nusra) and Israel's recent strike on Damascus. Other Yemenis believe that Syria is a dictatorship allied with Iran under the umbrella of the axis of resistance that oppressed Syrians' freedom more than any-

thing else.

Contrary to public opinion—which could stem from support for Syria itself, not for Assad's regime or for its opponents—there is a severe rift between two main parties in the Yemeni equation. The split widens with the escalation of incidents revolving around Syria.

The Muslim Brotherhood—which is part of a regional alliance that extends between Ankara, Doha, Gaza, Sana'a and until recently included Cairo—was the first party to reject Assad and his regime, and the ideology of the Baath Party first and foremost. None of these countries hesitate to remind us of Assad's massacre against the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria in the early 1980s. Better yet, they can list the blunders of Assad's secular regime that encouraged immorality and obscenities in Syrian society. They go on to give the death toll that amounted to thousands who died in the past two years in the bloody battles between Assad and his opponents—battles that culminated in Assad using chemical weapons against his adversaries, they say.

The Houthis are the other party that constitutes an extension of the Tehran-Damascus-Hezbollah coalition. They believe that Assad is the last standing Arab president who opposes the United States and Israel, the primary enemies of Islam and Muslims. Moreover, they believe that the Syrian incidents are a conspiracy plotted by an internal party represented by the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria and Al-Qaeda terrorists, who are made in the United States, and a regional party embodied by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the Muslim Brotherhood's international organization.

They all orbit the United States and carry out its plans to control Arabs, divide their nations and undermine their positions to the advantage of Israel. Thus, anti-Assad

Syrians "deserve to be killed." The Syrian army victory has pushed the United States to defend them under the pretext of the use of chemical weapons, which—according to them—was a story fabricated by the CIA.

Other factions in Yemen are taking up with these two camps, only in regard to the Syrian situation. Thus, as a result of domestic conflicts between different parties in Yemen, former chief of staff Yehya Saleh, who is also the son of the brother of former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, visited Damascus and declared his support for Assad's regime.

Saleh is known for his anti-Muslim Brotherhood stance, especially following the ousting of his uncle in 2011.

Moreover, Naef al-Qanes—a Baathist leader and former spokesman for the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), of which the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Al-Islah Party is seen as the largest component—visited Damascus as well to express his support to Assad, contradicting the position of his Muslim Brotherhood allies.

One can say that the Muslim Brotherhood, along with an independent segment of the Yemeni people, support a US strike on Syria. Nevertheless, the Houthis feel they have achieved a victory against the Muslim Brotherhood in their systematic campaign to mobilize supporters. They saw that victory in the opposition of the Yemeni public to the strike on Syria, regardless of the motives behind it.

However, the battle between the conflicting Yemeni camps was not limited to contradictory opinions. Indeed, clashes between anti-Assad and pro-Muslim Brotherhood factions dragged on for weeks in parts of the Amran governorate, where both camps share control in the weak presence of the state.

Clashes culminated when the United States announced its intention to strike Damascus. Mediations between the two conflicting camps in Yemen did not ensue until after Washington and Moscow agreed on the issue of Syria's chemical weapons.

We ought to recall the mutual accusations between the two factions regarding sending Yemeni fighters to Syria. While the Muslim Brotherhood has been accused of sending mujahedeen to support the Free Syrian Army, the Houthis have been blamed for sending militants to back Assad. Both camps provided evidence to uphold their claims, and local newspapers published several reports to this effect a few months ago.

Some Yemenis believe that the US monopoly on leading the world following the fall of the Soviet Union has inflicted great damage upon the Arab region, in terms of wars and bloodshed. Thus, Moscow's recent stance against the strike on Syria once again evoked the sense that Russia—the Arab's old friend—is closer to Arabs than the United States and Britain. They believe that unlike the United States and Britain, Russia does not seek to manage the entire region and direct it according to its own interests.

On the other hand, many Yemenis do not find a logical explanation for the US stances on Syria. Indeed, the United States is in the same trench with Al-Qaeda against Assad, while on the international scale it is leading a war on terrorism. This is in addition to Yemen being hit several times by drones under the pretext of fighting Al-Qaeda there.

In any case, the United States continues to be accused of taking sides with one party against the other, even if such accusations are made to criminalize such factions and confirm their allegiance to this conceited world power, which em-

ploys all means to serve its vague objectives and strengthen its ambiguous alliances and positions.

On the other hand, Russia's stock is high due to its position on Syria and non-participation in any battle against Arab countries. Russia is only opposed by the Muslim Brotherhood, which has been against it since the era of the Afghan jihad against "atheist and communist leaders."

Yemen affected by Syria

Yemeni officials continue to be cautious about their position on the Syrian events. The Syrian Embassy and cultural center in Sana'a continue to operate normally and Yemen is still receiving Syrian refugees from both sides of the Syrian conflict.

It should be noted that any change of balance in Syria could lead to intensifying competition in Yemen between the Tehran axis and Ankara and their local and regional extensions.

However, not much will change in the balance of power on the ground in Yemen. Perhaps pro-Assad factions will receive wider sympathy, not because of their support for Syria, but because many Yemenis would support Syria itself—the country they once knew and where many of them graduated from college, including Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated students.

Eventually, as long as Doha and Riyadh continue to join hands against Damascus, the map of local conflicts in Yemen will not change substantially.

Farea al-Muslimi is a Yemeni youth activist, writer and freelancer. His work has appeared in The National, Foreign Policy, As Safir and many other regional and international media outlets.

Yemen: Sana'a is a living fairytale city

Farouk Luqman
Eurasiareview.com
First Published Oct. 4

Sana'a, Yemen's modern-day capital was hard to reach back in 1962. We had to drive all the way from Aden to the border, then onto the twin capital of Taiz, in order to reach the capital of the newly created Yemen Arab Republic. Aden was the capital of the British crown colony.

We rested in the former royal guesthouse in Taiz, the only place we could sleep and eat in. A small and ramshackle army had just revolted against the imam (that is, monarch-cum-religious leader) at the time.

Taiz was a small town not far from Aden. Nowadays, with improved roads, Taiz is two to three hours by car. I was one of a group of foreign journalists who wished to reach Sana'a, so we made use of a propeller aircraft, which was not jet-owned by an oil company drilling in Yemen, although at the time, they had yet to find their oil reserves.

Today, Yemen produces about a half million barrels and has high hopes of raising the figure to one million in the next few years if

the country is pacified. We flew to Sana'a within an hour and landed in its then very primitive airport, which was built as a gift by the Soviet Union.

China was building roads from Sana'a to the Red Sea coast. Sana'a was a glorious surprise, at least to me, since it was my first visit to the city. It was like entering into a fairytale, the kind I had read about in primary and secondary schools. Sana'a is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, easily being 3,000 years old.

It had remained largely undeveloped until the revolution of 1962 because it had been ruled by ancient dynasties and struggled for so long against foreign influences. It was a storybook city with no roads, as there were few cars anyways at the time. There were only two schools and no power connections like other cities abroad.

The first time Yemenis experienced schools, cinemas and newspapers was upon arrival to the British colony where I was born. The concept of hotels was foreign at the time, so we were put up in the only guesthouse available with the permission of the new government. The guesthouse was staffed by some of the young officers who had staged

the coup d'état.

The guesthouse where we stayed was comfortable, given the circumstances. The city was situated 2,300 meters above sea level, so we did not suffer much from heat, as the atmosphere was cool and embracing, making Sana'a one of the most comfortable cities in the Arab world. It has since become a lovely and modern city, with five-star hotels in abundance. Its fairytale-like old city, nevertheless, is magnificent and imposing and is a stone's throw from its modern boulevards and hotels.

I have visited the city several times since then, as it remains the capital of the Yemen Republic to which I belong. Amenities are available, although water is scarce and electricity supplies are erratic because of frequent subversion by rebellious tribes, who use their clout to blackmail the government into regularly paying them to keep power supplies running.

The modern section is well planned and has stations to continue onto the main cities uninterrupted. The fact that the government and the people almost always have to depend on diesel generators for power, which is costly, remains a matter of continuous agony and struggle.

There has been no solution to the problem so far and the government will have to double or treble its armed forces in order to ensure control of the tribes. However, five-star hotels have enough generators and can afford the cost of diesel around the clock. Sana'a was a popular tourist attraction for foreigners and locals from other areas alike prior to the spurt of violence.

Nevertheless, access to resources remains a continuous struggle with greedy and unruly tribes who demand more incentive every time. British writer Jonathan Raban visited the capital in the 1970s and described the city as "fortress-like, its architecture and layout resembling a labyrinth." He said it was like stepping out into the middle of a vast picture book. Away from the scene, the entire city turns into a maze of another kind, a dense, jumbled alphabet of signs and symbols.

I did not have to go far to describe the city when I decided to write a book about it. In fact, the cover of the book has a picture of the palace of the imam perched on a huge rock, which had no elevators in the nearby Wadi Zahr.

How the imam managed to climb it is a mystery given his advancing age and those of his equally

old guests. The palace still stands proudly as one of the most attractive houses in the world.

The new quarter is fairly modern, being only 50 years old, and is comparable to any other Arab city.

This is unlike the old city, which has been chosen by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site for its distinctive visual character thanks to its architectural features expressed in multi-story buildings with impressive facades and clean insides that vie with each other to create one of the distinctive cities in the world.

The city has a long history, which dates back to Shem, son of Noah, and has remained well-inhabited and nearly self-sufficient with the exception of a few products, which are imported by camel and donkey from other parts of the country.

The city, however, was so badly neglected by the imams and rulers of the time that it remained one of the most backward capitals for centuries.

Even the long Ottoman-Turkish occupation, which lasted until the end of the First World War in 1918, did little to alleviate the suffering of the people who lived at very basic levels of subsistence.

The country was embroiled in a bloody civil war following the revo-

lution of 1962, which took hundreds of thousands of lives and lasted seven years. By the time peace was restored in 1970, the people were armed to the teeth, with no ban on guns and no way to control the circulation of arms, from rifles to bazookas.

This phenomenon has worsened the security situation with the rise of civil disturbances and the constant sabotage of public utilities and politically motivated assassinations, which the government is sadly unable to stem effectively.

The present targets comprise the armed forces and members of the security and intelligence services, which have considerably reduced the flow of tourists and the development of the country's tourist industry.

Only the increasing flow of foreign exchange from the large emigré population, in addition to substantial foreign aid given by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, are presently keeping the country in fairly good shape.

Tourism, unfortunately, still has a marginal effect on economic development.

Farouk Luqman is a journalist based in Jeddah.

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October 14, 1963: The beginning of southern resistance to British rule

Story by Samar Qaed
Photos courtesy of Hassan Qassim

A British colony, Aden rose up against colonial rule on October 14, 1963. This year marks the 50th anniversary of that uprising. Southerners resisted occupation and won independence four years later, on November 30, 1967, and the South was declared the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. They resisted occupation with all means that were available to them. In response, British forces deployed military and security patrols, established checkpoints and arrested scores of Southerners. But the South, determined, prevailed and remained an independent nation until unification with the North on May 22, 1991.

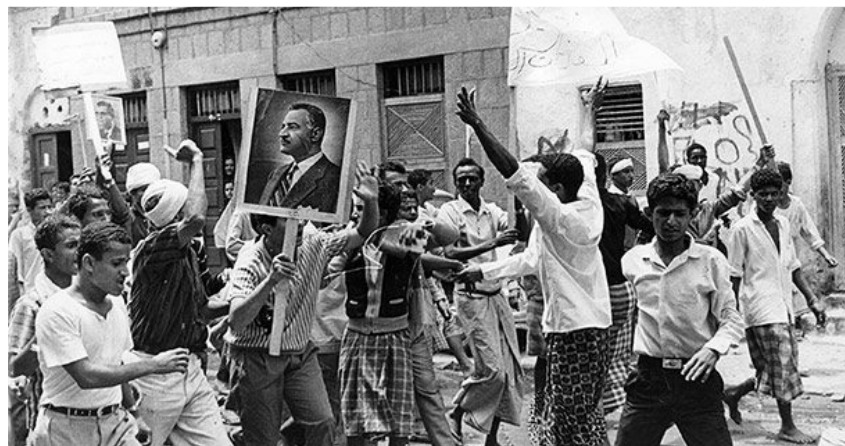
During British rule, Aden was renamed 'Crater' because of its location on a volcano.



Aden was the sole British base in the region after Britain lost its battle for the Suez Canal in 1956.



Armed resistance met British occupation. Resistance increased following the September 26, 1962 revolution in the North that saw the end of imamate rule. The revolution in the North established a foundation of support for the South to fight British rule.



A state of emergency was declared in Aden in 1958. There were many bombings and the British arrested and deported 240 Yemenis. Egyptian president at the time—Jamal Abdunnasser—encouraged Cairo radio to air revolutionary and national songs, inspiring anti-colonial movements throughout the region.



Many contemporary writers of the period, including Elizabeth Monroe, said the British presence in Aden justified the defeat of Britain because colonialism justified nationalist resistance.

Labor unions formed the largest base of the resistance. The pilots' union in Aden Harbor was established in 1952 and more unions followed. The British expected the unions to push for economic rights from employers, like the British model, but in Aden, many of the labor union's grievances—their national and economic demands—were political.

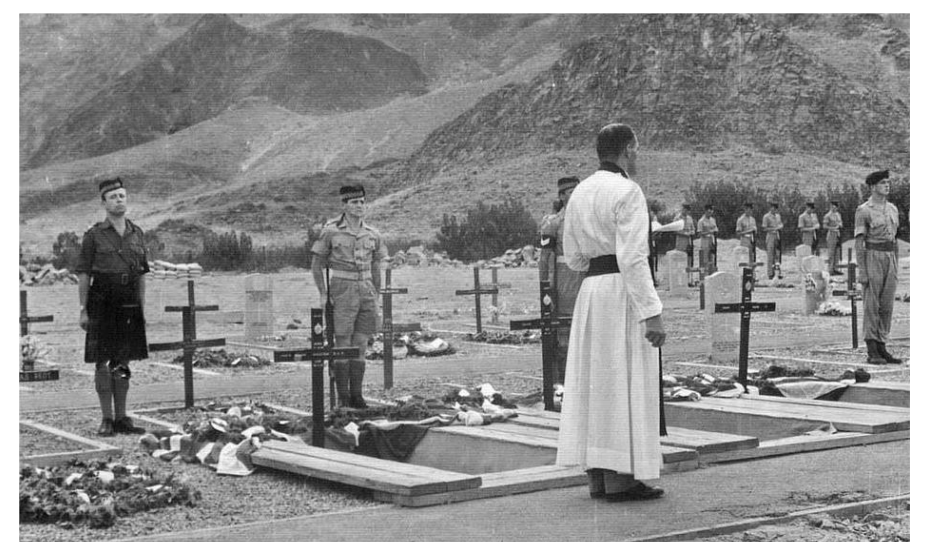


British High Commissioner Sir Charles Johnston survived a grenade attack by an unknown man in December 1963. Three passersby were killed in the attack.



British rule started in 1893 when Aden was mostly small villages with tents of fishermen and their families. The British established barracks and military camps.

India was also a British colony and the currency in Aden until 1951 was the Indian rupee. It was then replaced with the East African shilling. One shilling was the equivalent of one pound.



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OUT OF THE YEMENI KITCHEN

Kisher coffee



such as cinnamon, and ginger. Kisher coffee is one of those brilliant Yemeni inventions that minimizes waste. It is made from the dry shell of the coffee bean. The coffee shell has a great, tea-like flavor with less caffeine than coffee and provides many antioxidants. Kisher (derived from the word kishra (فشرة) in the Arabic language simply



Wigdan Al-Guneid

Kisher coffee is a drink that is not quite a coffee or tea. For many coffee lovers, the ritual of preparation is just as important as the coffee itself.



To prepare kisher coffee:

- ¼ teaspoon ginger powder
 - ½ stick of cinnamon
 - 2-3 cardamom seeds
 - 3 cloves
 - Pinch of nutmeg powder
- Kisher (for every 300 ml of water, add ¼ cup of kisher)



Add water, sugar, spices and kisher all together and let brew slowly until it turns to golden color.

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means the outer shell or skin.

It is usually brewed with spices such as ginger, cardamom, and

nutmeg, depending on the house hold it can include any combination of the above.



Smoked mistika residue

Wigdan Al-Guneid blogs about Yemeni food for the website YemenKitchen. Find more recipes at yemenkitchen.wordpress.com

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