YEMEN TIMES

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خدمة إتصل على حسابي ... لجميع مشتركي الدفع المسبق

- **إستخدام الخدمة :** إطلب 9* يليه رقم الموبايل المطلوب ثم إتصال.
- الخدمة متاحة لجميع خطوط الدفع المسبق ضمن شبكة سبأفون ولا تحتاج إلى تفعيل.
- إمكانية الإتصال حتى بدون رصيد بالنسبة للمتصل، لكن يشترط توفر رصيد كافٍ لدى الطرف الآخر حتى تتم المكالمة.
- **إستقبال المكالمة:** عند ورود المكالمة سيظهر رقم المتصل على شاشة الموبايل وعند الرد سيستمع المتلقي إلى رسالة صوتية تطلب منه قبول المكالمة على حسابه بالضغط على الرقم 1 أو رفضها بالضغط على الرقم 2 وفي حال كانت المكالمة من رقم موجود في قائمة السماح، سيظهر رقم المتصل على شاشة الموبايل وعند الرد سيتم إستقبال المكالمة مباشرة دون إنتظار موافقة الطرف الآخر.
- لإدارة الخدمة من قبل المتلقي، أرسل الامر المطلوب إلى 999 .

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WORKERS OF THE CAPITAL UNITE: About 1,000 union members and members of the February 11 Movement gathered in Tahrir Square on Wednesday on the eve of International Workers' Day. The secretary of the legal rights and freedom department at the General Union of Yemeni Laborers told the Yemen Times that the union was not presenting labor demands to the government because the government is not capable of meeting their demands. They have instead called for an end to the transitional government. **Story on page 2**. *Photo by Nasser Al-Sakkaf*

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Central Bank of Yemen demands urgent action to free kidnapped employees

■ **Madiha Al-Junaid**

SANA'A, April 30—The syndicate of the Central Bank of Yemen (CBY) on Wednesday called on the government and security forces to step up efforts to release four CBY employees and a Finance Ministry worker who were abducted in Al-Jawf by armed tribesmen on April 17.

CBY workers in Al-Jawf went on strike on April 20 and the syndicate is threatening to extend the strike to CBY branches throughout the country if it does not receive a response from the government.

"If we get no reply or any serious steps taken for the release of our colleagues by the end of the coming week, we will move the strike to the headquarters, and then to the other branch offices all around the country," said Aref Al-Salami, representative of the CBY syndicate.

Abdussalam Al-Aji, one of the kidnappers who spoke to the Yemen Times on the phone, said that they demand better services and an end to government corruption. He said that they have put other demands to the authorities which they would not disclose to the press.

"We kidnapped those five employees of the Central Bank as we couldn't reach the governor whom we accuse of corruption," said Al-Aji. The kidnappers intend to put pressure on Mohammed Bin Salim Abboud, the governor of Al-Jawf, to satisfy their demands. They say that they initially sought to kidnap the governor himself.

Rasheed Al-Barakani, deputy president of the syndicate, said that employees are afraid that kidnapping CBY workers will come to be seen as an easy way for tribesmen to get their demands heard.

"If we arrive at a deadlock and get no response, we will have to move the strike to the main branches of the bank and I am sure all employees will cooperate as this could happen to any of them if this kidnapping goes unpunished," he added.

According to Talal Al-Azzani, the Al-Jawf governor's secretary, the bank closure means that government employees are unable to receive their monthly salaries which are due at around this time.

The hostages, who are originally from Taiz, were traveling from Al-Jawf to Sana'a when they were kidnapped.

Speaking to the Yemen Times over the phone, Waleed Mejalli, one of the five kidnapped individuals, said "it was about 12pm... when we drove through Al-Khalq district and were threatened by two gunmen and told to get out of the Toyota Hilux we were in. We were led to another place where we saw the rest of the kidnappers."

Al-Azzani said that the abductors names have been blacklisted and security forces are searching for the culprits. He added that the governor does not intend to negotiate with the kidnappers as that would encourage kidnapping as a means of raising grievances.

The kidnappers, however, say that they want to deal directly with the governor himself.

"Soon the governor will have much pressure on him as he will have to deal with the angry people whose wages won't be paid because of the fact that the bank has shut down," said Al-Aji.

Mejalli said that the CBY deputy manager gathered the families of the hostages at the Central Bank in Al-Jawf on Sunday and together they sent a demand to the deputy governor to take urgent action to set the hostages free.

He said that the governor sent an "odd response" informing them that no military action would be taken for the sake of the hostages and their families.

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Security presence in Abyan beefed up as military offensive gets underway

■ **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**

SANA'A, April 30—Four-hundred security personnel joined military forces and Popular Defense Committee fighters in Abyan as part of an intensified security campaign in the Modaih and Lawder districts of Abyan governorate, according to Col. Mohammed Dunbo, the security manager of Abyan.

There are currently 1,600 troops concentrated in the area in addition to the popular fighters, said Dunbo.

"The campaign's aim is to purge Al-Mahfad, Modaih and Lawder districts in Abyan from Al-Qaeda militants," said Dunbo.

Saleh Al-Saribi, a resident of Lawder district, said he has seen armored vehicles and tanks spread out across the area and a considerable number of soldiers deployed in and around the city of Lawder.

Al-Saribi said clashes erupted on Monday between security forces and their allies and alleged Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) fighters. Shots and explosions were heard, he added.

"We are in a state of panic and worry. If a war between the militants and military forces occurs, we will be at risk. The military deployment in the streets is similar to what happened in 2011," said Al-Saribi.

This campaign follows Interior Minister Abdu Al-Tirb's claims that the ministry has shifted its emphasis from defense to offense, according to Mohammed Hizam, the deputy head of public relations at the Ministry of Interior.

On Wednesday, the state-run Saba News Agency reported that clashes were ongoing in the Lawder and Al-Mahfad districts of Abyan.

The agency quoted an unnamed source in the Fourth Military Command, which is leading the security campaign, as saying that clashes have thus far resulted in the death of three militants and the injury of another 10.

Neither the Saba News Agency nor the Defense Ministry website reported any casualty on the side of the military.

Mobile phone coverage was cut off today in Abyan. The Yemen Times could not reach local residents to verify the latest reports.

Abyan has been the scene of heavy fighting since armed Al-Qaeda affiliates took over the governorate in May 2011. They were expelled by the army in mid-2012.

Jamal Al-Najar, information officer at the Sana'a office of the UN Refugee Agency, said the 2011 fighting resulted in 200,000 internally displaced persons, most of whom later returned to their homes.

A series of joint U.S.-Yemeni strikes targeting alleged Al-Qaeda militants earlier this month resulted in over 60 deaths in Abyan, Al-Beida and Shabwa governorates.

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Shabwa fighting results in casualties on both sides

■ **Nasser Al-Sakkaf**

SHABWA, April 30—The Defense Ministry claimed five Al-Qaeda members were killed on Tuesday in Shabwa governorate in an offensive launched by security forces in collaboration with Popular Committee members. The Yemen Times was not able to independently verify the claims.

The government launched the offensive against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) affiliates this week in Abyan and Shabwa. The Al-Qaeda branch has been called the most dangerous in the world by U.S. officials.

The Defense Ministry did not disclose the number of security casualties, but local media reported sightings of two dead soldiers arriving at Ataq Hospital on Tuesday.

The campaign is in full swing in the Azan and Mafrq Al-Saeed areas of Maifa and Radhoom districts, respectively, in Shabwa governorate.

The mountainous Azan area, in Shabwa governorate, is a reported stronghold of militants in the governorate and borders Al-Mahfad district of Abyan.

Reports emerging from the area said 15 soldiers died in fighting in Azan in an ambush by AQAP militants.

Zabin Atia, a local journalist in Shabwa, said that in addition to the two dead security forces seen at the hospital, many soldiers were injured in the offensive.

"The campaign was launched simultaneously in Shabwa and Abyan in order to [devastate] the terrorists," said Mohammed Hizam, the deputy head of public relations at the Interior Ministry.

He denied reports that security forces were ambushed during the offensive in Azan.

"Light and heavy weaponry were used in the clashes. Warplanes could be heard and seen overhead," Atia said.

The defense minister, Major General Mohammed Nasser Ahmed, and the head of the National Security Burea, General Ali Hassn Al-Ahmadi, were in Shabwa governorate on Monday, according to the state-run Saba news agency.

Al-Ahmadi said the Supreme Security Committee is planning to rid Shabwa of the militants once and for all, according to Saba.

On April 21, the Interior Ministry reported that dozens of Al-Qaeda militants were killed in aerial raids in Shabwa, Abyan and Al-Beida. The raids followed a video released by the militants in mid-April, showing a large gathering of Al-Qaeda members openly meeting.

German diplomat evades apparent kidnapping attempt

■ **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**

SANA'A, April 30—A German diplomat sustained minor injuries after unidentified gunmen shot at the car he was traveling in with a colleague in Sana'a late Monday, according to the Ministry of Interior.

In what is believed to have been a kidnapping attempt, gunmen opened fire on the car after they failed to get the Germans' vehicle to pull to the side of the road in the Hadda district, home to many Western embassies.

"The perpetrators fled the scene, but investigations are underway," said Mohammed Hizam, the deputy director of public relations at the Ministry of Interior.

The German Foreign Ministry told the AFP that an embassy vehicle came under fire, adding that all passengers were "safe."

Seven months ago, another German Embassy worker was shot dead at a supermarket on Hadda Street in what was also believed to have been a kidnapping attempt.

The incident on Monday comes at the heels of another purported kidnapping attempts of a Westerner that ended in the death of two would-be abductors. According to Hizam, Yemeni authorities are looking for a male foreign national who is believed to have shot dead the two Yemeni nationals with a weapon in his possession on Thursday after they tried to abduct him outside a barber shop on Hadda Street, in south Sana'a.

The foreigner has been identified as Russian in several media reports, but Hizam says there is reason to believe the man is American although he could not provide any further details.

The Yemen Times tried to contact the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a but received no response as of press time.

"We are looking for [the foreign man] to [bring him in for questioning, said Hizam.

According to Ahmed Harba, the press secretary for the minister of interior, the passport authorities at Yemen's international airports have been ordered to intensify travel procedures and carefully check passport identities.

"The Interior Ministry has informed us about the name of the suspect," said Khalid Al-Shaif, the director of Sana'a International Airport, but he added there have been no restrictions placed on the travel of non-nationals.

Kidnappings have increased in frequency recently in Yemen. A Uzbek doctor was abducted on April 13 in Sana'a but was released a week later as a result of tribal mediation.

A majority of kidnapping victims are used by tribes in rural governorates who use them as pawns to gain concessions from the central government.

At least one German national and one British citizen are currently being held by captors, believed to be tribesmen.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is believed to have a South African teacher, a Saudi diplomat and an Iranian diplomat in their custody.

Union members, February 11 Movement hold protest, call for end to transitional government

Story and photo by **Nasseer Al-Sakkaf**

SANA'A, April, 30—About 1,000 union members gathered in Tahrir Square on Wednesday and marched to the Parliament and Cabinet, calling for the end of the transitional government.

The February 11 Movement and the General Union of Yemeni Laborers called the demonstration to demand an end of the transitional government.

Abdulla Al-Jabri, the secretary of the legal rights and freedom department at the General Union of Yemeni Laborers, told the Yemen Times that the union has pressing labor demands, but feels it cannot even present them to the government because it is incapable of fulfilling such demands.

The transitional government was established in December 2011, following the stepping down of former President Ali Abdulla Saleh as a result of the 2011 youth uprising. The government consists equally of the former ruling and opposition parties, as stipulated by the Gulf Initiative as part of the power transfer deal.

Demonstrators condemned the government for corruption. The February 11 Movement had a similar demonstration in mid-April.

Memebers of unions and the February 11 Movement took to the streets to condemn corruption and demand an end to what they say is a failing transitional government.

This latest march came one day before International Workers Day.

"We have taken a united stance with the union—our demands are identical," Talal Aqlan, a member of the February 11 Movement, told the Yemen Times. Workers are the backbone of the country, Aqlan said, and the February 11 Movement will support them.

"This march is only the beginning if our demands go unfulfilled," said Al-Jabri. The union includes 15 syndicates—all of whom participated in the march, according to Al-Jabri.

"If the protests are ineffective in securing our demands we will take the squares and remain there until our demands are met," he added.

Robbers target Ghail Ba Wazeer Post Office

Make off with $45,000

■ **Ali Saeed**

SANA'A, April 30—Unidentified armed men made-off with YR 9.8 million ($45,000) from the Ghail Ba Wazeer Post Office in Hadramout governorate Monday evening, according to a local official.

In Yemen, the post office dispurses salaries of government employees at the district level. Workers line up at the end of every month to receive their pay.

"While workers gathered to receive their salaries, seven gunmen showed up on motorcycles. Five went into the buiding and two stayed outside as guards," said Yasser Ba Ma'afa, secretary general of the Ghail Ba Wazeer local council.

The gunmen were unmasked, but could not be identified because they were not residents of the district, according to Ba Ma'afa.

"When they arrived at the office, they ordered everyone to get on the floor. One of the gunmen had a taser and pulled the manager of the post office aside and had him open the safe. They then took the money and fled the area," he said.

The men behind the robbery are suspected of similar robberies in the same district, according to the district general manager, Ahmed Bin Humam.

Government offices have been an increasing targeting for robberies since January, Bin Humam said.

"The state is useless and [with all the chaos], there are those who take advantage of the situation to carry out these robberies," Bin Humam said.

On January 23, unidentified armed men stole a 2008 Toyota Hilux belonging to Bin Humam.

"It was about 10:30 a.m. The men stopped my son on the road and threatened to kill him. They then took the car," he said.

Armed men also stole three vehicles from the Public Water Corporation office in the district in mid-February, he added.

Two shot dead in Sana'a bookshop

■ **Sina Khalid**

SANA'A, April 30—Two people were killed on Monday afternoon by unidentified gunmen in the Al-Ghadeer Bookshop in Al-Dairi Street, near the new Sana'a University.

Ahmed Saeed, an employee at the Basmala Media Production Center, located near Al-Ghadeer Bookshop, told the Yemen Times that a child who had gone to buy something from the bookshop found the two corpses.

"We didn't hear the shooting" he added.

Mohamed Hizam, deputy director of public relations at the Ministry of Interior, said in a conversation with the Yemen Times that investigations are currently underway and the ministry is unable to provide details of the case.

Yemen Meteorology Center warns of flooding

■ **Amal Al-Yarisi**

SANA'A, April 30—The Yemeni Meteorology Center on Wednesday warned Yemeni residents living in lowlands and valleys to take precautions against possible flooding due to heavy rains over the past week.

"Al-Mahweet governorate saw the heaviest rains all year on Tuesday," said Dharar Al-Ademi, a weather forecaster a the center.

Due to a lack of infrastructure, Yemen's biannual rainy seasons, typically bring both the loss of human life and structural destruction.

Cleanup complete after fire caused by oil tanker accident in Hodeida

■ **Madiha Al-Junaid**

SANA'A, April 30—Authorities and citizens have finished cleaning up after a mid-day traffic accident between an oil tanker and a Hilux truck on April 28 in the city of Hodeida that resulted in two deaths and a large fire that burned through the night.

The two men traveling in the Hilux were the casualties. The tanker truck driver survived the accident and is currently being held by authorities pending an investigation of the accident. One victim, identified as a 30-year-old from Mahweit governorate, died upon impact and the other, a 36-year-old also from Mahweit, was taken to a nearby hospital where he was pronounced dead.

In addition to the two vehicles in the accident, a police patrol car that arrived to the scene and a nearby motorcycle were also destroyed in the fire's flames. According to the Mushtaq Al-Sobaihi, an officer in in the local police department who was present for clean up efforts, the police car was engulfed in flames after arriving to provide assistance. He said the policemen operating the vehicle had parked a safe distance away from the accident but the fire unexpectedly and very quickly.

"The massive fire spread to nearby side roads," Al-Sobaihi said.

The Interior Ministry's website reported that "airport, harbor and Ministry of Defense firefighting teams were eventually able to control the expansion of the fire and extinguish it."

Although there has been no official release on the cause of the crash, Al-Sobaihi said it is believed that the diesel truck was traveling at too high of a speed when it collided with the Hilux, which may have been trying to pass the large tanker truck.

According to Mohammed Al-Maqalih, the general manager of the Hodeida Security Department, before the fire erupted, citizens tried to help remove some of the oil that spilled by scooping it up with water bottles.

"Police then led people away from the accident [as flames erupted]," Al-Maqalih said.

The motorcycle that was destroyed in the fire was reportedly traveling at too high of a speed when police tried to stop it. Although the driver was not hurt, the motorcycle slipped from beneath him and and slid into the fire, Al-Sobaihi said.

Al-Maqalih says a similar incident took place in the area six months ago where an oil truck collided with another vehicle and spilled the entire contents of the truck on the road.

"Fortunately, fire didn't erupt. Concerns were high and it took firefighters one whole day to make sure the fire was suppressed," said Al-Maqalih.

It is a worrying trend for many who say that a disregard for speed is leading to the accidents.

"Nowadays, drivers..pay no attention to tankers' driving speed regulations," said Abdulla Al-Mogheerah, a traffic officer in Sana'a.

كليات سليمان الراجحي
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منح دراسية في كليات سليمان الراجحي الأهلية
(المملكة العربية السعودية)

كليات سليمان الراجحي الأهلية،

هي كيان تعليمي متكامل غير هادف للربح، يتطلع إلى تقديم تجربة تعليمية متميزة عبر اصطفاء أفضل الطلاب في العالم الإسلامي وإعدادهم من خلال كوكبة من الأساتذة والموظفين ذوي الخبرة والكفاءة والشخصيات المتميزة، لتخريج قادة للمجتمع، يحملون شخصيات متكاملة الجوانب، تؤهلهم إلى قيادة ركب النهضة الحضارية للأمة الإسلامية.

وقد أبرمت الكليات شراكات أكاديمية مع جامعات عالمية حرصاً منها على تقديم تجربة تعليمية وشخصية متكاملة، فالطالب في كليات سليمان الراجحي لا يتخرج فقط بشهادة علمية عالية المستوى معترف بها عالمياً ومصدقة من جامعة ماسترخت الهولندية العالمية، ولكن يتخرج أيضاً بمجموعة متكاملة من الأدوات العلمية والشخصية التي تُقدم بمستوى عالمي احترافي، ومزيج من التجارب والخبرات التي تصقل الشخصية وتطورها لتكون شخصية قيادية فذة ومؤثرة في كل المجتمع.

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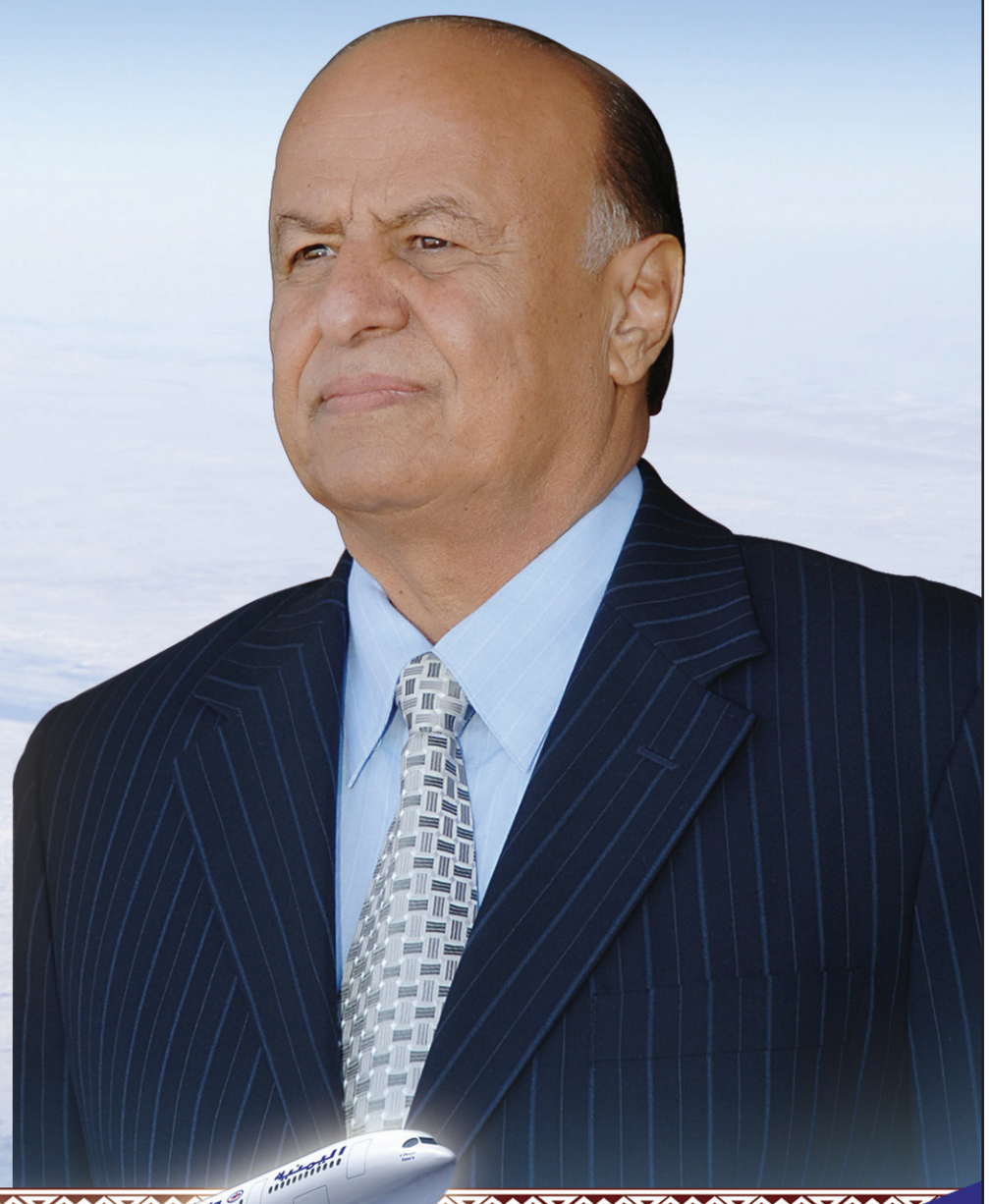

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Sporty SUV set to propel Porsche into new segment

Porsche Centre Yemen reveal of the all-new Macan

Sana'a. The world's first sports car in the compact SUV segment, the Macan, has been revealed to an excited audience by Porsche Centre Yemen, at an exclusive event that took place yesterday in Sana'a. The introduction marks Porsche's pioneering move into a new segment, following in the footsteps of the brand's most successful model in the luxury SUV range, the Cayenne.

The unveiling event was held under the theme "Life, intensified.", a phrase which exemplifies what Macan represents. Commenting on this occasion, Christer Ekberg, Managing Director of Porsche Middle East and Africa FZE, said: "With the all-new Macan, Porsche is launching a world first and enter a new segment. I have no doubt that this car will be another success for Porsche, with the long-term commitment and intensive efforts of our local Porsche Centre in Yemen."

Poised to set new standards in driving dynamics and enjoyment, both on and off the road, the new Macan boasts the typical sporty handling characteristics that have become synonymous with the Porsche brand. Many of the design and performance elements have been inspired by the brand's sports cars, including the iconic 911 and the revolutionary 918 Spyder, making it clear that the compact SUV heralds the first of its kind.

Featuring exceptional acceleration, vast engine power, extreme agility and optimum steering precision, the Macan is set to rewrite the rulebook on outstanding sporting comfort and everyday usability. The sporty DNA of the Macan, as with all Porsche vehicles, is immediately recognisable in the design. The compact SUV is unrivalled in its flat and broad profile on the road. The wrap-around bonnet and gently sloping roof line accentuate the overall impression of sporty elegance and powerful dynamics. Two derivatives are now available at Porsche Centre Yemen: Macan S and Macan Turbo.

As the top derivative, the Macan Turbo is set to be the most powerful petrol-powered vehicle in the compact SUV segment. The 3.6-litre V6 biturbo engine, which is being used in a Porsche model for the very first time, achieves an unrivalled 400 hp and catapults the vehicle from 0 to 100 km/h in just 4.6 seconds (with Sport Chrono package), reaching a top speed of 266 km/h.

Mr. Jamal Hayel Saeed, General Manager of NATCO Holding CO. LTD., said:

"As you would expect, we have had a great deal of interest in the new Macan. Last year the Cayenne, our luxury SUV, proved to be the brand's most popular model range and we are excited to expand our SUV offering, reaching a new group of customers. The sporty dynamics of the Macan inject an added dose of fun which I believe is set to redefine the SUV market."

The name Macan comes from the Indonesian word for Tiger, a spirit the car truly embodies. Boasting pure Porsche power and assertiveness, the Macan is also a nimble yet tenacious off-roader. The latest stage of evolution of the all-wheel drive – known as Porsche Traction Management – has produced one of the world›s most powerful drive systems.

Mr. Fathi Abdulwase Hayel, CEO of NATCO Holding Co. LTD., delivered a speech in the 10th anniversary of establishing the Porsche Center in Yemen, saying that the inauguration ceremony of Porsche Macan is an evidence of the ongoing success of NATCO.

PORSCHE

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YT vision statement

"To make Yemen a good world citizen."

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

OUR OPINION

The horse and the water

There is a phrase that goes: You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink.

This is Yemen's experience with the international community.

The international community continues to fail to understand that we have a mind of our own. What may seem logical to others, may not be the case with us, especially if we are not interested to begin with.

Two years ago, Friends of Yemen met with Yemen's government and decided on the transitional priorities plan 2012-2014, pledging 8 million dollars to implement it. Today we are almost midway through 2014 and only 65 percent of the pledges have come through. Not a single priority has been completed.

Friends of Yemen has held two high-level ministerial meetings since 2012 to review the progress of the transitional program's implementation and every time there have been complaints that nothing much has been achieved. The horse just won't drink the water!

So, as a result of a proposal from Yemen's Foreign Minister Dr. Al-Qirbi, Friends of Yemen will now have a more hands-on approach. In addition to a ministerial group, there will be a steering committee that meets every six months as well as three working groups—political, economic and security—to meet every month. This is a step by step approach and breaks down the obstacles to implementation and includes a close follow-up mechanism. I wonder why we did not do it from the beginning. Now the water will be brought closer in smaller quantities and made more tempting.

What if, even with this working groups mechanism, there is not much progress? The international community fails to realize that the problem is not with the water, it is with the horse!

Unless Yemen takes the lead in this process and sincerely wants to improve its own situation, then no matter what mechanism we use, the situation will become worse.

If the Yemeni government is really committed to implementing the transitional program, how do we then explain that the national plans of the various sectors and the national budgets of 2013 and 2014 are not in line with the transitional priorities decided in 2012? It is as if the government is doing its business as usual and there is no concern that we are on the verge of an economic and humanitarian disaster.

The outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference present us with an opportunity to review the transitional priorities, taking into consideration today's indicators and not those of 2012. With the new Friends of Yemen mechanism, emphasis will be on the NDC's outcomes and their implementation in the various ministries. The Friends of Yemen's three working groups should work closely with the national authority responsible for overseeing the implementation of the NDC's outcomes.

This sounds like a good plan. But even then, if the people in charge do not want to change their ways and quit playing politics, then there will be no progress. The situation will get worse and worse. Political will and good leadership in the government are what we really need at this stage. We need a strong prime minister to put an end to all this mess and keep all ministers on their toes. It is not business as usual, it's emergency mode.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Do Arab states really engage with human rights?

Henriette Johansen
middleeastmonitor.com
First published April 14

With growing demands for "bread, freedom and social justice" across the Arab Spring countries, many have started to question the status of human rights in the region and, more specifically, whether Arab states actually have any engagement with them in any meaningful way. Brutal clamp-downs and massacres by state security services have been accompanied by international support for regime changes, from the likes of French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé and British Prime Minister David Cameron among others.

Both have urged the international community to "shoulder" demands for rights and regime change in order to further democracy and the application of international human rights, although critics point to the sub-text that this is merely an excuse to cover their collective fear of Islamist groups coming to power in the Middle East. At the beginning of the Arab Spring revolutions, Cameron told the Daily Telegraph that if Western governments did not provide support to people defending their rights, prolonged chaos in the region would breed Islamic extremism and accelerate the pace of immigration by North Africans to European countries. Such support would thus be "good for us back at home". It is clear that the morality of human rights can fall short of genuine conviction when faced with political interests.

There appears to be an inherent Western bias in UN human rights bodies and many accusations have been made about Arab states' "sloppy" engagement with human rights. In a talk this week by Fateh Azzam, former UN Regional Representative for the region, founder of Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship and Senior Policy Fellow at the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut, he scrutinised these allegations and dismantled misconceptions about Arab states' motivation to improve human rights.

Findings

Azzam determined that in terms of legal obligations vis-à-vis human rights in Arab states, they are there. If we look, for example, at the 21 members of the Arab League, engagement and ratification can be detected, especially with regards to conventions covering women and children's rights.

However, if we look at the most important part—the implementation of conventions—there is some inconsistency. States have to report periodically to the bodies responsible for the treaties, each of them with a committee of experts appointed by states but acting independently and not as representatives of the states charged with the implementation of regulations to meet human rights goals. In the reporting process there are major issues over delays, especially from Arab states; some have delays up to 13 years. Half of the states in the region are "seriously late" presenting their reports, Azzam pointed out. On the reporting of civil and political rights ten of the states were delayed by a minimum of two years. Reports on women's and children's rights are almost never late.

All of the conventions also have Optional Protocols, most of which require states to accept individual complaints about abuses of the various treaties to be submitted to state governments. Very few Arab states have signed the Optional Protocols allowing individuals to file complaints and raise issues, suggesting that they are not ready to subject themselves to international scrutiny.

There are 36 working groups mediating between NGOs and states. They aim to ensure that national legislation and the implementation of rights correspond with UN treaties signed and international human rights law. "There is a very patchy engagement by the mandate holders of the working groups on human rights," Azzam said. "They don't seem to accept that there is criticism and that we are going to do something about this." Frankly, he noted, some of the correspondence was a waste of time. You have to receive permission to enter a country to see if implementation of specific issues has been carried out; this could be done by a Special Rapporteur. There are also open invitations, which gives the representative the liberty of visiting more freely but only five Arab states have signed up to this within the past five years. Transparency in implementation of the ratified treaties and respect for them is very rare.

There appears to be an inherent Western bias in UN human rights bodies and many accusations have been made about Arab states' "sloppy" engagement with human rights.

Palestinian rights

There has been an increase in the number of issues raised about Palestinian rights through UN mechanisms, especially in Lebanon. Many recommendations on behalf of the UN have been made concerning the treatment of Palestinian refugees and the dire consequences when fundamental rights are lacking. Government responses are always very defensive; Lebanon has rejected all recommendations, on the grounds that "they [the international community] don't understand what it's like in Lebanon with millions of refugees", explained Azzam.

Despite constituting a quarter of the total Lebanese population, there is still no system in place for refugees for a regional approach to deal with the issue. According to refugee law, the longer a person has refugee status the more rights they should accrue with regards to social and economic life and their long-term requirements. As MEMO's previous reports show, this is not the case in Lebanon.

How serious do the Arab states take their engagement with human rights?

According to Azzam, the way that the Arab states engage with UN human rights mechanisms is no different from the rest of the world. However, whether they are doing this because of real commitment to the human rights issue is debateable.

The Arab states' discourse on human rights has changed, from being more or less redundant to seeing the vacuum filled by faith-based, usually Islamic, civil society organisations. Welfare and the protection of civilians was regarded as a Western liberal construct forced upon all other states. As the human rights paradigm grew more important in international relations discourse, the Arab world could not maintain this position.

The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam was developed in 1990 in order to respond to the increasing legitimacy of the human rights paradigm, effectively setting out how the Arab states see human rights in accordance with Islam. This more or less failed to accommodate either.

Now, the Arab states are trying to conform to international human rights law and mechanisms and engage fully. "They are trying to do what they want to do, within the limits of what they think [the UN] will accept," claimed Azzam. There is a commitment to human rights, but "our way, let us do it our way" he recounted from his recent meeting with a regional monarch. This is mainly due to a commitment to "cultural traditions".

Moral and political interplay within the UN system is very extensive and there is always the underlying assessment of western influence and to what extent it is a product of Euro-American ideological history. The UPR (Universal Periodic Review) reports and recommendations, civil and political rights concerns were raised twice as frequently by international NGOs and four times more by non-Arab states, than they were by national/regional NGOs and Arab states respectively. In response to these recommendations, Arab states were more or less silent and entirely silent on the issues of the physical security of citizens, including protection from torture, Azzam's latest report said.

Welfare and the protection of civilians was regarded as a Western liberal construct forced upon all other states. As the human rights paradigm grew more important in international relations discourse, the Arab world could not maintain this position.

Could the UN play a bridging role for Arab states and human rights?

There is a sense that the UN is more optimistic and willing to enforce rights but it is a complex organisation. Nevertheless, argued Azzam, UN agencies and programmes on the ground have the capacity to play a bridging role between local states and human rights.

Further, as they are obligated to create an annual report for each country, UN agencies need more engagement with states. "In looking at what treaties they are obligated to implement, a part of the plan has to be that the UN helps the state to achieve this through legislation," Azzam said. "We do this with the support of expert NGOs, research centres, human rights activists; that's the bridging role, I am thinking about."

The UPR is a relatively new mechanism established in 2006 by the UN General Assembly of the UN as a function of the Human Rights Council; every four years the states are reviewed individually, and all concerned parties and stakeholders may contribute to this review, following up each state's improvements. This function will, according to Azzam, assist states in bridging between human rights and the state, as it is more action-oriented and merges together human rights mechanisms in the UN.

Why should we deal with Arab states regionally rather than individually?

Azzam believes that there is a sense that states can help each other, in the context of the region: "We are a unity, and it is different if we coordinate with for example Amnesty or HRW, whether we find it useful or hampering in furthering human rights; we feel it is very important."

Regional coordination has fluctuated over the years and there are disagreements, but in the end some of the common issues in the Gulf and Levant are shared.

In this regard, many discussions have taken place recently on many levels about an Arab Human Rights Court, but nothing has yet materialised. Discussions took place during the review of an Arab Human Rights Charter where all human rights activists wanted this court to be created, "but the states would not hear of it!" The most they would accept, said Azzam, was a committee. Although there is a Latin American commission, and an African and European court, the Arab states decided not to go ahead.

"The real issue with the establishment of an Arab court is this concept of sovereignty and being willing to submit your decision-making and the way you run your state to regional or international scrutiny," Azzam explained. "Having someone else telling you how to run your state is problematic."

The Arab states are very defensive of their sovereignty and the human rights paradigm has cut into that sovereignty, particularly since the start of the Arab Spring. "We have common issues and can mediate between the often Western-centric nature of the global UN discourse on human rights, and what some would designate 'cultural traditions', inhibiting their enjoyment." Furthermore, added Azzam, identity is in some sense involved as human rights concerns are frequently shared amongst these states, and could be answered most effectively in cooperation. "We speak the same language—not Arabic—but the same language of human rights."

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Friends of Yemen restructured to mitigate impending crisis

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

UK Foreign Office

Friends of Yemen delegates meet in London. The humanitarian situation has worsened in Yemen amid a major backlog in financial aid from the international community.

Two years after Yemen's friends came together with pledges of support, the economic and security situations in the country are worse, not better. The seventh Friends of Yemen conference that began in London on Tuesday highlighted this fact and the urgency to change the way such meetings have been conducted in the past.

As Yemen's Foreign Minister Dr. Abubakr Al-Qirbi explained, Yemen has focused too much on politics over the last two years.

"We managed to avert a civil war through the GCC initiative and had this not been achieved the humanitarian situation would have been much worse. Yemen deserves credit for that," said Al-Qirbi at a humanitarian event on the eve of the Friends of Yemen conference. The conference was organized jointly by the Yemen Relief and Development Forum, The Humanitarian Forum, UNOCHA and Oxfam.

However, he also acknowledged that the government and its stakeholders must address the real challenge—the economy. This is why there has been a restructuring in the way the Friends of Yemen conference works, by forming working groups which are supposed to direct the attention to economic issues.

UK Minster of State for International Development Alan Duncan agreed and said that Yemen and its friends must remember the scale of humanitarian need. He said that although Yemen has provided an example of political success, politics alone will not solve all the country's problems.

The restructuring has meant that instead of Friends of Yemen being an annual ministerial meeting, there are now three working groups—political, economic and security—and the chairing of the groups is rotational. Each group will meet once a month, the steering committee will meet every six months, and the high level ministerial meeting will meet annually as usual.

Also, in terms of the mandate, priorities of the transitional program will have to be re-evaluated and based on the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) outcomes, the GCC initiative, UNSCR resolutions 2014 and 2051, and the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF).

Each working group will establish its own terms of reference in consultation with the steering committee, and each will decide on its own subordinate structures and may establish a mechanism for other countries to participate on a consultative basis.

The steering committee will comprise of Yemen (represented by the minister of foreign affairs and a representative from the president's office), the UK and Saudi Arabia. It is responsible for establishing the strategic priorities for the political, economic and security working groups, monitoring Yemen's transition and ensuring Friends of Yemen activities are directed to support priority reforms. It will also report to the Friends of Yemen annual ministerial meeting and address threats posed to a stable transition based on recommendations from the working groups.

In an exclusive interview with The Yemen Times, UK Minister for the Middle East Hugh Robertson explained that there were two main points stressed at this latest conference: a commitment by the donor community to fulfill its financial pledges to Yemen, and Yemen's political commitment to win the confidence of the international community, which is formulating the reforms by absorbing aid efficiently.

"There is a fairly short time between this meeting and the next one which is likely to take place at the margins of the UNGA [United Nations General Assembly] in New York in September... That will provide the perfect opportunity for people who have made pledges today and have not followed them through, to [be pursued] at a ministerial level in New York. That is a very effective vehicle," Robertson said.

Business as usual should be discontinued

Director of the Executive Bureau Amat Al-Aleem Al-Sosowa highlighted another part of the problem. While a lot of attention at the Friends of Yemen conferences has been on the countries that have not yet delivered on their promises, Yemen's government should also take its share of the blame.

"For the two-and-a-half million of our male and female youth who wish to make their parents proud by securing a meaningful job; and for the one million of our children whose bodies are literally breaking down because of acute malnutrition; and for the ten million of our people who go to bed every night hungry and in fear of starvation, business as usual, unfortunately, continues to prevail."

Al-Sosowa added that Yemen is running out of time and serious reforms are overdue and must begin now. She said that in order for tangible results to be achieved soon at the economic level and concerning people's livelihoods, donors must fulfill their promises of pledged money, and the remaining non-allocated funds of approximately $424 million should be committed to projects with rapid and high social returns of investment.

A joint statement by six international civil society organizations—The Humanitarian Forum, Islamic Relief, Yemen Relief and Development Forum, International Rescue Committee, Care, and Islamic Help—said that amidst so much humanitarian need the UN's $592 million 2014 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan has only been given 11 percent of the funds, and only 35.1 percent of the approximately $7.9 billion of financial assistance pledged for the country in 2012 has been disbursed.

In a press release by Oxfam on the Friends of Yemen conference, the NGO underscored the urgency of the humanitarian situation, noting that over half the population of Yemen—14.7 million people—remain in urgent need of food, clean water and medicine. In some areas, 100 percent of households have fallen into debt to feed their families and fuel shortages risk bringing the country's economy to a halt.

Colette Fearon, Oxfam's Country Director in Yemen, said, "whilst Yemen is wrestling with its new constitution, millions are going hungry, water is running out and dwindling fuel stocks are crippling production ahead of the harvest. You cannot build a new country without food and water."

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BUSINESS FOR PEACE AWARD
YEMEN TIMES

From 'father of death' to life coach

The journey of Osama Bin Laden's bodyguard

Nasser Al-Saqqaf

Nasser Ahmed Al-Bahri spent four years as Osama Bin Laden's bodyguard and fondly remembers his former boss as a "man with a vision." In an exclusive interview with the Yemen Times, Al-Bahri, also known as Abu Jandal, or the "father of death," explains his decision to leave Al-Qaeda and discusses his new career as a life coach and motivational speaker and the difficulties he faces because of his past.

Nobody makes it to their forties without some personal baggage, but many wonder if the man tasked with guarding the life of Osama Bin Laden has any room for redemption.

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The path to jihad

Abu Jandal's path to Al-Qaeda started in Saudi Arabia, where he was born to Yemeni parents. He was inspired by the speeches of Saudi clerics in the late 80s, when mujahedeen were waging war against Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

"In 1986 we would listen to clerics deliver speeches at a time when the jihad in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union was very popular. I was a member of the Islamic Awakening Youth in Saudi Arabia at that time and clerics were encouraging us to go for jihad in Afghanistan," Abu Jandal said.

"After that, the jihad began in Bosnia and the videos that [the clerics] would show us moved us so much that some of us would cry. In one video, we saw six young men battling 10,000 Serbian fighters and we were very moved by their actions and wondered how so few men could possibly accomplish so much [against such great odds]."

"People say that Al-Qaeda kills whoever leaves the organization, but it's not true. Several people left bin Laden, including his sons Omar and Abdulla, and he did nothing to them."

Jandal graduated from university in 1991 and found himself constantly thinking of jihad. The opportunity to carry out holy war came during the outbreak of the Bosnian War. The war started in 1992, and by 1993 Abu Jandal was in Bosnia fighting with the mujahedeen.

He had been steadfast in his determination to go to the battlefield and he saw jihad as his calling. He did not wait around for permission from his family to travel to Bosnia.

"The fatwas said that jihad was an obligation and that we did not need anyone's permission. I ran away from home in 1993 and my father didn't know what had happened to me until the Political Security Bureau [notified him] when they imprisoned me in 2001."

His experiences in Bosnia planted the seed for the career he would eventually one day settle into.

Abu Jandal told the Yemen Times that he trained the mujahedeen in Bosnia on how to deal with their captives. He says that, instead of torture, he encouraged the fighters to rely on persuasion and moral influence.

"The mujahedeen successfully brought many of the captives to Islam."

In addition to the battlefields of Bosnia, Abu Jandal would also go on to fight in Afghanistan and Somalia.

After leaving Al-Qaeda in 2000, Abu Jandal then headed to Yemen.

A four-year stint in Afghanistan as bin Laden's bodyguard did not deter him from flying straight to Sana'a International Airport once he decided his time with Al-Qaeda had come to an end.

"His path post-prison was not a clear one, and two years behind bars left Abu Jandal and his peers resentful. They say they felt neglected by the very scholars who encouraged them to pursue jihad.

Post-bin Laden

"People say that Al-Qaeda kills whoever leaves the organization, but it's not true. Several people left bin Laden, including his sons Omar and Abdulla, and he did nothing to them."

Two months after his arrival, he was arrested and taken to the Political Security Bureau in the capital, Sana'a, following the bombing of the American warship, the USS Cole.

Abu Jandal was named as a principle suspect in the bombing and was held for two years before being cleared of the charges and released. He now lives in Sana'a with his wife and children, where he is building his life post-bin Laden.

His path post-prison was not a clear one, and two years behind bars left Abu Jandal and his peers resentful. They say they felt neglected by the very scholars who encouraged them to pursue jihad.

There were two attempts made to entice Abu Jandal back to Al-Qaeda after his release, but he declined, he said.

Perceived neglect from the very scholars Abu Jandal and his peers admired and followed pushed him and his peers to the extreme, Abu Jandal said.

"Fatwas have certainly had a strong effect on youth. Some young people joined jihad after Yemen's Scholars Body issued a fatwa saying that jihad would be a necessity in the event the U.S. were to attack Yemen. Now young people have a greater awareness of the presence of the U.S. in Yemen, but where are the scholars who issued the fatwa? When we were put in prison, those scholars did not come talk to us—instead, they sent Hamood Al-Hitar and Sheikh Moqbil Al-Kedhi and others."

"I present myself as a life coach. But later they inevitably discover that I was Osama bin Laden's bodyguard."

While Abu Jandal considers these men to be scholars, they were sent by former President Ali Abdulla Saleh, according to Abu Jandal, and ceased contacting him and his peers following their release from Yemeni prison.

Abu Jandal's life story has been written about and documented, perhaps most famously by documentary filmmaker Laura Poitras.

In various interviews since his release from Yemeni prison, his interviewers have repeatedly pointed out the contradictions in Abu Jandal's responses.

Redemption?

The juxtaposition of his insistence that he has left Al-Qaeda behind, with his nostalgia for its founder, draws a profile of a man who is eager to forget about his past, but still offers praise for some of the group's beliefs and goals.

"I loved him," he says, when asked about his feelings for bin Laden. "[He] established Al-Qaeda to fight injustice and stop abuses against Muslims by the U.S. and Israel."

Can a man whose job was once to guard Osama bin Laden help young people grow and develop into happy and good human beings?

"A coach should be capable of doing two things: to gain information from a trainee, and to correct and develop the trainee's skills and behaviors. A coach is a professional who uses his expertise in a behavioral way," Abu Jandal said.

But Abu Jandal attributes his skills as a coach because of—and not despite—his time with bin Laden.

"Life has given me experience. As a matter of fact, accompanying Osama bin Laden for four years taught me a lot in terms of theory, skills and experience. So, why shouldn't I transmit this experience to young people so that they can become independent and responsible for their own decisions?"

"Some families have approached me, saying that their sons were getting involved in terrorist groups. Praise be to God, I was able to persuade some of them to return to their studies."

His new mission, he says, is to ensure that young people do not feel trapped. He feels qualified—and obligated, to give this advice because he has entered the third phase of life.

Abu Jandal believes that people go through three stages. The first is the learning phase.

"An individual is [constantly] learning until he is 20 years-old. This is called the learning phase."

The second phase, he says, starts at 20 and ends at 40. This is called the experience phase. The third phase starts at 40 and is called the giving phase.

"Now I have entered the giving phase," he said.

But despite his best efforts to rebrand himself, to some, Al-Bahri will always be Abu Jandal—he will always be bin Laden's former body guard.

"This is a really embarrassing point. I present myself as a life coach. But later they inevitably discover that I was Osama bin Laden's bodyguard."

Whenever asked, he confirms the information, but says they soon discover that he is not an extremist or a terrorist.

"On the contrary, I am a person who teaches life skills."

Abu Jandal says he has a number of certificates from accredited training centers, "but what really counts is what one can do, not the pieces of paper that one has."

Each of Abu Jandal's sessions have as many as 130 registered guests, he said. He claims to have trained 1140 people, and says 120 are now trained coaches.

He says he hopes to foster the spirit of tolerance, development and dialogue and to help people better prepare and face life's difficulties.

"This will also help keep young people from being [manipulated and] radicalized."

In fact, families regularly approach Abu Jandal to ask for help.

"Some families have approached me, saying that their sons were getting involved in terrorist groups. Praise be to God, I was able to persuade some of them to return to their studies."

Others agreed to be coached—realizing their full potential, he said.

"They put the extremist ideas aside. Three quarters of those who join terrorist groups simply want to escape their own desperate situation. We restored hope in their hearts and they started their lives anew. In Sana'a, I helped 80 young people, including young women, [who were about to join terrorist groups]. When I first met with those women, they were absolutely determined to join terror groups."

Abu Jandal claims he was able to dissuade them from joining terrorist organizations by gaining their trust and figuring out their needs, "which I try to meet. I was able to persuade them. As a life coach, I have learned [the importance of] this."

"Three quarters of those who join terrorist groups simply want to escape their own desperate situation. We restored hope in their hearts and they started their lives anew. In Sana'a, I helped 80 young people, including young women, [who were about to join terrorist groups]."

Jihad continues

Unlike his motivations for pursuing jihad, Abu Jandal believes that many of the Yemenis who join Ansar Al-Sharia do not do it out of ideological purposes.

"Those who join Ansar Al-Sharia have sad stories," he said. For those who do join out of ideology, the problem is in the group's tactics, according to Abu Jandal.

"We cannot deny that U.S. actions harm Muslims but...Al-Qaeda is now doing things that isolate it from the people. Instead of uniting people, it divides them. Recent events in Syria and Iraq prove this."

With the man he guarded, admired and loved dead, Abu Jandal says the source of his admiration these days is a little closer to home.

"I am touched by the Yemeni people because I expected them to reject me. On the contrary, they have welcomed me. Yemenis has a strong moral compass and care more about who I am today than who I was in the past."

While Abu Jandal's level of continued devotion to Al-Qaeda's past beliefs is unclear, it is clear that he has not left behind jihad. From the physical battlefields in Bosnia, Somalia and Afghanistan, to the less physical and more personal jihad of struggle and perseverance, Abu Jandal remains perhaps Sana'a's (and the world's) only jihadist turned life coach.

"Jihad is a way to protect Sharia but it is the last resort. Jihad includes using everything in one's power first to avoid violence...but people often start with violence because they lack the needed skills [to effect change without violence]."

"Jihad is a way to protect Sharia but it is the last resort. Jihad includes using everything in one's power first to avoid violence...but people often start with violence because they lack the needed skills [to effect change without violence]."

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The Obama doctrine

Frederic C. Hof
atlanticcouncil.org
First published April 24

White House image

Obama with advisors. President Obama to Ambassador Rice that he does not want the Middle East swalling his foreign policy agenda.

The key source for what we might call the Obama Doctrine is the president's speech to the United Nations General Assembly on September 24, 2013. The speech was preceded by a policy review in the White House during the summer of 2013. That review was overseen by the new Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Susan Rice. It involved Rice and, according to The New York Times, perhaps six of her aides.

This policy review process tells us something about how key foreign policy questions are studied and decisions reached in this administration. Much more than any administration in recent memory, the Obama administration deals with important foreign policy issues within a very small and tight circle of key officials.

It is notable that something this important did not include—at least in a formal sense—the Departments of State and Defense. And it's quite possible that White House aides directly involved in the review reached out to trusted contacts elsewhere in the government. But other presidents and other national security advisors would have seen merit in conducting a broad interagency review process that would have tapped systematically into a deep reservoir of regional and national security expertise.

Ambassador Rice told The New York Times that the president's overall goal was to avoid having events in the Middle East swallow his foreign policy agenda. According to Rice, "We can't just be consumed 24/7 by one region, as important as it is. [The president] thought it was a good time to step back and reassess, in a very critical kind of no-holds-barred way, how we conceive the region."

This point of departure seems more reflective of a president's time-allocation preferences than an attempt to arrive at an objective appraisal of core American interests. After all, Harry Truman's idea of how he would spend most of his second term did not include a war in Korea. So events in the Middle East may preoccupy President Obama no matter how much he would prefer to focus elsewhere. The regional consequences, for example, of failed statehood in Syria may prove impossible for Washington to downplay or hold at arm's-length. Presidents are powerful people. Yet they are not always free to choose where they will focus their attention.

What then did the president say to the General Assembly? He listed—as core interests for "my policy during the remainder of my presidency"—four items.

- Confronting external aggression against allies and friends.
- Ensuring the free flow of energy from the region to the world.
- Dismantling terrorist networks that threaten Americans. And
- Not tolerating the development or the use of weapons of mass destruction.

The standard cited by the president for highlighting those four rested on his conclusion that they could be upheld unilaterally. Consider his words: "Now, to say that these are America's core interests is not to say they are our only interests. We deeply believe it is in our interests to see a Middle East and North Africa that is peaceful and prosperous, and will continue to promote democracy and human rights and open markets, because we believe these practices achieve peace and prosperity. But I also believe that we can rarely achieve these objectives through unilateral American action, particularly through military action. Iraq shows us that democracy cannot simply be imposed by force. Rather, these objectives are best achieved when we partner with the international community and with the countries and peoples of the region."

This is a novel way to define core interests. Indeed, the core four are all fit subjects for collective action. And clearly it is a core American interest that legitimate governance prevail throughout the region. In any event, however, the basis of the doctrine seems to be one in which core American interests are defined by President Obama as things he thinks the United States can uphold on its own.

The president denied that the United States would either disengage from the region or fail "to do our part to prevent mass atrocities and protect basic human rights," even when core interests are not directly threatened. Beyond indicating that preventing mass atrocities and even genocide is not a core American interest, it is clear that the president struggled to define the appropriate response to what he called "the breakdown of societies . . . states that are fragile or failing—places where horrendous violence can put innocent men, women and children at risk, with no hope of protection from their national institutions."

Clearly he was referring mainly to Syria. In discussing Syria the president focused on the limits of American unilateralism, saying "I know there are those who have been frustrated by our unwillingness to use our military might to depose Assad . . ." The key point, however—something we know in part from this speech and in part from other comments President Obama has made about Syria—is that he is skeptical that any American military action in Syria can have a decisive or even useful effect.

It is precisely because Syria does not meet Mr. Obama's definition of a problem that can be successfully addressed by unilateral American action that it does not make the list of core interests. Indeed, this is the central point: the presumed utility of unilateralism in any given case is what determines whether or not an American interest achieves the "core" status. I doubt this standard will survive the Obama administration. Indeed, it may not survive the balance of this administration.

Clearly the president and his team—at least with respect to the Middle East—sincerely wish to focus their time and effort on things they believe they can do essentially on their own, without the messy complications of alliances and partnerships. The evidence for this view rests on the president's own words before the General Assembly. It also rests on Ambassador Rice's explanation for the policy review that produced the speech: the desire of the president to avoid having the Middle East and its problems consume his administration's foreign policy agenda. It is also a product, in my view, of the way the administration tends to operate with respect to important policy decisions: within a very tight circle of trust.

I believe that core American interests in the region include solving the Syrian catastrophe and facilitating legitimate governance which, by definition, would be respectful of human rights. No, we cannot and should not do these things on our own. Indeed, we cannot effectively do the "core four" on our own. Yet maintaining alliances, cultivating partnerships, and dealing with adversaries all require investments of time and effort in relationships. President Obama seems to have reservations about making the time and effort investments required by the Middle East, and he has an inclination to try to manage important issues within a very small circle. These factors—more than an objective review of core American national security interests in the Middle East—may have driven, more than anything else, both the articulation of the Obama Doctrine at the General Assembly and the review process that produced it.

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التعاون الألماني
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وزارة المياه والبيئة

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN
Ministry of Water and Environment

Provincial Towns Open Program (PTOP)
KfW Reference No. 2007 65 222

Pre-qualification for
"Consultancy Services for Water Supply and Sanitation Projects in Provincial Towns (PTOP)
- Preparation of Conceptual Studies, Preliminary and Detailed Engineering Designs,
Tender Documents and Construction Supervision-"

The Government of the Republic of Yemen has received a grant from the German KfW Bankengruppe towards the cost of PTOP, and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this grant to payments under contracts for consulting services for the preparation of conceptual studies, preliminary and detailed engineering designs, tender documentation and construction supervision of water supply and sanitation projects in various provincial towns throughout the country.
PTOP intends to establish a long list of consultants categorizing the consultants according to the (estimated) financial volume of the works/projects to be implemented/executed:

- **Small size:** **EUR 0.3 – 1.0 Million,**
- **Medium size:** **EUR 1.0 – 2.0 Million,**
- **Large size:** **EUR 2.0 – 3.0 Million.**

Consultants qualified for the small size category will be listed for consultancies for small size works/projects, consultants that are qualified for the medium size category will be listed for consultancies for medium and small size works/projects. Accordingly, consultants that are qualified for the large size category will be listed for consultancies for large, medium and small size works/projects.
Through PTOP, the Ministry of Water and Environment now invites qualified local and international consultants to indicate their interest in providing the above mentioned services. The consultant to undertake the assignment must be an independent firm or a joint venture with another firm. The joint venture might consist of local consultants, international consultants or a local consultant in joint venture with an international consultant. The consultant should have adequate expertise in rehabilitation and expansion of urban water supply and sanitation systems and should have at least five years of relevant experience. This should preferably include similar experience from working in the Republic of Yemen or neighbouring countries.
Specifically, the Consultant will be required to carry out the following:

- consultancy services related to rehabilitation and optimisation of existing water supply and/or sanitation systems,
- consultancy services related to extension of existing water supply and/or sanitation systems.

Interested eligible consultants must provide information that they are qualified to perform the services (company profile(s(/brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff etc.).
The consultant will be selected using the following criteria:

- Information comprising the general, organizational, legal and financial position of the consultant/JV,
- Experience and past performance on previous projects of similar nature, and
- Capabilities with respect to design and supervision staff.
- Interested eligible firms may obtain a copy of the Pre-qualification Document free of charge at the address stated below, containing detailed descriptions of all requirements as stated above.

One set of originals and two sets of copies of the Pre-qualification Document must be delivered latest on the date and time and to the address as stated below. Please note that all submissions must be in English and all inquiries must be made in writing.
All Pre-qualification Documents must be delivered in closed envelopes bearing the mention:

Pre-qualification for:
"Consultancy Services for Water Supply and Sanitation Projects in Provincial Towns Open Program (PTOP)
Preparation of Conceptual Studies, Preliminary Engineering Designs, Detailed Engineering Designs, Tender Documents and Construction Supervision"
not later than 30 days after the first date of the advertisement i.e. on 28 May 2014, 13.00 hours (Yemen Standard Time) at the following address:

Provincial Towns Open Program (PTOP)
Attention: Mr. Zaid Abutaleb, PTOP Manager,
PTOP Office, Hadda, next to GIZ office, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
Telephone: + 01 413413, + 733 710 934, Facsimile: + 01 410138.
E-mail: ptop.mwe@gmail.com

Deadline for the receipt of requests for clarifications (RfC) shall be not later than ten (10) days after the first date of this advertisement.

UNDP

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

In line with the objectives of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), especially fostering inclusive growth and accountable governance systems, collaboration with NGOs/CSOs is essential to programme countries' sustainable human development efforts. NGOs/CSOs are often uniquely positioned to ensure quick response, to reach communities at grassroots, and to engage with excluded or marginalized population groups.

In this context, UNDP is constituting a Roster of national and international NGO's and CSO's operating in Yemen in the field of poverty reduction, governance, crisis prevention and recovery, gender and human rights, to support the implementation of UNDP programmes and projects.

Interested NGO's are kindly encouraged to fill the "Request for Information" (form available on the UNDP website).

http://www.ye.undp.org/content/yemen/en/home/operations/about_undp.html)

For further clarification please contact Mr.Abdulraheem Almekhlafi in his mobile number 00967 712222123.

BUSINESS FOR PEACE AWARD
TIMES

Jihadi jurisprudence?

Militant interpretations of Islamic rules of war

This article is the second in a series on the intersection between Islamic law, jihadists and humanitarian norms

IRIN
First published April 24

In 2012, the Taliban wrote an open letter to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in response to its accusations that the militant group had killed civilians.

"According to us," the Taliban wrote, "civilians are those who are in no way involved in fighting. The white-bearded people, women, children and common people who live an ordinary life, it is illegitimate to bring them under attack or kill them. But... the police of Kabul admin, those personnel of the security companies who escort the foreigners' supply convoys and are practically armed, similarly those key figures of the Kabul admin who support the invasion and make plans against their people, religion and homeland, those people who move forward the surrender process for Americans in the name of peace and those Arbakis [i.e. militias] who plunder the goods, chastity and honour of the people by taking dollar salaries, all these people are civilian according to you. No Afghan can accept that the above mentioned people are civilian... They are directly involved in the protraction of our country's invasion and legally we do not find any difficulty in their elimination, rather we consider it our obligation."

It was one poignant example of the debate, which similarly exists in international humanitarian law (IHL), over what constitutes direct participation in hostilities (DPH). And it mirrored some of the arguments that the US appears to embrace: under US law, "material support" to terrorism is a federal crime (though to be targeted for assassination by US forces, suspects must demonstrate a much higher level of "terrorist engagement").

More importantly, the Taliban letter forms part of what has come to be known as "jihadi jurisprudence" - sometimes sophisticated legal arguments used by jihadist groups to justify violations of IHL, and according to many Muslim scholars, perversions of Islamic law itself.

Jihadi military jurisprudence is increasingly studied by humanitarians as they seek to understand the degree to which there is room for even the most radical armed groups to be influenced in favour of the protection of civilians and aid workers.

Even within jihadist circles, there is a debate about acceptable norms of behaviour in war.

"It's an opportunity that that debate exists," says Ronald Oftering-er, an adviser to the International Committee of the Red Cross's director of operations and an expert in Islamic law. "It is surely not an issue to subscribe to all kinds of different concepts. But... we have to engage with all parties to a given conflict and look for commonalities that help us and allow us to make a difference - even if it is on one issue and not on all issues."

For Andrew March, associate professor of Islamic law at Yale University, there is a window through which humanitarians can negotiate with jihadist groups.

Concepts like distinction and proportionality - "all these things we take seriously," he says - "these distinctions are available [within jihadist circles], but they have to be worked into from an Islamic perspective."

As such, he advises aid workers not to abandon these principles in negotiations with such groups.

"The idea of neutral humanitarians is not inaccessible to them," he says. "But from their view, it has to go through their conceptions of neutrality... Your neutrality and your non-targetability is something that they determine...They don't regard themselves as being subject to any arbitrary authority, except their own."

Jihadist groups and IHL

Some armed groups in the Muslim world speak in IHL discourse and are compliant with its requirements, in some cases, even more than their own governments. Gazan armed groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad even provide their own training on IHL to their combatants.

Others, however, see Islamic law and international law as inherently irreconcilable. Many Al-Qaeda insurgents, for example, show contempt for IHL. "The amount of respect we hold for your international law is even less than you show for our defined Islamic Shariah," said a 2007 Al-Qaeda propaganda video which cited "international infidel law".

In recent years, says James Cockayne, now president of the United Nations University in New York, but formerly a senior associate with the International Peace Institute, armed groups in the Muslim world have shifted from presenting themselves as groups seeking self-determination under international law in the 1950s to 1970s, to "a more revolutionary trend that rejected public international law as an artefact of Western domination."

But that is not to say that their actions are random or ad hoc. Many groups have devised their own careful Islamic reasoning to support their actions, which are themselves subject to legal debate even within jihadist circles.

Targeting civilians

One of the most important areas of concern for humanitarians is the permissibility of targeting civilians.

"Armed groups that espouse a strict religious agenda... tend to authorize a wider range of lawful targets than IHL," writes the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights in a January 2014 policy brief on armed groups and the protection of civilians. "Groups that call for global jihad often define the targets of their military operations in especially broad terms."

Jihadist groups offer a variety of justifications for attacks on civilians. Some argue that because non-Muslim armies are killing Muslim civilians, they are reciprocally justified in killing non-Muslim civilians. Others say civilians contribute to the war effort in "deed, word or mind". Still others say it is sometimes impossible to distinguish civilians from combatants.

Islam's prohibition against targeting civilians has exceptions - namely necessity. Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan al-Shaybani, the first Muslim jurist to codify Islamic rules of war, wrote in his seminal treatise, for example, that flooding enemy cities was acceptable even if women, children, slaves or Muslim prisoners were inside their gates. Some degree of collateral damage is seen to be acceptable if it helps achieve an imperative goal. In other words, the ends justify the means.

© Magharebia/Flickr

Mali Islamist rebels occupying swathes of northern Mali.

In the autumn 2011 issue of its monthly magazine Inspire, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) argued that if combatants and non-combatants were mixed together and integrated, it was permissible for Muslims to attack, even if civilians are killed, "but this should only be done with the intention of fighting the combatants."

The case of occupation

Islamic law imposes strict limitations on violence when Muslims initiate hostilities against non-Muslims. However, according to Mohammad Fadel, associate professor of Islamic law at the University of Toronto, Muslims are legally entitled to use all means to repel an invasion of Muslim territory.

Militants resisting foreign military occupation tend to consider all nationals of the occupying power to be a potential target, the Geneva Academy says.

For example, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, a founder and spiritual leader of Hamas, said in a 2001 press interview: "The Geneva Convention protects civilians in occupied territories, not civilians who are in fact occupiers... All of Israel, Tel Aviv included, is occupied Palestine. So we're not actually targeting civilians - that would go against Islam."

In 2001, after the US invasion of Afghanistan, Sheikh Hassan Qaid, then head of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, issued a fatwa, stating: "By declaring war against the Muslims and occupying their countries, the United States of America has made all of its worldwide interests into legitimate targets for the mujahideen [guerrilla fighters]... Those interests include military, economic, humanitarian, diplomatic, cultural, tourism, or anyone else anywhere around the globe."

He said women, children, and the elderly should not be specifically targeted, but that there was "no sin in killing them" if they were in the vicinity of those whose killing is permissible. Permissible targets extended to all those who supported the US with oil, intelligence, shared military bases or "moral support" in its "war against the Muslims in Afghanistan."

In a May 2012 statement, AQAP invited Muslims in Yemen to "target Americans everywhere".

Targeting fellow Muslims

Extremist militant groups use several lines of reasoning to target Muslim civilians too.

According to March, several maxims of Islamic theology guide such interpretations: First, in Islamic law, acts are judged by their motives. Second, necessity makes the unlawful lawful. Third, individual harm is tolerated to prevent communal harm.

As such, "if it is necessary to fight the non-Muslim, the killing of Muslims becomes permissible," he says. In this case, a Muslim who is killed accidentally by another Muslim is considered a martyr and can receive compensation. "This reduces the stakes of killing in the first place," March says.

Extremist groups have also justified the killing of Muslim civilians - especially those of the Shia sect of Islam - on the basis that they are kufar, or disbelievers.

In the Salafist view, since Muslims are obliged to participate in defensive jihad, those who instead cooperate with a non-Muslim invading power or collaborate with an enemy against Muslims are considered apostates. Many jihadists argue the punishment for apostasy is death (though this is disputed in mainstream Islamic thought). The Taliban in Afghanistan and Al-Qaeda in Iraq have justified attacks on civilian bureaucrats - accused of belonging to Western-backed governments - on this basis.

Palestinian-Jordanian Islamist ideologue Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi has gone even further, arguing that all governments that do not apply Islamic law, including democratic governments, are infidels and apostates. Like much Salafist doctrine, this interpretation defies the mainstream view. In his book Fiqh al-Jihad (Jurisprudence of War), Yusuf al-Qaradawi, one of the most influential Sunni scholars of modern times, argues that Arab regimes that mock Shariah should be challenged through peaceful means wherever possible.

Limits on militant action

But even those groups with very wide definitions of legitimate targets have their limits.

The winter 2012 issue of AQAP's Inspire magazine reminded followers that: "one should avoid targeting places of worship for any religion or faith, regardless whether they are Christian, Jewish, or other. One should also avoid harming civilians who are citizens of countries that have no relation with the conflict, even if they are non-Muslim."

In December 2013, AQAP publicly apologized after one of its fighters killed patients and medics inside a hospital during an AQAP attack on a Yemeni Defence Ministry complex. It said it had specifically instructed its fighters not to enter the hospital or the prayer space during the attack, and offered to pay blood money to the victims.

According to the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point, documents captured from Osama bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, show that bin Laden disapproved of the attempted attack in 2010 on New York City's Time Square. Under Islamic law, Muslims are bound to respect promises made and contracts or treaties signed. Bin Laden argued that by taking U.S. citizenship a year earlier, the Pakistani-born attacker had signed a social contract with the State. His action, bin Laden said, "amounts to betrayal and does not fall under permissible lying to [evade] the enemy [during times of war]."

Mullah Omar, leader of the Taliban, banned the use of anti-personnel landmines in 1998, denouncing them as "un-Islamic and anti-human". Armed groups in Afghanistan continue to use them, but the Taliban insists each mine is carefully placed and detonated against "military targets" only. In 2010, Mullah Omar also instructed his fighters "to take every possible precaution to protect the people's lives and property as well as the public infrastructure."

Continued on the back page

> ***"Since when did we speak of killing women and children? Since when did we speak of killing the laymen of the Shia?"***

> ***The new generation of irresponsible jihadis are in the habit of striking in random fashion without consulting anyone.***

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- بكالوريوس محاسبه وإدارة أعمال ودبلوم لغة إنجليزية، خبرة طويلة في إدارة الحسابات والمراسلات التجارية باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية في اليمن والسعودية، مستعد للعمل فوراً، جوال: 715608677
- مدرس متخصص يرغب في اعطاء دروس خصوصية للصف التاسع في الرياضيات والعربي والانجليزي والعلوم لطلاب المدارس الحكومية. 734680597
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مطعم ومخبازة الشيباني (باسم محمد عبده الشيباني)
تلفون: ٥٧٣٦٦٢ - ١٠ ٩٢٥٠٥ - ١٠ فاكس: ٩١٦٧٦٢

استراحة العدد

النجمة

عجائب وغرائب

خسرت سابين ميلر البالغة من العمر 30 عاما جنينها وجزءا من امعائها الدقيقة بسبب الاهمال الذي تعرضت له في أحد المستشفيات, فحصلت على تعويض بقيمة 11.5 مليون دولار, ولكن هذا التعويض لن يعوضها المشاكل الصحية التي ستعاني منها طوال حياتها وفقدانها الأمومة.

حكمة العدد

لسان الجاهل مفتاح حتفه

نكتة العدد

سألت احداهن جارتها: ماذا تستعملين لتنظيف الصحون؟
فقالت الجارة: جربت الكثير من وسائل التنظيف ولكن لم اجد افضل من زوجي في التنظيف

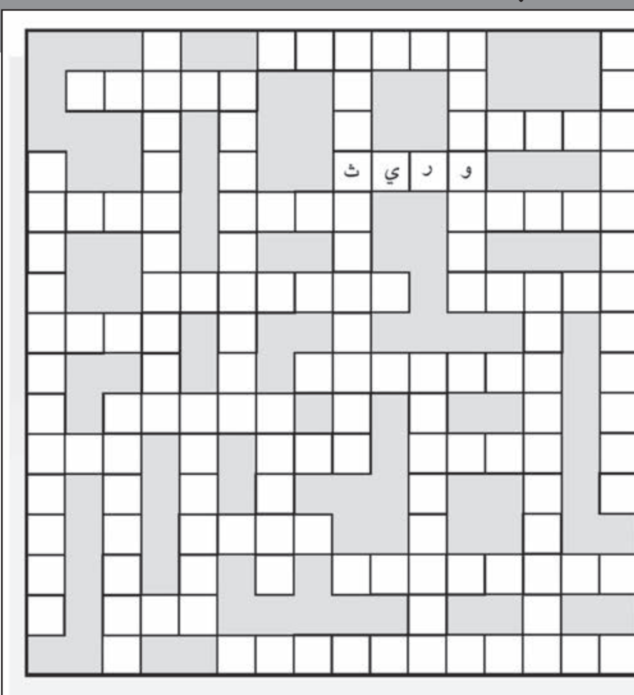
لغز العدد

هو له رأس ولا عين له وهي لها عين ولا رأس لها. ماهما؟

هل تعلم

أن أول من وطئت قدماه القمر هو الامريكي نيل ارمسترونغ

الكلمة المفقودة



3	؟؟؟؟؟	8
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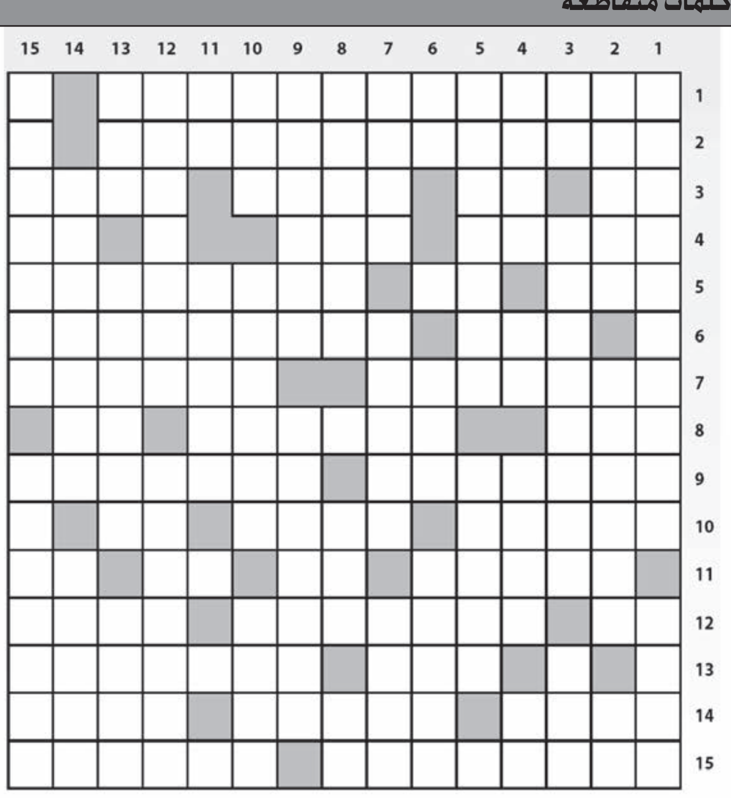
		حرارة العضلات

كلمات متقاطعة



افقي
1- بطليموس الثاني
2- مطربة لبنانية
3- حب - من الاسماء الخمسة (م) - ملعب - اسب
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5- قدح - تقال في البرد (م) - العوائق
6- تزهق - الافتتاح
7- ممثلة سورية - العائلة
8- باستثناء - الصمت - جبل صغير
9- القيود (م) - الاماكن
10- وجهه - علم مذكر (م) - مقياس ارضي (م)
11- اباه - نعم بالفرنسي - قوة العدد (م) - اثنان بالانجليزي
12- عكس انس (م) - الدولي (م) - حافل بالانجازات
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الحلول بالمقلوب

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YEMEN TIMES

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

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Militant interpretations of Islamic rules of war

Debate within jihadist circles

Extremist interpretations are also subject to much debate, even within jihadist circles.

Analysts say some of these debates are less about what is religiously acceptable and more about what would be strategically viable or politically popular. (Many recruits to extremist groups know precious little about Islam).

Nonetheless, in February 2009, Fadil Harun, an Al-Qaeda operative involved in the 1998 US embassy bombings in East Africa, published a manuscript on a jihadist website distancing Al-Qaeda from "the new generation of irresponsible jihadis" around the world who "are in the habit of striking in random fashion [at unlawful targets] without consulting anyone".

According to the captured documents, bin Laden himself had similar concerns about the "ideology and operational conduct of regional jihadi groups".

In another sign that even Al-Qaeda has its limits, Ayman al-Zawahri - allegedly linked to the 1997 massacre of tourists in Egypt and current leader of Al-Qaeda - reportedly asked the then head of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, during the bloodshed there in 2006, whether it was necessary to behead so many people.

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Many of the wounded in the Peshawar bomb blast were women and children.

Some groups are reinterpreting the rules of jihad over time, as they seek more credibility from the international community or from their own constituencies.

Whereas the Taliban instructed in its 2006 Code of Conduct that NGOs were "tools of the infidels" and as such legitimate targets, the revised 2010 Code of Conduct did not mention NGOs, taking what appeared to be a more flexible approach.

> ***"As long as the enemy undertakes its aggression without limits or red lines, we will also respond without limits or red lines… We will be very careful to avoid civilians unless they force us to."***

Overstating Islamic influence

However, it is important not to overstate the influence of the various interpretations of Islamic law on the actions of armed, even Islamist, groups. Many of their justifications for targeting civilians are not, in fact, rooted in Islamic arguments, but rather in strategy or practical necessity. In many cases, the violence simply amounts to terror and asymmetrical warfare.

"We would accept the rules [of IHL] if Israel would use them," said Ismail Abu Shanab, a Hamas leader, in a 2002 interview with Human Rights Watch. "If you ask us to comply, that is not difficult. Islamic teachings support the Geneva Conventions. They are accepted. When it comes to the other party, if they don't abide, we cannot be obliged to them, except insofar as we can achieve something."

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Shia women in Baghdad.

Hassan Nasrallah, head of the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah, echoed the sentiment in a 2006 interview with Amnesty International:

"As long as the enemy undertakes its aggression without limits or red lines, we will also respond without limits or red lines... We will be very careful to avoid civilians unless they force us to."

Usama Hasan, a senior researcher in Islamic studies at the Quilliam Foundation, which tries to counter extremism, says there is yet another limitation to keep in mind. Islamic jurisprudence, or fiqh, has two strands: the rules and norms emerging from the less humane medieval times, and the more humanitarian, modern interpretations.

"It is possible to influence [jihadists] towards the most humanitarian and humane reading of medieval [jurisprudence], but it is important to remember they are operating within that paradigm. So the best way to address it is to force a paradigm shift [towards the modern interpretations]... It's a very slow process."

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