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# Security in Sana'a on high alert after gunfights

Story and photo by **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**

**SANA'A, May 11**—The capital city has been witnessing intensified security measures, a move aimed at curbing any potential attacks in retaliation for the ongoing military offensives in Abyan and Shabwa in southern Yemen.

Security forces stepped up their presence in certain areas after security checkpoints near the presidential palace were attacked on two consecutive nights on the weekend. A security source and eyewitnesses said four militants and four soldiers were killed in the two attacks.

The Interior Ministry's website reported that on Friday evening militants launched the first attack on a checkpoint manned by the Special Security Forces near the Al-Misbahi roundabout tunnel, close to the presidential compound. Four soldiers and one civilian were killed. The militants fled the scene.

Abdulla Al-Awsh, an officer at a security checkpoint at Al-Misbahi roundabout, told the Yemen Times that the militants were traveling in a Toyota Hilux pickup. He said they caught the security forces by surprise, killing the four.

A civilian who was carrying a pistol at the time opened fire on the militants but was killed.

"The gunmen thought they would be able to enter the presidential compound by storming the

security checkpoint but they didn't know that there are more than five checkpoints inside the tunnel," Al-Awsh added.

Soldiers closed streets surrounding Al-Misbahi roundabout and patrolled the area in search of the perpetrators' cars, according to Habib Haider, an eyewitness.

"We heard heavy shooting but the soldiers ordered us to close our shops to avoid being caught in crossfire," he added.

Two hours after the Friday attack, soldiers from the Special Security Forces closed all streets near the Presidential Compound. On Sunday, shortly after midnight, four militants were killed as they attempted to pass through the same checkpoint towards the presidential palace. The militants were traveling in a car and a four-wheel drive.

"Militants attacked the checkpoint personnel at 2 a.m. They [the militants] were in a Monica car and a pickup without registration numbers. They opened fire on the soldiers at the checkpoint, but none were injured. The soldiers struck back and clashed with them for some minutes. Four militants were killed," said Al-Awsh.

He added that suspects in a taxi and on a motorbike appeared to be surveying the scene about a half-hour prior to the attack.

Security forces were still deployed on the streets around Al-Misbahi on Monday.



Intensified security measures were in place around the Al-Misbahi roundabout after two separate attacks on the weekend.

"The security forces have taken several precautionary procedures around and inside the capital in anticipation of any terrorist at-

tacks," the Interior Ministry said on its website on Saturday.

"The security forces intensified their field presence and the number

of checkpoints, and assigned more soldiers to guard the foreign embassies and houses of diplomats," added the statement.

On April 29, Yemen's military began a campaign against alleged Al-Qaeda affiliates in Shabwa and Abyan governorates.

## Military claims success in Abyan and Shabwa campaigns

■ **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**

**SANA'A, May 12**—Yemen's military on Thursday announced that its recent campaign against alleged Al-Qaeda in the Arabian peninsula (AQAP) militants that began in Shabwa and Abyan on April 29 is being brought to a successful end.

The military reported on its website that areas including Al-Mahfad and Modia districts in Abyan and Azan, Mayfa'a and Haban districts in Shabwa were cleared of militants, adding that hundreds of militants and dozens of soldiers were killed in the clashes.

Hundreds of civilians have also been displaced in the fighting.

The military claims to have seized large quantities of weapons after militants fled to other areas in the two governorates, adding that it is in pursuit of them.

The government has not yet provided any details about the victims of clashes on either side, but the Interior Ministry said on its website that it gave orders on Saturday to the police in Sana'a, Abyan, Lahj, Shabwa, Al-Beidha, Sayoun, Hadramout, Al-Dhale and Marib to prepare lists of the suspected Al-Qaeda affiliates killed during recent clashes and in air raids.

Seven gunmen were killed on Friday in clashes with the military in Shawa and Abyan governorates.

Taimoor Al-Daghistani, an alleged Al-Qaeda explosives expert, was also said to have been killed during patrols in Shabwa, according to Mohammed Hizam, deputy director of the Public Relations Department at the Interior Ministry.

The military and the popular committees launched the Abyan offensive on April 29. They were divided into two forces—one

concentrating on the Al-Mahfad district of Abyan and the other on Mayfa'a, Haban and Azan districts of Abyan. The military has cleared all these areas, according to Fahd Binam, the Operations Officer in the Fourth Military Region in Abyan.

"Some militants fled towards other areas and valleys in Abyan and Shabwa. Others fled to Al-Beidha governorate where they could have sympathizers," said Baiaim.

Popular committees took part in the fighting on the side of the military. These committees were set up in 2011 to support the army with an estimated 6,100 men.

Ali Aida, the spokesperson of the popular committees in Abyan said the battles in that governorate and Shabwa largely ceased on Thursday, but that sporadic clashes have occurred.

According to Aida, all areas of Abyan have been purged of militants and travelers can now move safely from Shabwa governorate to Al-Mahfad.

Although the army is portraying its campaign as a victory, some remain skeptical and feel that this may be premature.

Abdulrazaq Al-Jaml, a journalist specialized in Al-Qaeda affairs, said "there are ongoing mediation efforts between the army and Al-Qaeda militants, but the army do not want to declare that, fearing they will lose the confidence of the people."

Last week, tribal groups from the Bakazim tribe attempted to broker peace between the military and alleged Al-Qaeda militants in Abyan and Shabwa governorates after a week of fighting.

The Defense Ministry denies mediation efforts are underway, but the Yemen Times could not reach the tribal sheikhs for comment.

## Yemen draws criticism for deporting foreign journalist, barring another

■ **Ahiam Mohsen**

**SANA'A, May 12**—In a statement released on its website Friday, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) expressed concern over the Yemeni government's recent expulsion of American journalist Adam Baron and the denial of entry to journalist Tik Root, also a US national.

Baron, who has been reporting from Yemen for the past three years, was expelled from the country on Thursday with no official explanation from the government.

"Adam's sudden expulsion sort of blindsided us all. He's the last journalist I would have imagined to be deported for any reason," said Casey L. Coombs, a freelance journalist based in Sana'a.

"[He is] honestly the most devoted, ardent colleague of all who've come and gone since I've been here."

Baron received a phone call from the Passport and Immigration Authority on Monday night and was told to report to the office the next day, according to a colleague of the journalist. When he arrived, he was held at the detention center for 10 hours before he was released and given 24 hours to leave the country.

Abdullah Al-Zurqah, head of the Passport and Immigration Authority, declined to comment. However, the spokesperson for the Yemeni embassy in Washington, Mohammed Albasha, expressed his support for Baron on the social media website Twitter, saying that he has petitioned the Yemeni government to allow Baron to return.

Albasha said Baron has "left a positive footprint" in Yemen and that he strongly objected to the decision to deport him.

Tik Root arrived at Sana'a International Airport in the early hours of Friday morning but was denied entry and ordered to leave the country. While on the plane back to Istanbul, before takeoff, Root told the

Yemen Times that he was forced to purchase a plane ticket out of the country.

While Baron was working in the country on an official journalist visa, Root entered on a tourist visa. Most foreign journalists working in the country are here on tourist or student visas. Journalist visas can be very difficult to obtain, and may require bribes and a lot of bureaucracy.

Baron's latest article, written for the Christian Science Monitor, described how the government is losing the information war in the age of social media, with people on the ground increasingly able to disseminate information and photos contradicting the government narrative.

The recent events echo the expulsion of foreign journalists during the 2011 uprising. The government rounded up and deported four journalists four days before the Day of Dignity Massacre, which left more than 50 unarmed protesters dead and over 200 injured in Sana'a's Change Square.

"Given the batch of foreign journalists arbitrarily deported before I arrived in early 2012, the possibility of that happening to me or a colleague has always been a consideration, however distant. But having managed to stick around two-and-a-half years into Yemen's reputed democratic transition process, which touts a new era of transparency, freedom of the press, government accountability, and so on, my worries had subsided a bit lately," Coombs said.

The latest events have left the country's journalists wondering who might be next and what is being plotted?

Times of London correspondent Iona Craig tweeted on Thursday that she was "waiting for the soldiers to come knocking."

Root told the Yemen Times that the recent events raise questions

about the government's next moves.

"At the end of the day, this is undeniably an effort to keep me—and clearly other foreign journalists as well—from operating in Yemen. It is a very worrying development, to say the least."

The events have shone a light on the threat to press freedom in Yemen.

Baron's deportation came four days after a Ministry of Information-sponsored symposium marking World Press Freedom Day. The ministry invited journalists to the symposium to honor them for their contributions to the media.

In the presence of Information Minister Ali Al-Amrani, journalists at the event condemned the government for arbitrary detentions of journalists, censorship of the press (including the blocking of various news websites) and for not investigating or prosecuting cases of attacks on journalists. Journalists also gave accounts of repeated threats made against them by government officials.

Yemen ranked 169 out of 179 countries in this year's press freedom index, rounding out the worst 10 countries for press freedom.

In a September report titled "A Life-Threatening Career," Human Rights Watch (HRW) documented an alarming increase in attacks on journalists under Yemen's transitional government.

But the transitional government had eased controls on the press, the rights group said.

"As different political groups and factions compete for power in the post-Saleh era, the government is no longer the main culprit behind attacks and threats against the press," the report said.

At a press conference in September, Belkis Willie, a HRW researcher on Yemen, said that journalists are now "under threat from all sides."

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## Sana'a experiments with electronic voter registration

■ Madiha Al-Junaid

**SANA'A, May 12**—A pilot project to test electronic voter registration was launched on May 10 in the tenth constituency of Sana'a by the Higher Election Committee (HEC), and will last until the end of the month.

Electronic voter registration is still in its infancy in Yemen, where it is being experimented with for the first time in Sana'a this month. For now its use is limited to Sana'a's tenth constituency, but there are plans to eventually expand its use to all of Sana'a and beyond.

"The constituency is divided into eight committees, four for the male registration and the other four are for females," said Adel Al-Rafeeq, a security committee official at the tenth constituency.

According to the state-run Saba News Agency, the tenth constituency reached 1,997 registered individuals—of whom 597 are women—by Monday night. For the 20 day period that the electronic voting is open, each of the 8 committees are expected to get between 50-100 voters per day.

The data entry phase is preceded by filling in a personal information form.

"We use the paper-based information form for two things: one is to check the accuracy of the given information, and the second is to save it as a backup archive," said Mutwakil Al-Ansi, a data entry member of the constituency.

"This electronic registration operation will eliminate any fraud or redundancies in the voters registration process as was previously the case because all information is in the system," said Al-Ansi.

Mohammed Al-Mawri, the chairman of the electoral center and a freelance engineer told the Yemen Times that when this process ends other constituencies will start the same method of electronically registering voters.



Electronic voting machines being tested in the tenth constituency.

"Weaknesses and strengths will be studied to empower the next voters registration phases as well as avoid any mistakes we will be facing during this empirical process," said Al-Mawri.

According to Al-Ansi, only one committee faced technical problems that lasted less than 15 minutes and was back to work normally after the technical team resolved the issue.

"The technical team solved the issue the other committee faced when they had a suspended system. It was the only issue we faced so far and therefore the system is working properly," said Al-Ansi.

The third registration committee had the highest number of registered voters among all other committees, numbering 150 registered voters since Saturday, according to Al-Ansi.

Amani Abu Kahla, a supervisor at the female constituency section and an officer at the passports department, said that her committee registered 27 voters on Saturday and 39 on Sunday.

All identity documents are accept-

ed except for the previous election card and the military card, according to Assel Al-Amrani, a member of the registration committee.

"The electronic record is the one that we will be dealing with any further electoral process, and registered voters get a sheet of paper at the end of the registration process proving they are registered," said Al-Amrani.

Murad Merhib, an engineering graduate from Sana'a University and an observing member representing the Democratic and Public League Party said that he and his colleagues are working in shifts doing observation work at the constituency.

"We watch if any violation happens at the registration committees, and our work changes shifts every three days provided that the work day starts at 8 a.m. and ends at 6 p.m. with a break period from one until three p.m.," said Merhib.

Abu Kahla said that the number of registered voters is increasing each day.

"People are getting more awareness and they understand the importance of their electronic registration," said Abu Kahla.

## Fact-finding committee to investigate killing of two Marib tribesmen

■ Nasser Al-Sakkaf

**SANA'A, May 11**—President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi on Saturday established a three-member committee to investigate the murder of two tribesmen from the Al-Shabwan tribe of Marib governorate on Thursday in Sana'a.

"President Hadi established the committee after the Al-Shabwan tribe met and released a statement on Friday calling on him to establish a fact-finding committee within four days," said Abdulla Yardan, director of Wadi Abeeda District in Marib.

The committee will comprise Abdulqader Hilal, the mayor of Sana'a and the committee's head; Jalal Al-Rowaishan, head of the Political Security Bureau; and Ali Abdu Rabu Al-Qadi, a member of Parliament.

The committee is expected to begin its four-day investigation on Tuesday after Hilal returns from a work trip to India.

The killing of Hamad Al-Shabwani and his nephew Shaif Al-Shabwani by security forces in Sana'a has elicited strong reactions.

Following the incident, gunmen from the Al-Shabwan tribe are suspected to have attacked several military locations in Marib, sabotaged electricity towers and a power station, and blown up an oil pipeline.

Authorities claim that the two deceased were Al-Qaeda suspects. The state-run Saba News Agency on Friday published a statement by the Supreme Security Committee saying that the security forces had killed members of Al-Qaeda.

But according to Yardan, tribal

leaders allege that false information about the victims has been spread and they want a thorough investigation into the killing. He says that the tribe will be closely involved with the committee.

Shiekh Morsal Al-Qabali, a local leader in Marib, said that Al-Shabwani and his nephew had returned from Egypt and were on their way home when they were killed.

He said the tribe demands that those who killed its members be tried and that what it claims is misinformation about the two be corrected.

Abdulla Bohaibh, a journalist in Marib, said that the situation is stable in Wadi Abeeda district following the establishment of the committee but that tension between the army and tribesmen may flare up.

## 13 killed in Hadramout attack — Interior Ministry

■ Sina Khalid

**SANA'A, May 12**—A bomb-laden car on Sunday exploded near a military police compound in Mukalla city in Hadramout governorate, leaving 12 policemen and a passerby dead and several others injured, according to the Interior Ministry's Security Media Center.

General Ali Nasser Lakhsha,

the deputy minister of interior, told the Security Media Center that gunmen in a car shot at the security guards at the entrance of the military police compound and distracted them while another car carrying explosives entered the building and was detonated.

The compound and nearby buildings sustained substantial damage, according to Lakhsha.

Mustafa Al-Hamid, the security

chief of Mukalla, said, "a criminal investigation is being conducted by the Hadramout Security Department to investigate the incident and identify and arrest the perpetrators."

Researcher and security expert Mohammed Al-Khaledi said that the attack is possibly a reaction by militants to the military offensive in Shabwa and Abyan governorates over the past two weeks.

## Popular committees in Shabwa suspend defense activities

■ Nasser Al-Sakkaf

**SANA'A, May 12**—The popular committees in Shabwa said on Friday that they would suspend their defense activities for one week or until they are given the same privileges that popular committees in other governorates receive.

The popular committees issued a statement saying their move aims to pressure the government into granting them privileges given to other popular committees elsewhere.

The statement warned that the committees would step up protest actions if their demands go unfulfilled, although what this might entail was not specified.

The popular committees were established in March 2011 to help the army maintain security in the governorate.

The statement also said the defense minister and the Shabwa governor declined to meet with the popular committees on Friday.

"The popular committees had and still have a strong role in confronting the terror groups in Shabwa. However, they have raised their demands at a very difficult time," Nasser Al-Maleesh, the deputy governor of Shabwa, said.

Al-Maleesh said the popular committees in Shabwa stated on May 4 that they sought equal status with other popular committees outside of Shabwa. He said the governor did not dismiss their demands.

The Defense Ministry pays a wage of YR15,000 (US \$69.75) to each member of these committees, according to Al-Maleesh. The members, of whom there are an estimated 200, say the amount of money they receive is not fair in comparison to the committee members in other governorates.

Reportedly, the popular committees fighters in Abyan governorate receive about YR30,000. This information was corroborated by Ali Aida, the spokesper-

son of the popular committees in Abyan.

"We will reach a solution by the end of the next week. The governor and the Defense Ministry will coordinate to resolve this issue," said Al-Maleesh.

Salem Al-Sayil, a local journalist in Shabwa, said the popular committees last week helped the army clear Azan area of alleged Al-Qaeda militants and supported the army in taking over the main road connecting Hadramout, Shabwa and Aden.

"The armed groups still exist

in some areas in Shabwa, and the army has not completely gained control of them," said Al-Sayil.

"If the demands of the popular committees in Shabwa are not met, the security situation in the governorate will further deteriorate given that the committees help maintain security in some areas," said Al-Sayil.

The popular committees have a better understanding of the topography in the governorate and can accurately identify the strongholds of armed groups, according to Al-Sayil.

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# Confusing regulations leave kiosk owners vulnerable

Story by **Mohammed Al-Khayat**  
Photo by **Zakria Dahman**

**F**ive years ago, the Cabinet issued a decision to restrict the issuing of licenses that would permit the establishment of new kiosks and newspaper stands in the capital city and other governorates. At the time the government said the kiosks distort the beauty of the city and cause overcrowding. In spite of the decision, the number of unlicensed kiosks continues to grow, according to the Public Works Office in the capital city, which is part of the Public Works and Highways Ministry.

Lately, however, the owners of kiosks say they have been increasingly subject to extortion by individuals claiming to represent the government.

"I want an official license so that I can avoid being extorted. Almost every week individuals come to the kiosk attempting to extort money under the pretext that I do not have an official license," said Noor Al-Salimi, the owner of February 11 Kiosk, which he set up in April of 2013 in the Hizyaz area of Sana'a.

Faced with the option of either handing over money or getting involved in a dispute with those attempting to extort money from him, Al-Salimi says it is better to not concede and give them money.

There appears to be considerable confusion over how to go about obtaining a permit, and the boundaries of authority between the various government institutions responsible for regulating kiosks and public space are unclear.

Anyone seeking an official license for a kiosk needs to go through a complicated bureaucratic process. In order to obtain the license, the kiosk proprietor essentially needs approval from three bodies—the local



**Ambiguous legal procedures and confusion over which institutions are responsible for licensing and regulating kiosks means that owners are left in legal limbo.**

council in the capital city, the Public Works Office, and the Culture Office which falls under the Ministry of Culture.

"The local councils are not responsible for giving licenses but they can send a letter to the Public Works Office to state the need for the area to have a kiosk. This is the first step to establish the kiosk," said Abdurraqeb Ata, the general manager of the Sana'a Public Works Office.

However, after a Cabinet decision to restrict the establishment of new kiosks, those intending to set up shop hit a dead end even after successfully acquiring a recommendation document from the local council stating that a particular area is in need of a license for a kiosk. The local council gives a recommendation, knowing that the last decision is at the hand of the public works office and the culture office.

For the past five years, such licenses have not been granted to kiosks, only bookshops.

"I established the kiosk after I got a recommendation notice from a lo-

cal council member in Hizyaz saying that the area was in need of a kiosk. I then went to the Public Works Office to apply for a license. However, I have not received the official license so far because of the Cabinet's decision," said Al-Salimi.

According to Ata, "if a particular area needs a bookshop, a license is given considering it will do the same job as the kiosk."

Mohammed Atif, the secretary general of Al-Tahrir district of Sana'a, said that authorities prevented many would-be proprietors from attempting to establish kiosks last year.

"Kiosks distort the beauty of the city and violate the Cabinet's decision. It is not possible to allow chaos in the city," said Atif. On the face of it, it appears that the Cabinet's decision to stop issuing licenses is informed by the same logic—that kiosks contribute to overcrowding and disorganization.

Ata said that the Public Works Office has disagreements with some local council authorities who give

some individuals recommendations to open kiosks even though they are aware of the Cabinet's decision.

Officials have no justifications for ordering the closure of the kiosks except for disorder and overcrowding, particularly in the capital city.

"We shut down many kiosks in the capital city over the past five years. However, some reopened their kiosks, saying that "it was not the prosecution that shut the kiosks down," said Ata.

Kiosks cannot legally be shut down without an order from the prosecution, and according to Ata, the prosecution has not issued a verdict to shut down kiosks. Kiosk owners, says Ata, simply reopen their kiosks when authorities attempt to close them down.

"The Culture Office has not given any licenses to any kiosks over the past five years. However, the kiosks have been increasing day by day to the extent that the Ministry of Culture does not have statistics of the number of unlicensed kiosks in the capital city," said Najat Bahkilm, the

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manager of the Culture Office.

The confusion over regulation gives room for unscrupulous officials, and people masquerading as officials, to extort money from vulnerable kiosk owners.

Salah Al-Kaboudi, the owner of Jamal Abdunnasser kiosk in Al-Tahrir district, spoke to the Yemen Times about his experience. "Many times individuals come, pretending that they belong to the Public Works Office. They insist on closing the kiosk and I finally bribe them to stop doing so," said Al-Kaboudi.

Although he said he is aware that closing the kiosk is a matter that lies in the hands of the prosecution, he prefers to avoid disputes with these individuals.

Ata said the Public Works Office does not have any relation to those attempting to extort money from kiosk owners. He claimed they are not affiliated to any government authority.

"It is important that the issue of unregulated kiosks is solved, either by granting licenses or closing them," said Ata.



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## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

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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](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 71222123.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abu Bakr al-Qirbi to the Yemen Times:

# “Economy should not be left to the mercy of political bickering”

On the sidelines of the recent Friends of Yemen meeting held in London on April 29, 2014, Yemeni Minister of Foreign Affairs Abu Bakr al-Qirbi explained why the transitional program designed two years ago failed and what is being done now to rectify this problem and improve Yemen's economy and security situation.

Interview by Nadia Al-Sakkaf



Sky News screen grab

**How do you evaluate the seventh Friends of Yemen meeting?**

The main result of this meeting is its restructuring into three working groups: political, economic and security. When I first introduced the idea to Friends of Yemen co-chairs, the Saudis and British, I thought they would be reluctant. But on the contrary, they were quite enthusiastic as they realized that at this level we need to come up with creative solutions to Yemen's problems and the stagnation in implementing the transition plan. Also, countries which talk a lot and deliver nothing will be held accountable.

Similarly, we as Yemenis will also be held accountable because if we don't efficiently utilize the programs we created and the money we received we have no one else to blame but ourselves.

The restructuring was approved by all partners and I was amazed by their positive reaction and eagerness to be part of all the working groups although they need to be limited to four or five countries.

This enthusiasm and interest in Yemen should make clear to us as Yemenis that the international community wants to support us.

But at the end of the day there is no point unless we ourselves do our job. As the saying goes: "God helps those who help themselves!"

**But this isn't the first time Friends of Yemen has working groups, isn't that correct?**

When the group started in 2010, two committees were formed: A political committee and another for security, judiciary and economic reforms. The committees operated for only one term before they stopped.

The difference with today's Friends of Yemen structure is that we have three permanent working groups which operate based on a critical assessment of Yemen's challenges in each of the political, economic and security sectors, and how to deal with them in the short and long terms.

**Does this mean the priorities and challenges defined in 2012 will be changed or chosen from?**

Yes. These priorities will have to be revisited because the developments in the last two years require us to re-examine the situation. Especially since we focused in the last two years on political progress and less attention had been given

to the economy, today we face a budget deficit and other economic problems.

We must lay down the foundation for economic reforms and use the pledged money by donors to support the state's budget, ease livelihood burdens on the citizens, and improve their living conditions.

**During your visit to London for the Friends of Yemen conference you spoke of a partnership that needs to happen in Yemen. Do you mean with the private sector?**

I mean all the Yemeni sectors and factions. They should shoulder their responsibility because we in Yemen always hold the government responsible and it is the first thing the people blame.

**But the government is quite dysfunctional, with a prime minister missing in action and many ministers who keep disappearing out of the country for long trips. Where is the government?**

This is not an objective question. The government is present and runs the country. It's true that ministers travel and others return...

**But is it fair with the country going through crisis to not even have the cabinet have its regular sessions?**

If every component of the society, whether political or civic, or the private sector as you mentioned, were to ask themselves: are we doing everything we can in these circumstances where the country needs us all to come together to fulfill the people's ambitions after the change that happened?

**Let us suppose that those components do want to help, where do they go, whom do they talk to in order to synergize their efforts?**

I think doors are open for all the businessmen and the civil society organizations.

Those who are interested in health issues, they can go to the Health Ministry and coordinate with it. Those who are interested in the humanitarian sector can go to the Ministry of Planning and the National Committee for Internally Displaced People. Every field has a government authority that can create a bridge of connection.

The problem we have is that we don't have communication channels, but in the absence of such

channels why don't these organizations take the initiative?

Don't forget that the 2011 events [protests] came as an initiative by the youth for change.

**You co-chair the Friends of Yemen political working group. How will you work with the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) bodies?**

One of the main references for all the working groups is the National Dialogue Conference outcomes.

For example, the security working group will adopt the security outcomes of the NDC. But in all cases the NDC bodies are only temporary and should end with the constitution or elections, but our strategic action plans as the government are long term, as we are planning for the next five years. And within this five-year framework we expect engagement of political parties, civil society, women, youth, et cetera, as it used to happen before the changes of 2011.

**That being said, can you give me three reasons as to why the 2012-2014 Transitional Program for Stabilization and Development failed?**

For the first reason, we have to admit that we got too busy over the last two years with politics more than economics and security. We should now set things straight. The government, political parties, the civil society organizations, and all those concerned should come together in order to create parallel processes for these three issues.

Despite its significance, the political achievements cannot last if there is a crumbling economy and security. Thus, this is a priority.

The second reason is that we need the political leaders in the country regardless of their background to work on reforms. The economy should not be left to the mercy of political bickering. Otherwise the deterioration will continue and peoples' lives will become worse.

Politicians in positions of authority must distinguish between politics for elections, et cetera, and between damaging the economy. Improving the country's economy should be a priority for all those in power and not their personal party's interests.

The third reason, which I always repeat is your role, you journalists: How do we mobilize the Yemeni people to support the transitional process, whether it is the National Dialogue Conference outcomes or

the constitutional referendum?

If the constitution is written according to the NDC outcomes, we will have an exemplary constitution. But it will remain empty words if Yemenis do not come together to see it to life and build the new Yemen as they dream of it.

This entails sacrifices. As you know, building a new Yemen requires huge costs. Countries that

are now considered strong economies such as China and India had to go through very difficult years to become what they are today.

But because they had visionary governments who clearly saw into the future, they understood that this struggle will pay off in the end and peoples' lives will be better.

Civil society, media, the private sector, and citizens in general need

to become engaged. They have to be part of the process and not remain bystanders watching the process happen without their involvement.

For example, the country's national production was much higher than what it is today because people are watching or criticizing or chewing qat and not being productive.

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# FROM THE AIRWAVES



Article 19 is a weekly awareness program on Radio Yemen Times that tackles some of Yemen's toughest issues: those related to the right to freedom of opinion and expression as defined in Article 19 of the International Declaration of Human Rights.

The program airs on Radio Yemen Times, 91.9 FM, on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. and is rebroadcast on Saturdays at 11 a.m.

المادة 19 هو برنامج توعوي يتحدث عن حق الفرد والمجتمع في حرية التعبير عن الرأي التي كفلتها كفاية كاملة بالنص الصريح بالمادة 19 في العهد الدولي للحقوق المدنية والسياسية، والإعلان العالمي لحقوق الإنسان والتي نصت على أنه لكل شخص الحق في حرية الرأي والتعبير، ويشمل هذا الحق حرية اعتناق الآراء وإذاعتها بأي وسيلة كانت دون تقيد بالحدود الجغرافية.

هذا البرنامج يبث كل أربع ساعات الساعة 8 مساءً ويعاد يوم السبت الساعة 11 صباحاً على أثير راديو يمن تايمز 91.9.

## People with disabilities & freedom of expression

Article 19 Radio Show this week discussed the issue of whether people with disabilities enjoy their rights, particularly freedom of expression.

Interviewees this week include **Abdulkareem Al-Mesbahi**, director of the Comprehensive Education Department in Sana'a and a coach for people with disabilities; **Raja Al-Masabi**, president of the Arab Association for Human Rights; and **Hassan Ismail**, head of the Yemeni Disabled Forum.

### When I first called you, you said that people with disabilities are still unable to demand their due rights. What do you mean?

**Al-Mesbahi:** People with disabilities always talk about their issues freely and we must hear them and meet their needs. However, are we able to meet these needs? I work in the field of education, visit schools and meet with disabled people. If I can, I would meet their needs even with my own money. I hope the state will pay attention to them and listen to their needs.

### Is it enough to listen to people with disabilities and their needs? Why?

**Al-Masabi:** Of course it's not enough. We want people who can sit with us and listen to our needs in order to enable us to have access to our rights, because the entire society, government, political parties, local councils, and NGOs don't think about national interests.

### When I called you regarding this topic, you said we are talking about people with disabilities and not people with special needs specifically. What is the difference?

**Al-Masabi:** In the UN meetings to discuss the draft of the agreement, we stuck to the name the disabled because all people have special needs and this name isn't associated with a certain group of people. We are disabled people rather than people with special needs.

### Regarding freedom of expression, can you express your opinion freely?

**Ismail:** Freedom of expression is a right of disabled people. They have the right to express their needs and opinions freely without being afraid. Many disabled people encountered difficulty in expressing their needs prior to the 2011 uprising. Now people with disabilities don't have any excuse because they have more space for freedom and their leaders must criticize the situation and demand their rights in an appropriate way.

### There are clear articles in Yemen's law but they aren't enforced. How do you explain this?

**Al-Masabi:** Yemen is the best country in terms of signing agreements and passing laws but nothing is enforced. We have amazing laws regarding disabled women, children and elderly but the problem is that they aren't enforced. The society also takes part of the responsibility because they don't demand their rights. Or, sometimes they don't demand these rights in an appropriate way. By the society, I mean all individuals, including the government and selfish political parties and organizations.

**Al-Mesbahi:** The attitude of society is the biggest problem because society looks down upon the issue of disabilities. The problem doesn't lie in laws and agreements. We have laws, agreements and treaties but we aren't aware of them. We need to be aware of these laws and provide support to the disabled. We must appreciate and respect them because they are part of society.

**Ismail:** There are various laws and articles that guarantee the rights of people with disabilities but the most important thing is to enforce them on the ground. People with disabilities and the organizations that work with them must demand their rights. Although we have great potential in society, people with disabilities

are still suffering and get only a few services from the Disabled Care and Rehabilitation Fund.

### Who is responsible for enforcing these laws?

Disability is the issue of both the state and society and isn't the responsibility of an individual, organization or specific authority. Most of the ministries are responsible for people with disabilities. For example, the Ministry of Education is responsible for providing some of their rights. We must all work for the good of people with disabilities because it's our duty and it's also their right.

### Is there any awareness for people about this?

**Al-Mesbahi:** We still don't have sufficient awareness. All groups of people, including the government and civil society organizations, should be aware of this issue.

**Ismail:** We don't come here to talk about problems but rather to focus on the proposals and resolutions provided by the organizations supporting people with disabilities and also to enforce the laws. In the forum, we do our best to serve disabled people. In the Ministry of Education, we had an initiative to establish an advisory committee of different sectors at the ministry. This committee now meets weekly to discuss the issues and policies related to the education of the disabled.

❖ **Call in: Huda, a visually-impaired woman: Most people working in the field with people who have special needs care only for financial gain and I have evidence for this. Even those in the Comprehensive Education Department are thieves.**

**Al-Mesbahi:** We should be logical and shouldn't generalize. Whoever wants to get their rights must respect others and shouldn't insult them. They should complain to the Education Ministry and I'm sure the ministry is ready to serve disabled people.

**Al-Masabi:** Without the efforts of the late Fatima Al-Aqel, visually-impaired females wouldn't have the chance to study. Although there are several corrupted people, we can't generalize and also we can't deny the efforts of some people who have done great things for us.

**Ismail:** Most of us and the caller speak painfully about the current situation. We are like a camel that carries water on its back but dies of thirst. The state provides billions of riyals to the Disabled Care and Rehabilitation Fund but the fund gets worse and people with disabilities are the reason for this because they don't demand their rights. We hope that the youth with disabilities will demand their rights.

**Al-Mesbahi:** I hope people with disabilities will join the youth initiatives that demand their rights because this will help them in achieving their rights.

### What is the role of the Yemeni Disabled Forum?

**Ismail:** We have organized several initiatives and activities to teach visually-impaired females as well as workshops in coordination with the Comprehensive Education Department. We also have recorded the curricula for disabled students and distributed headphones and computers to them.

## حقوق ذوي الإعاقة في حرية التعبير

ناقش برنامج المادة 19 هذا الأسبوع موضوع الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة وهل هم بالفعل قادرين على الحصول على حقوقهم، لاسيما الحق في حرية التعبير. استضاف البرنامج عبد الكريم الصباحي مدير إدارة التربية الشاملة في أمانة العاصمة ومدرب في مجال ذوي الإعاقة، ورجاء المصعبي رئيسة المؤسسة العربية لحقوق الإنسان، وحسن إسماعيل رئيس المنتدى اليمني لذوي الإعاقة.

عند مكالمتي لك، قلت أن هذه الفئة لازالت عاجزة عن المطالبة بحقوقها بشكل كامل؟

**المصباحي:** الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة يطرحون قضاياهم بكل حرية وانطلاق ويجب علينا الاستماع لها وتلبيةها ولكن هل نحن قادرون على تلبية هذه المتطلبات والآراء؟ أنا أعمل في التربية وأزور المدارس واستمع اليهم واحتياجاتهم ومتطلباتهم ولو كان الأمر بيدي لوفرت لهم من مالي الخاص ولكن أتمنى من الدولة أن تستمع لهم وتأخذ آراءهم ومتطلباتهم لأن هذا حق من حقوقهم.

وهل يعتبر الإنصات إلى احتياجاتهم كافياً؟ ولماذا؟

**المصعبي:** بالطبع لا، نحن نريد أشخاص يجلسون معنا ويستمعون إلينا ويتحاورون معنا من أجل أن يصل إلينا حقنا الذي نحتاجه، لأن المجتمع اليمني كافة ابتداءً بالحكومة وكذلك أعضاء المجالس المحلية والمنظمات الغير حكومية لا يهتمون بمصالح البلد والمواطن.

عند تواصلتي معك أخبرني ان هؤلاء هم الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة وليسوا الأشخاص ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة، ما الفرق بين الجملتين؟

**المصعبي:** في اجتماعات الأمم المتحدة لمناقشة مسودة الاتفاقية، تسكنا حتى النهاية بالاسم لأن الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة ليسوا من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة حيث أن الاحتياجات ليست محصورة علينا وكل الناس لديهم احتياجات خاصة. إذا نحن ذوي الإعاقة ولنا من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة.

كيف تنظر إلى جانب التعبير بحرية، هل تستطيعون التعبير عن آراءكم وحقوقكم بكل حرية؟

**إسماعيل:** من المهم جداً أن يتمكن الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة من التعبير عن احتياجاتهم بكل صراحة وبدون خوف، وقد كان العديد من ذوي الإعاقة يعانون من عدم قدرتهم على التعبير في الفترات الماضية قبل 2011 ولكن الآن هناك مساحة أكبر ولا أجد أي عذر للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة وعلى قياداتهم انتقاد الوضع بكل حرية وبالشكل السليم.

بماذا تفسرون عدم تطبيق المواد الصريحة الموجودة في القانون اليمني؟

**المصعبي:** اليمن أفضل بلد من حيث توقيع الاتفاقيات والتشريعات ولكن عند التنفيذ هي أفضل بلد في تجاهل هذه الاتفاقيات. لدينا قوانين وتشريعات رائعة جداً فيما يخص الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة من النساء والأطفال والشيوخ ولكن عند التنفيذ يكون هناك قصور كبير، وبشارك في ذلك كافة شرائح المجتمع لأننا إذا لم يطالب صاحب الحق بحقه فمن المستحيل أن يتفاعل الناس معه ونحن في اليمن نسكت وحتى عندما نطالب في بعض الأحيان تكون هذه المطالبة بأسلوب غير مناسب. ونحن نقصد بالمجتمع الأفراد والحكومة والأحزاب السياسية الأناثية والمنظمات.

**المصباحي:** أكبر مشكلة موجودة في المجتمع هي نظرة المجتمع القاصرة والدونية تجاه قضايا ذوي الإعاقة والمشكلة أننا لم نصل بعد إلى النضج والوعي بالرغم من وجود القوانين والاتفاقيات. لا بد أن يكون لدينا ثقافة ووعي واحترام وتقدير لذوي الإعاقة لأن هذه الفئة موجودة في إطار المجتمع.

**إسماعيل:** هناك العديد من التشريعات والقوانين التي تكفل حقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة بشكل كامل ولكن العبرة ليست في كثير القوانين والتشريعات بل في تطبيقها وترجمتها على أرض

الواقع. بالرغم من وجود الإمكانيات الكبيرة في مجتمعنا إلا أن الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة يعانون بشكل كبير ولا يحصلون إلا على القليل من الخدمات من صندوق رعاية وتأهيل المعاقين.

من المسؤول عن تطبيق هذه القوانين؟

**المصباحي:** قضية الإعاقة هي قضية دولة ومجتمع وليست مسؤولية فرد أو منظمة أو جهة محددة. أغلب وزارات الدولة مسؤولة عن قضية ذوي الإعاقة، فعلى سبيل المثال، وزارة التربية والتعليم إحدى هذه من الوزارات المهمة والمعنية بتلبية خدمات فئة ذوي الإعاقة. خدمة هذه الفئة واجب على الكل وليس فضلاً.

هل هناك توعية بهذا الحق؟

**المصباحي:** ما زال الوعي قاصر لدينا ولا بد من توعية في هذه المسألة لكافة فئات المجتمع والحكومة والمنظمات المدنية المختصة بهذه الفئة.

**إسماعيل:** نحن لا نأتي للتعبير عن المشكلات ولكن نريد أن نركز على المقترحات والحلول التي تقدمها المنظمات للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة وتطبيق القانون. نحن في المنتدى نبدل قصارى جهدنا وبقدر الإمكانيات المتاحة لخدمة هذه الفئة. نحن في وزارة التربية والتعليم قمنا بإنشاء مبادرة لتأسيس لجنة استشارية مكونة من قطاعات مختلفة من وزارة التربية والتعليم برأسها وكيل قطاع التعليم وهي الآن تجتمع أسبوعياً وتناقش القضايا والسياسات ذات الصلة بتعليم الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة.

❖ **مداخلة هاتيفي / هدى، أحد الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة (كفيفه):** أغلب الذين يعملون في مجال الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة لديهم مقاصد مادية، بحتة وأنا لذي أدلة تثبت هذا، حتى الذين في التربية الشاملة سرق ومطالبهم مادية.

**المصباحي:** نحن لا بد أن نكون منطقيين ولا نعمم على الجميع ومن يريد حقه يجب أن يطالب بكل احترام وبدون تجريح وعليهم تقديم شكاواهم إلى وزارة التربية والتعليم وأنا على ثقة بأن الوزارة على استعداد لخدمة ذوي الإعاقة.

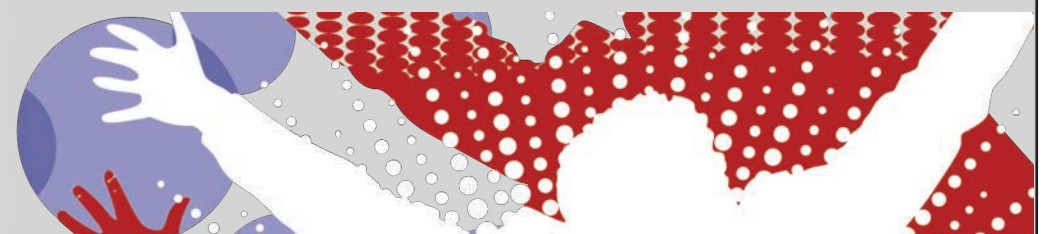
**المصعبي:** لولا جهود فاطمة العاقل رحمة الله عليها لما تسنى للكفيفات الدراسة والتخرج. وأنا لا يمكن أن أتكلم على أحد والفاستين كثير ولكن هذا لا يعطينا الحق في التعميم أو إنكار فضل أناس بذلوا الكثير من أجلنا.

**إسماعيل:** نحن و أغلب المتصلين نتكلم بكل حرقة من وضعنا ولكننا كالجمال الذي يحمل الماء ويموت من شدة العطش في الصحراء وبالمثل تقدم الدولة المليارات ولكن صندوق المعاقين يزداد فساداً والسبب في ذلك هو الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة لأنهم لم يعبروا عن حقوقهم. نحن نعول على الشباب في المطالبة بحقوقهم.

**المصباحي:** نتمنى من الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة أن يخرطوا في المبادرات الشبابية التي تعبر عن حقوقهم لأن هذا سيساعدهم كثيراً في تلبية حقوقهم.

المنتدى اليمني للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة ما دور؟

**إسماعيل:** حضورنا جزء من دورنا ونحن قدمنا الكثير من الأفكار والمبادرات والأنشطة سواء في مجال تعليم المكفوفين أو ورش العمل بالتنسيق مع إدارة التنمية الشاملة وكذلك قمنا بتسجيل المنهج المدرسي بصورة ممتازة وواضحة وقمنا بتوزيع السماعات وأجهزة الكمبيوتر.





# Unprepared for the job market

## University students say curriculum leaves them with too little practical knowledge

■ Madiha Al-Junaid

**R**ana Hamoud, a 2013 graduate from Sana'a University's accounting department, teaches Arabic at a private school in Sana'a. While she takes her job seriously, always making an effort to prepare lessons and provide her students with support and encouragement, the 23-year-old from Taiz never had aspirations of working in education.

She says she fell into the profession because she could not land a job in accounting. Yemen struggles with a high level of youth unemployment, which most international estimates put at between 40-60 percent. However, Hamoud does not attribute having to forgo her preferred career path to a lack of opportunities in the accounting sector only. She says her university degree did not appropriately prepare her for the few jobs that do exist in that field.

Along with a couple of her colleagues from the accounting college, Hamoud had the opportunity to attend a one month internship working on a government development project, sponsored by the World Bank.

"The trainer, who was an accountant, was astonished by our weak accounting skill level, even in terms of the basics," the aspiring accountant said. "That's when I realized we hadn't received a quality education at university."

"We told the trainer that our studies were based only on theory, and we hadn't put into practice what we have learned," Hamoud said, referring to the applied accounting training courses she took as part of the internship. She took the courses after graduating from university in the hope that they would better prepare her for an accounting job. The extra courses were designed to help Hamoud specialize, but they proved to be more effective at highlighting what the young student did not know instead of building on her academic experience.

### Stuck with the same old teaching methods

Hamoud, along with countless other students from a variety of academic backgrounds, are critical of the curricula in Yemen's public universities. They say professors are not encouraged to apply any sort of practical or critical learning to the curriculum. They instead rely too heavily on textbooks in

their lectures and expect students writing exams to simply regurgitate what they have learned.

"University studies are based on theory. Students memorize the information but forget it immediately after they finish exams due to a lack of practice," said Hani Al-Maqtari, a student studying mathematics at Taiz University's College of Science.

Abdullah Al-Azazi, chairman of the faculty syndicate at Sana'a University and a history teacher at the Education College, said that many teachers and professors are still applying the outdated teaching method of being informers rather than communicators, expecting their students to rely solely on memorization.

"I regret to say that most professors and teachers are not applying the modern teaching method where students are not only receivers but, instead, the core of the teaching process," said Al-Azazi.

According to him, the university does not give enough attention to improving the style of education and its practical applications.

Al-Maqtari thinks that in addition to paying more attention to the practical side of teaching, the university and professors should pay more attention to providing new curricula, particularly in departments such as accounting and information technology.

Hamoud said that some courses in the curricula are old and their content is unrelated to their specialization. "For example," she said, "we studied a big book explaining the stream of information and the binary system in computers, which is unrelated to our major. There are also old topics that are no longer needed in the labor market."

Asma Abdulla, a third-year student from the English Department at the Education College of Sana'a University, said that students risk being punished if they criticize their lecturers. In her view, students remain silent because "we care more for grades and how to pass exams. This doesn't enable us to object or ask for a replacement of the teacher whose teaching methods we don't like. This is because almost all students are afraid to be punished with low grades by those teachers."

Hamoud agreed: "We attend several lectures only to get attendance marks and then attend the same class with another professor who explains things in a better way." However, even then students have run into trouble with their own



Yemeni students and teaching staff say that university curricula are often outmoded and lacking in attention to practical applications. To stay competitive in the job market, many turn to external training courses.

teachers, who believe their own way of teaching is best.

### Lack of resources

The teachers themselves do not deserve all the blame. In many ways, their teaching methods and the curriculum they use are symptomatic of a deeper issue—a lack of resources.

"Faculties such as the Science Faculty and the Agriculture Faculty lack the simplest pillars of the practical educational process such as the appropriate labs," said Al-Azazi.

Al-Maqtari voiced a similar concern, saying that at times "we were assigned to do the practical exercises as homework. However, most of us used to not do them due to the regular electricity outages."

The students also said that the professors are often busy and although many top students become teachers after graduation, they are often absent.

Hamoud believes this problem comes down to money. "Several professors have their own businesses and they don't have time. Those who graduated and are now teaching at college are often absent because they receive low payment."

According to Al-Azazi, neither the salaries nor the environment at the colleges are conducive to nurturing the abilities of teachers, which in turn affects the teaching process and eventually the student's professional future.

While Nojood Jamal, an accountant at Sihatak Insurance Company, places part of the blame on universities for not preparing students for the job market, she says students themselves are also part of the problem.

Jamal is still a freshman at the Commerce College of the Yemeni-Jordanian University, and she says students are partly responsible for not finding their way and not

seeking out training opportunities while at the college, after graduation, or even prior to their college years.

"It seemed strange to me when a graduated accountant, who was my trainee at the insurance company I work at, had problems with the accounting basics," Jamal said.

"Most students care only for grades and the graduation certificate, neglecting the importance of practicality, understanding of the subjects and being well prepared for the job market," said Jamal.

### Insufficient improvements

There have been improvements at some of Yemen's educational facilities. For example, in 2009, The Netherlands Initiative for Capacity Development in Higher Education (NICHE) updated the curriculum at the mathematics and science colleges at Sana'a University.

"The Netherlands Initiative staff are still working on improving the

university curricula, however, I don't exaggerate when saying that some colleges still have subjects that haven't been updated since the 1980s," said Al-Azazi.

Al-Maqtari agreed somewhat, saying that many students who become teachers are stuck in the same mindset as their teachers, using the same methods and lacking the resources to improve their teaching.

Some of the many students who complain about the lack of practical skill development in public universities search for external training courses that are relevant to their goals.

"Nowadays, I am taking Yemen Soft Accounting courses [graduate courses offered by the Yemen Soft Technology Company] to prepare myself for the labor market," said Hamoud.

"I will practice what I haven't practiced at college," she concluded.



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# Eighth Children's Parliament session confronts new challenges

Story by **Ali Abulohoom**

**T**he moment the result was announced Maram Al-Areqi jumped from her seat and burst into tears. Her colleagues gathered around, congratulating her for securing the presidency of the Children's Parliament.

The attendees gave the 14-year-old from Ibb governorate a thunderous ovation before she made her acceptance speech.

"My tears fell for two reasons: the first is that I feel very proud of being elected as the president of the Children's Parliament and the trust I got from my colleagues; the second is that I never imagined how proud of me my parents would be," Al-Areqi said.

During her speech Al-Areqi called for political parties to implement the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) outcomes.

"The dialogue's outcomes are the best means by which we can draw the roadmap of Yemen for the future because they were nailed down by all political and social parties and dissidents, which means they are undisputed," she said.

The Children's Parliament started in 2000 and involved 32 members from different governorates. Membership reached 63 in 2014 as the project developed and extended to include as many members as possible from all over Yemen, according to Om Kolthoom Al-Shami, the director of the project.

The Democratic School, an NGO which runs the Children's Parliament, conducted the opening session on April 22 to elect the 63 members for the period from 2014-2016, including the president and two deputies.

Al-Areqi was one of three girls who ran in the 13-member presidential election. One boy and one girl were elected as her deputies.

The Children's Parliament meets for three days every three months in one of Parliament's halls. Its members have the support and sponsorship of the President of Yemen and the Yemeni Parliament.

Al-Shami explained that the process of choosing children parliamentarians passes through two stages. The first is to hold elections every two years in schools around the country. In an attempt to appropriately represent children from all of Yemen, the elections include girls and boys between the age of 13 to 15 from 63 of Yemen's largest schools across all governorates. The second stage entails elections at the Yemeni Parliament, where elected parliamentarians from Yemen's government convene to select the presidential board for the Children's Parliament.

Since 2010, the Children's Parliament has addressed issues regarding childhood in Yemen and has helped pass some significant bills, especially at the third session of Children's Parliament held in 2006 in cooperation with the Yemeni Parliament.

"In the 2006 session the Children's Parliament had accomplished members who [were given the opportunity] to summon Yemeni ministers, question them, make recommendations, and submit them to the Yemeni Parliament and Shura Council for discussion," said Al-Shami.

Mohammed Abdu, 22, was a Children's Parliament member in 2006. He said that "by 2008 we served the children of Yemen and were able to follow up with the implementation of bills we already put to Parliament [before the 2008 session concluded]."

"We pressured the Yemeni president to stop two death sentences against juveniles a couple of days before they were executed. As a



On the table at the eighth Children's Parliament session are the issues of stricter punishment for recruiting child soldiers, making society more inclusive of minority groups, and providing education and essential resources to children displaced by conflict in Yemen.

result, [the Children's Parliament] participated in the passing of a bill to determine the legal age of minors, which used to be under 15 according to the Yemeni law, but afterwards it became 18 to conform to international law," he added.

The Children's Parliament has also helped secure free birth documents, which used to cost families almost YR800 (US \$3.72), and has pushed for a reduction in school fees, according to Abdu.

Al-Shami says that the Children's Parliament has taken on new tasks and faced many challenges since the political upheaval in 2011. "The burdens have become heavy since then," she said.

"Due to defections from the Yemeni army which took place during the 2011 uprising, the political dissidents some army factions are affiliated with have recruited children. Since then it has been our task to put an end to the recruitment of children," Al-Shami said.

Despite findings reached by the Children's Parliament and submitted to Yemen's Parliament in 2012 and 2014, calls for strict punishment for those who recruit children to fight has not come into effect.

According to Akram Noman, a Yemeni lawyer, article 149 of the children's rights law of 2002 criminalizes the recruitment of children into the Yemeni army or for any armed conflict. However, Noman says that the law does not state a punishment.

Al-Shami said that the Children's Parliament is trying to pass a law that punishes such recruitment. "We will still strive until we get this law and make the Yemeni army devoid of children," She said.

Mohammed Al-Shadadi, deputy head of the Yemeni Parliament, attended the eighth session of the Children's Parliament.

"We never hesitate to support the Children's Parliament by any means because it is considered the only source by which we learn about children's issues and problems in Yemen, thus we can pass laws and legislation supporting their rights," he said.

The Children's Parliament aims to include representatives from dif-

ferent minorities and marginalized groups.

"How could we know the problems and concerns of minorities unless we include their representatives," Al-Shami said.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have been another major issue for the Children's Parliament. Many IDPs have been created by the Houthi rebellion in Sada'a governorate as well as the ongoing battle against alleged Al-Qaeda militants in Abyan governorate. The Children's Parliament took on the issues of IDPs and conducted many field visits to learn about the conditions facing displaced children.

Al-Shami said they conducted

many visits and provided internally displaced people with tents, food, and health services in cooperation with local and international organizations.

Taghreed Ali, 14, a newly elected member says, "my electoral program included some critical points upon which the students in my school voted for me. I focused on education and health, both things that millions of children are deprived of."

Jerry Farrell, the country director for Save the Children in Yemen, one of many international NGOs supporting the Children's Parliament, stated that all children in Yemen have the right to participate in

society and to be empowered.

"I believe strongly in the Children's Parliament as a forum for children and young people to make their voices heard at all levels and they will play a role in improving children's situations as future leaders in their community," Farrell said.

Nora Al-Kasadi, the children protection manager at UNICEF says, "the children in Yemen are in urgent need of care from all concerned bodies, whether governmental or civil, particularly after the 2011 upheaval whose fallout caused the children in conflict areas to drop out from school and become unable to receive health services."

The deputy regional director of the UN Refugee Agency, Yasuko Shimizo, said that the Children's Parliament has had a significant role in highlighting children issues in Yemen.

"We became partners with the Children's Parliament because child refugees have their own representatives through whom we learn about the challenges facing them."

As for Al-Areqi, she looks ahead with cautious optimism. "I realize that this responsibility is not trivial. Being a child president means I will bear a lot of burdens and tasks which I am supposed to adhere to in the upcoming two years," she said.

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# Yemen's counterterror offensive sidesteps real problems



A military helicopter flies over Sana'a.

Vivian Salama  
Atlanticcouncil.org  
First published May 01

US drones and Yemeni counterterrorism forces recently killed more than three dozen militants in Yemen linked to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in one of the largest counterterrorism operations to take place on Yemeni soil in years. At least sixty-five suspected terrorists were killed in both land and air operations. At least three airstrikes were carried out as part of the assault, which targeted a convoy and in remote training camps in southern Yemen. US government officials say the militants were planning to attack civilian and military facilities. The attack came just days

after CNN aired a video showing many suspected al-Qaeda militants gathered together in South Yemen. But what this offensive severely lacks is a comprehensive solution to the drivers of militant activity in Yemen.

South Yemen has, in recent years, been a hotbed for AQAP and other militant activity, but it is essential to understand the roots of these troubles. In the town souk in Jaar, shopkeepers recently grappled for the trickle of pedestrians making their way down Nasser Street, the town's main strip, while woodsmen cut and sanded new pieces of furniture for local residents looking to rebuild their modest homes.

Not two years ago, Jaar, in Yemen's Abyan governorate, was the scene of callous bloodshed as security forces vowed to rid the region of

al-Qaeda infiltration. Poorly trained, heavy-handed security forces attacked insurgents that had used the political instability as an opportunity to bolster their presence, engaging in a brutal war that crushed local villages and killed many innocent civilians in the crossfire. Instead, the military pushed many of those militants deep into the mountains for incubation, while the violence sparked a mass exodus of impoverished civilians, many of whom remain internally displaced today.

Yemen's militant activities, while not exclusively to the South, developed amid the turbulent political backdrop that colors North-South tensions after the two Yemens were united in 1990. The country's brutal 1994 civil war left a major psychological rift between the opposing sides in the absence of reconcilia-

tion talks. Northerners—particularly those loyal to then-President Saleh, also received privileges in terms of access to power, land, and jobs.

Yemen's National Dialogue Conference (NDC), aimed at constructing a political road map, including a new constitution, wrapped up in January amid nationwide calls to revitalize Yemen's failing economy and address the dire humanitarian crisis. According to the World Bank, 54.5 percent of Yemen's population was living below the poverty line in 2012, up from 42 percent three years earlier. More than 10 million people—nearly one-half the population—lack sufficient food; 12 million lack access to clean water; and 1 million children are malnourished, according to the World Food Program.

In a statement last week to journalists, Yemen's current President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi advised the Minister of Finance to raise government revenues particularly in the areas of electricity, water, taxes and customs; all the while combating the roots of corruption and holding violators accountable. He highlighted that thirty-six oil and gas companies pulled out of Yemen due to crumbling security. Southerners blame the central government for turning its back on security—particularly in Abyan province, the scene of last week's joint counterterrorism operation.

For many in the South, government neglect has been a major source of disenfranchisement, while the use of US drones and the Yemeni military has helped militant groups looking to play on these sentiments. In his statement this week, President Hadi noted, "militants from all



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over the world flocked to Yemen." There are signs that, for some recruits in Yemen, their incentive to join Islamist groups like al-Qaeda are not ideological.

As military operations increase in the southern governorates, as many believe they could, the more productive option for winning hearts and minds is to seek reconciliation. Severe government neglect and dwindling resources, including declining water, soaring unemployment and rapid population growth—issues

often at the heart of domestic conflicts—are becoming blurred as the government wages a war against these groups that supposedly represent a radical Islamist position. Resources including electricity, water, and gas are scarce and coming under increasing pressure. Many remote areas from Khawlan to Rada'a to the southern governorate of Abyan have little-to-no access to healthcare or proper education, fueling further resentment against the state.

*Continued on the back page*



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# Alert over spike in Middle East flu-like virus

**Louise Redvers**  
IRIN  
First published May 5

Health authorities around the world are on high alert after a sudden spike in the incidence of a deadly Middle Eastern flu-like bug that began in Saudi Arabia but has now spread to Asia and the USA.

As of May 4, the Kingdom had recorded 411 cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) and 112 deaths in two years.

Almost a third of these cases have emerged in the past two weeks, the biggest single surge of MERS-CoV since it was discovered in April 2012, prompting questions about whether the virus has the potential to escalate into a pandemic similar to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which swept through Asia in 2002-3, killing over 700 people.

Beyond Saudi Arabia the virus has a significant caseload in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and in the past week other cases have been discovered in the US, Greece and Egypt for the first time, with 12 countries in total now affected.

"This is a key moment in the MERS-CoV timeline," Sofian Ragab research director at IDPH Research Group, a London-based but Middle East and North Africa-focused think tank, told IRIN. "Unless it is brought under control and kept that way, we could see an exponential increase in incidence."

Ragab, who has been mapping MERS-CoV since it first appeared, noted that while the "pandemic potential" remained "low", he said: "We still have to be concerned, and infection prevention and control measures should be implemented and maintained."

The good news is that so far the genome structure of MERS-CoV does not appear to be mutating as it passes from person to person, un-

like SARS, which makes it less virulent and unpredictable, and easier to treat.

But while several studies have identified camels to be the likely source of MERS-CoV, scientists remain unsure about how the virus is moving from animals to humans.

"Until we better understand how the virus transmits from camels or the environment to a human, we are likely to see more cases," said Jaouad Mahjour, director of the Department for Communicable Diseases at the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) in Cairo.

Mahjour, a medical doctor who has just led a WHO fact-finding and risk assessment mission to Saudi Arabia, added: "Understanding this link is key to limiting the outbreak. There is an urgent need to conduct an in-depth epidemiological study of known cases to get this knowledge."

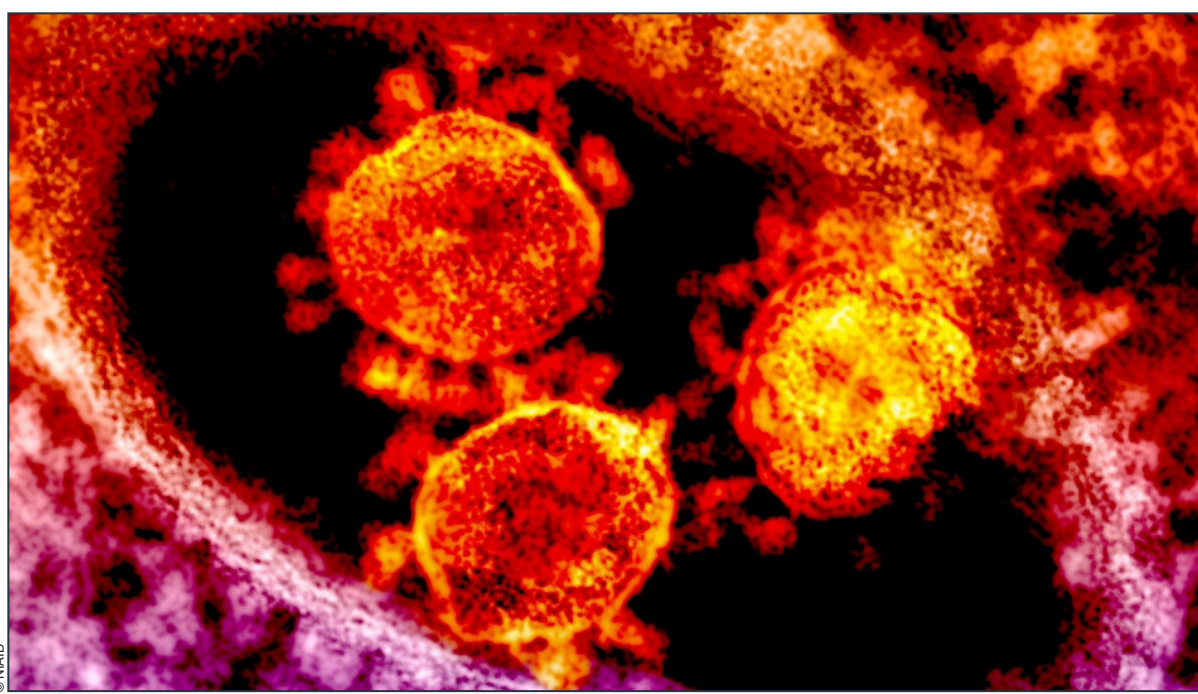
## Two weeks on a ventilator

Forty-seven-year-old Saudi consultant Ismael Qushmaq, one of a number of healthcare workers to be infected with the virus in the Kingdom in the past month, is recovering after two weeks on a ventilator in the ICU department he runs at King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center in Jeddah.

His sister, Nahid Qushmaq, who works as a doctor in infection control at another hospital in the city, told IRIN that her brother had been exposed to MERS in early April while treating a patient, who it later turned out had the disease despite having atypical symptoms.

"It's important that we control this as soon as possible. It's not a chronic disease, it's an acute infection of the respiratory system and it can be contained," she said.

Some parents in Saudi Arabia have called for schools to close early for summer due fears of an outbreak, but Qushmaq said she was still sending her children to class because she was confident that adequate surveil-



Particles of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus that emerged in 2012.

lance measures were in place.

"People are obviously concerned and are asking a lot of questions", she said. "But... I wouldn't say there has been a lot of panic, not as much as I thought there would be. People are still going about their lives, though you do see some people in masks in shopping malls and other crowded areas."

## Improved response

Saudi Arabia had come under fire for its handling of MERS, with some accusing the government of opacity and trying to cover up the infection rate in order to limit reputational damage.

Last month, in what was read as a response to those negative headlines, King Abdullah removed the country's health minister, Abdullah al-Rabiah, and appointed Adel Faqih as his "acting" replacement.

The Kingdom's Ministry of Health now has a dedicated and regularly-

updated MERS section on its website. A 10-person medical advisory council made up of leading health experts has also been put in place and three hospitals in the Kingdom are designated specialist MERS-CoV treatment centers.

"The previous minister didn't seem to want to talk about the numbers and he kept telling people to keep calm and not panic," said Ahmad Qushmaq, a brother of the recovering ICU consultant.

"But now there seems to be a lot more information available and more discussion, which is good," he added.

"This is a key moment in the MERS-CoV timeline. Unless it is brought under control and kept that way, we could see an exponential increase in incidence."

Although the details of how the virus is passing from animals to humans is not clear, the Saudi Health Ministry has now reiterated WHO

advice about contact with camels and consumption of the animal's meat and milk - controversial in a country where camels are revered for their beauty and considered prized possessions as well as part of the traditional diet.

## Migrant workers

A number of the healthcare staff in Saudi Arabia who have fallen ill with MERS-CoV have been migrant workers from Asia, fueling concerns about the virus being transported around the world.

Last month some 400 passengers from an Etihad flight from Abu Dhabi to Manila were called in for testing by the Philippines Ministry of Health after it was discovered one person on board had been diagnosed with MERS-CoV in the UAE, but had left the country before his results were known.

Like many countries supplying workers to the Gulf, the Philippines

government has sent information on MERS-CoV to all its embassies, consulates and overseas labor welfare organizations; their websites now carry large banner reminding people about hand hygiene and what to do if symptoms develop.

In the UAE, the death of a Filipino paramedic, 45-year-old Abundio Verzosa Esporlas, in the city of Al Ain in April sparked a flurry of concern on social media sites.

In recent weeks some Filipinos in the UAE have been seen wearing protective masks while traveling on public transport and the health authorities have stepped up awareness campaigns, running "advice clinics" on social networking sites like Twitter.

## Pilgrimage fears

A bigger worry is the millions of Muslims who travel to Saudi Arabia every year on religious pilgrimages to Mecca and Madinah, particularly the Hajj pilgrimage in October.

Malaysia recorded its first case in April when an infected man returned from pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. Press reports say the country will now be screening all passengers landing at Kuala Lumpur airport.

The Saudi government has advised against elderly people, pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions (all more vulnerable to MERS-CoV) from taking part in pilgrimages, advice reiterated by Egypt as well.

Nevertheless, in spite of the increase of MERS-CoV cases since the start of 2014 and the widening global spread of infections, WHO has not declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

It has recommended "increasing efforts to raise awareness of MERS among travelers going to and traveling from MERS-affected countries," but said it did not "advise special screening at points of entry with regard to this event nor... does [it] recommend the application of any travel or trade restrictions."

## Job Vacancies

**The Executive Bureau for the Acceleration of Aid Absorption and Support for Policy Reforms**

The Executive Bureau (EB) is an institutional mechanism to provide support and monitoring for the implementation of the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) policy reforms and acceleration of aid absorption. EB was established by the Presidential decree no. 2 on February 2, 2013 and was launched on December 8, 2013. EB, based in Sana'a, is currently seeking to recruit Yemeni nationals with professional credentials that match the profile of the following positions:

### 1. Project Management Specialist (2 positions available)

Main tasks would be:

1. Assist government implementation agencies complying with the application of government project selection and prioritization criteria in accordance to sectorial priorities, plans and development objectives;
2. Support Project Implementation Units (PIUs) and Project Monitoring Units (PMUs) enhancing their technical and organizational capacity in the fields of project management, procurement, and project implementation and compliance;
3. Strengthen the capacity of government implementation agencies (PIUs and PMUs) to accelerate the implementation process of ongoing pledged donor funded projects;
4. Participate in constant contacts and meetings with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and government agencies on project selection, prioritization, implementation and evaluation;
5. Conduct frequent initial assessments of government implementation agencies' capability and assist drafting effective action plans to support these agencies;
6. Provide technical and capacity building support to PIUs and PMUs to overcome any major pitfalls in their implementation progress;
7. Enable PIUs and PMUs adopting best international practices and conducts in project management and procurements;
8. Participate in the development of MAF M&E system at the EB;
9. Assist in the preparation of quarter and annual progress reports and business plans for the EB's Board of Directors and donors;
10. Able to travel outside Sana'a and abroad;
11. Other duties: As assigned by management.

### Qualifications, Work Experience and Skills:

1. A minimum of Master degree in Project Management, Engineering, Business Administration, Economics, or any other related fields;
2. Notable qualifications or certifications in Project Management or related area will be a plus;
3. At least seven (7) years of progressive experience in project development or project management, with emphasis on established managerial experience in designing, planning or implementing public projects that are either funded by international donors or the Yemeni government;
4. Hand-on experience of applying common project management and planning tools;
5. In-depth knowledge of Project Cycle's requirements and arrangements in Yemen;

6. Familiarity with international organizations' project procedures and procurement guidelines;
7. Strong and certified verbal and written communication skills in both Arabic and English;
8. Strong computers skills in Microsoft Office applications, Internet and MS Project.

### 2. Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (2 positions available)

Main tasks would be:

1. Review the MAF project investments working with relevant actors responsible for actions with the MAF, to ensure that all indicators are clear and measurable and contribute to the objectives of the MAF and that benchmarks and targets are well defined;
2. The development of an M&E plan, in conjunction with relevant actors, for the collection of data;
3. Oversee the preparation of regular reporting;
4. Design a tracking tool and process to track movements of aid, from pledges to commitments and from commitment to allocations to each of the pillars of the Transitional Program;
5. Support central and line ministries in developing and implementing monitoring plans for the policies and projects;
6. Identify capacity gaps within government implementing agencies and develop programs of support;
7. Work with MoPIC and other state institutions to institutionalize enhanced monitoring and evaluating systems and practices across government;
8. Communication: Ensure all stakeholders are aware of progress and decisions related to the implementation of the MAF and the Transitional Program and manage stakeholder expectations;
9. Design, implement and manage forums for coordinating stakeholders relevant to MAF and Transitional Program implementation. Activities should take into account existing coordination forums, including the Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) Steering Committee, the MAF coordination mechanisms and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC);
10. Enable PIUs and PMUs adopting best international practices and conducts in Monitoring and Evaluation.
11. Able to travel outside Sana'a and abroad;
12. Any other tasks as deemed necessary and relevant to EB work plans.

### Qualifications, Work Experience and Skills:

1. Master's degree(s) or higher in Economics and or Statistics or any other related fields;
2. Notable qualifications or certifications in Monitoring and Evaluation or related area will be a plus.
3. At least seven (7) years of working experience in international development, policy analysis and national development monitoring and evaluation;

4. Strong analytical skills and experience in analyzing quantitative/qualitative data and surveys and policies;
5. Good computer skills and familiarity with statistical packages;
6. Excellent communication and writing skills, in both Arabic and English;
7. Good contextual knowledge of local issues, community priorities, social and cultural constraints and realities will be an added advantage.

### 3. Project Management Assistant (1 position available)

Main Tasks would be:

1. Providing direct daily support to the Project Management Support (PMS) unit;
2. Administrating and updating collected projects data, documents and correspondences;
3. Preparing a monthly consolidated projects sheet for each sector;
4. Supporting the unit in coordinating and organizing workshops, seminars or training sessions that aim at strengthening the capacities of the government implementing agencies;
5. Participating in meetings with various stakeholders either in or outside Sana'a;
6. Preparing meeting minutes and reports;
7. Supporting the Project Management specialists in the preparation and the designing of monthly, quarterly and annually reports;
8. Developing and updating client contact information;
9. Other duties: As assigned by management.

### Qualifications, Work Experience and Skills:

1. Bachelor degree in Project Management, Engineering, Business Administration, Economy or other relevant or equivalent filed;
2. At least three (3) years of progressive experience as an assistance in administrative management;
3. Experience or notable qualification or training in project management will be an asset;
4. Knowledge in reporting, meeting minutes writing and coordination in either public or private sector organizations;
5. Superior interpersonal and communication skills;
6. Strong verbal and written language skills in both Arabic and English;
7. Advance computer skills; mainly in Microsoft Office, Internet and MS Project;
8. Ability to work under pressure;
9. Multi-tasks oriented and a team player attitude.

\*\*\*All Positions will be for expected work duration of one year; renewable and subject to semi-annual and annual performance evaluation against specific deliverables established by the EB Managing Director.

Qualified and interested Yemeni individuals should apply. Please apply along with your detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV) and cover letter via email to [apply@ebyemen.org](mailto:apply@ebyemen.org) by May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for written tests and interviews.



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## The Issue of the Importance of Grammar Instruction

By JAMES SUTTON

One often debated issue amongst most ELT Teachers is the importance or lack thereof of teaching grammar in the classroom. This is an ongoing debate and I personally expect it to remain that way. Even if we could actually agree on the importance of teaching grammar to ESL Students, the next issue arises as to how to properly teach grammar in a way that is beneficial and interesting for students. However, let's remain on the subject of the importance of teaching grammar for a minute before we proceed to the process of teaching it. When it comes to teaching or learning grammar in language classrooms, you will generally find that the people are separated into three different camps of ideologies and theories.

The first camp is the camp that believes that grammar bears no importance in any ESL classroom. This theory causes teachers who follow it to completely abandon any form of grammar instruction in the classroom. Their argument is that students should learn their second language (L2) imitating the same process they used to learn their first language (L1) which is: students should learn a language the way a child learns a language which is by constant drilling and repetition. Their argument centers on the theory that language is a natural process that is learned through communication with others and not through any form of academic process of lectures and superfluous explanations. When a mother first starts teaching



her child to speak, she does not explain to him that the word mother is a 'noun' and a noun is 'a name of a person, place or thing.' She simply has the child repeat the word while pointing to herself to afford the child the opportunity to understand on his own that 'mother' is the woman standing there pointing at herself. Thus, learning is taking place with the absence of any formal grammatical instruction.

The second camp carries the belief that no learning can take place with the absence of grammar in the classroom. This camp places the utmost importance on grammar instruction and feels that this is the only plausible way for students to learn the language. The teachers who implement this methodology in the classroom tend to focus more on drilling students on the understanding of word and verb forms rather than on the actual application of these forms. Therefore, you will find that when they introduce a new form of grammar such as the Present Perfect, they will focus

on the form and drill students to the point that they will see 'have/has past participle' in everyone one of their worst nightmares. As a result, you will generally find the students of this methodology, as they reach higher levels, with a strong understanding of word and verb forms and an ability to explain grammar rules in vast detail; however, you will find that they have the most difficulty structuring sentences that are free of grammatical mistakes. Because they focused more on what the language looks like, they are not able to implement the language in the proper way through their usage of the language.

Then along comes the third camp. These are the teachers who sat back in observation and took a very empirical approach to understanding which theory is the one that will rule. They looked at the original thesis of grammar being the most important aspect of teaching and saw the mistakes that came about through this method. However, they did recognize some decent practices that can be taken and implemented. Next, they observed the Grammarians' antithesis and noticed that, even though they might have met with a lot of success in the beginning stages of their endeavors to teach students through natural methods of language acquisition, students, when reaching higher levels, had a very mediocre understanding of the 'meaning' of language; they had created a classroom full of parrots unable to function outside of the realm they were taught in. They finally came to the conclusion that what is needed is a complete synthesis of the two theories in a way that we will take the beneficial methods from each of the two previous

camp and discard the useless ideals.

Once the two methodologies were synthesized, we came up with an approach to teaching that will please all walks of life. We came to the conclusion that the focus on Natural Language Teaching would be more beneficial at lower levels where students mainly need vocabulary to function more than they need to understand the difference between the Past Simple and the Present Perfect. As soon as the students have enough vocabulary words to the point they are now struggling to put them into correctly structured sentence, grammar then should start to be introduced little by little. This is because, in the lower levels, the students are more focused on learning the basic words and phrases they are going to need in everyday life; they are not focused on the specific meanings of these structures, instead, they understand them as a whole. In direct contrast to students in higher levels who have reached a complete understanding of

the basics of the language, so now they are prepared to journey out into the deepest chasm of understanding the structures of language they have been taught throughout the years.

In conclusion, I believe, once these arguments are understood and the synthesis is made, we should have little or no doubt about what needs to be done in the classroom. I mean, it is a common understanding amongst all people that 'a lot of anything is dangerous and lacks benefit.' Therefore, we should all strive to bring a sort of variety into the classroom and deal with language in a more holistic way. We have to understand that any weakness in one aspect of the language will carry over into other aspects and cause a deficiency in the whole. Teachers have to rely on their high level of creativity to present the language in a holistic manner that can be of benefit to all the students who crave an understanding in the science they are studying.

## An Old Man's Language

By KHALID ZILBERG

The English language as previously discussed had three time periods. The first being called Old English or Anglo-Saxon, Middle English, and Modern Day English. The earliest time period capped off with the migration of Germanic tribes that originally lived in Britain around the fifth century A.D. As of now, no record has been found of the original language spoken by these tribes. The biggest consequence of the migration came from the decision by the Vikings to invade which in turn created the Norman Conquest of 1066. All of these groups of people who fought for power impacted the lexicon and the inflectional system of English (French during this time had the most influence on English).

I have given a small sample of Old English. It shows several of the significant ways in which change was brought to the language. If we look close enough we will find resemblance between the languages of the tenth century to ours. This short passage was taken from Aelfric's "Homily on St. Gregory the Great" depicting how the Pope sent missionaries to convert the Anglo Saxons to Christianity.

Eft he axode, hu ðære ðeode nama wære þe hi of comon. Him wæs geandwyrð, þæt hi Angle genemnode wæron. Þa cwæð he, "Rihtlice hi sind Angle gehatene, for ðan ðe hi engla wite habbað, and swilcum gedafenað þæt hi on heofonum engla geferan beon."

The words that are known by the modern day English speaker are - he, of, him, for, and, on. If the reader is reading carefully



they will see *nama* (name), *comon* (come), *wære* (were), and *wæs* (was).

The brief summary of the short passage: Again he [St. Gregory] asked what might be the name of the people from which they came. It was answered to him that they were named Angles. Then he said, "Rightly are they called Angles because they have the beauty of angels, and it is fitting that such as they should be angels' companions in heaven."

Looking closer at these texts we will find some words have survived the transformation and are readable by the modern day speaker, *axode* (asked), *hu* (how), *rihtlice* (rightly), *engla* (angels), *habbað* (have), *swilcum* (such), *heofonum* (heaven), and *beon* (be). The opposite has happened in which words were erased or forgotten: *eft* "again," *ðeode* "people, nation," *cwæð* "said, spoke," *gehatene* "called, named," *wite* "appearance, beauty," and *geferan* "companions."

The most amazing comparison between Old English and Modern Day English is the difference between the elaborate systems of inflections. Nouns, adjectives, and defi-

nite articles were inflected for gender, case, and number: *ðære ðeode* "(of) the people" is feminine, genitive, and singular, *Angle* "Angles" is masculine, accusative, and plural, and *swilcum* "such" is masculine, dative, and plural. In Modern English the system of inflections for verbs would seem simple if seen by an Old Englishman: for example, *habbað* "have" ends with the *-að* suffix characteristic of plural present indicative verbs. Additionally, there were two imperative forms, four subjunctive forms (two for the present tense and two for the past tense), and several others we no longer have.

Modern English has a set of rules for inflection. Old English had a complicated system as in present participles suffix was *-ended* not *-in*, and past participles held a prefix *gee-* (*asgeandwyrð* "answered" above).

In conclusion we learn that the English language did not birth itself into existence. Rather, it came into existence because of Germanic tribes migrating. These tribes had no form of writing and left no record of their own language. Linguistically speaking, we know that these tribes spoke a dialect related to German, Dutch, Low German, or Firsian. We say this because of the similarities between the languages such as grammar, lexicon, etc. Furthermore we have found out Old Norse, Gothic, Icelandic, and Norwegian have commonalities with Old English. In the end English is a young member of an ancient family of languages whose people covered the globe.

### A BIT OF GRAMMAR

## Present Simple in Negative Statements and Questions

By MICHAEL CHAVIS

To form a negative statement with the Present Simple, we simply use the present form of 'do' with the negative form 'not.'

An example of this would be:

**Affirmative:** I go to the store every day.

**Negative:** I do not go to the store every day.

**Affirmative:** He goes to the store every day.

**Negative:** He does not go to the store every day.

Therefore, if you use: I, we, you, they or a plural noun, you will use 'do not.' If you use the pronouns: he, she, it or a singular noun, you will use 'does not.'

These forms can also be contracted in informal writing and in speech to save time. An example of this would be:

I don't go to the store every day.

He doesn't go to the store every day.

### EXERCISE

Change the following affirmative statements to negative statements applying the grammar explained above.

- I wake up every day at 7 AM. \_\_\_\_\_
- They eat breakfast together every morning. \_\_\_\_\_
- He over sleeps his class once a week. \_\_\_\_\_
- I go to the store on weekdays. \_\_\_\_\_
- We always go swimming on weekends. \_\_\_\_\_
- Mujahid and Sayf argue every day. \_\_\_\_\_
- The doctor treats patients in his office daily. \_\_\_\_\_
- China produces new items all the time. \_\_\_\_\_
- Fatimah Saleh does her homework every day. \_\_\_\_\_

### Answers

- I wake up every day at 7 AM. I don't wake up every day at 7 AM.
- They eat breakfast together every morning. They don't eat breakfast together every morning.
- He over sleeps his class once a week. He doesn't over sleep his class.
- I go to the store on weekdays. I don't go to the store on weekdays.
- We always go swimming on weekends. We don't ever go swimming on weekends.
- Mujahid and Sayf argue every day. Mujahid and Sayf don't argue every day.
- The doctor treats patients in his office daily. The doctor doesn't treat patients in his office daily.
- China produces new items all the time. China doesn't produce new items all the time.
- Fatimah Saleh does her homework every day. Fatimah Saleh doesn't do her homework every day.



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

## Yemen's counterterror offensive sidesteps real problems

In a recent conversation with Farea Al-Muslimi, a local activist who testified before the US Senate Judiciary Committee last year about a strike in his home village of Wessab, he explained: "We are hearing more and more that these guys who join al-Qaeda don't pray. How can that be? Because this isn't ideological for many of these people. They join al-Qaeda because they don't have money to buy food; because they don't have water; because they don't have schools; because they hate the drones."

To avoid an unnecessary escalation of violence in Yemen, it is imperative that the Yemeni government look to avoid the use of foreign drone and military force when possible. Tribesmen have repeatedly sought to help government officials track down al-Qaeda militants and make arrests in some less-volatile parts of the country. The government should make this a priority to avoid unnecessary casualties, and arresting and interrogating suspected militants would be a productive approach to intelligence

gathering. Compensation must be paid to the families of innocent victims of drone and air strikes to avoid retaliatory violence. Finally, addressing the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, while boosting education and job prospects for younger generations, would inevitably deter many young men from taking desperate—and violent—measures as a means for survival. Al-Qaeda often offers some form of compensation to the families of its fighters. The Yemeni government—with the help of the United States and its other

allies—must give these young men more incentive to live a productive and peaceful life.

Vivian Salama is an independent journalist focused on issues in the Middle East and North Africa. Her work has appeared in Newsweek, Daily Beast, Al Monitor, The Atlantic, Columbia Journalism Review and more.

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