

Report  
**Executions  
gone wrong**



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**Corruption and  
used clothing**



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Report  
**Fireworks and  
celebratory gunfire  
at weddings continue  
unabated**



Page 8



## SabaFon's 8<sup>th</sup> draw and announcement of the grand prizes for surprise card offer (2) " BMW x3 2014 car.

The winner ( Qayed Muthanna Hameed ) from Al-Dalea'a

Sabafon Company, Yemen's 1st Mobile Operator, celebrated the 8<sup>th</sup> draw of the Prizes Card Offer 2 launched early 2014 for it's a loyal subscribers, including prepaid & postpaid.

In the celebration held in Taiz, Qayed Muthanna Humaid won the grand prize (BMW X3 2014), while three winners of golden bars (100 gram), in addition to several other prizes.

Mr. Bakr Al-Junaid communication Senior Agent, expressed happiness about the scale & reward of this offer, which is the first of its kind in the field of communications in Yemen.

Al-Junaid asserted that all subscribers still have an

opportunity to win by recharging their mobile lines using the 80-unit recharge cards.

The grand prize was handed over to the winner in a celebration held inside the company's head building in Sana'a, in the presence of managers and employees as well as several journalists & the winners, as well as winner relatives & friends.

Mr. Bakr Al-Junaid, congratulated the winners and wished good luck for all other subscribers, adding that the offer is still ongoing and there are 200 prizes to be distributed to customers in the coming month.



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Heritage meets communication

# Houthi militants face guerrilla campaign in Arhab

■ Ali Aboluhom

**SANA'A, Dec 22** — Two Houthis were killed and four others injured on Sunday after they stormed the booby-trapped house of a tribal figure in Al-Makarib village, Arhab district.

Abdualjaleel Sinan, a local sheikh, was able to confirm the number of casualties. He said the owner of the house is Yahya Al-Makroob, a prominent tribal figure with ties to Islah. Houthi militants entered the building as part of ongoing efforts to clear the area of Al-Qaeda affiliates following their withdrawal from Arhab on Dec. 13.

Another resident of Al-Makarib, Ibraheem Azan, 45, told the Yemen Times that dozens of Houthis have been killed or injured in similar explosions since they took over. He said houses have been booby-trapped by owners fleeing in fear of Houthi reprisals.

Ali Al-Qahoom, a member of the Houthi political office, claimed that the houses had been booby-trapped by Al-Qaeda affiliates since Houthi militants took control of the area.

"Since arriving in Arhab over a week ago, Ansar Allah has been purging the district and surrounding villages of terrorists," Al-Qahoom claimed.

In the wake of the explosion, clashes broke out between Houthis and local militants in Al-Makarib, leading to a number of deaths on both sides. "Fighting lasted for few hours and has now ended, although the number of casualties could not be confirmed," said Sinan.

Al-Qahoom told the Yemen



Houthis in Arhab have been grappling with booby-trapped buildings and surprise skirmishes since taking the district on Dec. 13.

Times that government security forces participated in operations in Arhab. "There has been constant coordination between Ansar Allah and the Yemeni army in terms of fighting Al-Qaeda, whether through direct participation by sending forces or by giving a green light to fight them."

Azan says that clashes could renew at a moment's notice, as local militants — whom he identifies as Islah, rather than Al-Qaeda, af-

liates — have taken to a guerrilla campaign against Houthi units in the area. "The conflict in Arhab may continue for several months before Houthis get a firm grip on the district by clearing Islah party militants who come back and forth to fight against Houthis," he said.

The Houthis have capitalized on a security vacuum left following the country's 2011 uprising and the removal of formal President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The

group, traditionally based in Yemen's northern highlands, seized the capital on Sept. 21, and have continued expanding into governorates around the country. They have gone after Islah party officials, and are accused of trying to settle scores with political foes. The Houthis say they are trying to clear the country of Al-Qaeda, but critics accuse them going after individuals and tribes affiliated with the Islah party.

# AQAP assassinate high-ranking security officer in Ibb

■ Khalid Al-Karimi

**SANA'A, Dec. 22** — Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) claimed responsibility on Sunday evening for the assassination of a high-ranking security officer in Ibb governorate earlier in the day.

AQAP released a statement on their Twitter account claiming responsibility for the assassination of Colonel Ali Al-Hakmi in Ibb city. AQAP says one of its cells carried

clashes between AQAP and the Houthis. The Houthis entered Ibb in mid-October, in-line with their expansion of control following their Sept. 21 takeover of Sana'a.

Hamid Al-Hakmi, a cousin of the late officer, told the Yemen Times that Al-Hakmi sustained two bullets in the neck. "They shot him when he was returning from work on Sunday afternoon. Neither the security forces nor the popular committees were able to prevent the es-



# Rada'a locals: Government needs to help injured school girls with hospital fees

■ Bassam Al-Khameri

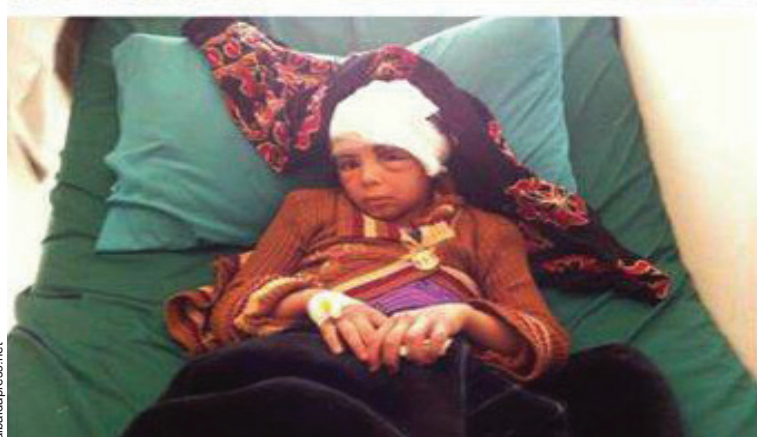
**SANA'A, Dec. 22** — Government affiliated journalists and members of the Rada'a District Local Administrative Council condemned on Monday the lack of action taken by the Yemeni government to help the victims of a Dec. 16 attack in Rada'a city that left 28 dead, including 16 school girls.

In addition to those killed, 34 were injured when two car bombs exploded in Rada'a, Al-Baidha governorate. Aside from the 16 school girls killed, 15 of their classmates were injured in the attack.

Ahmed Al-Akam, secretary general of Rada'a District Local Administrative Council, condemned the government for its inaction, saying that the families of those injured have not received any assistance to help pay for treatment.

"As the government's representatives in Rada'a, we contacted the Cabinet the day after the attack and asked that assistance be given to the families of those killed and injured," Al-Akam said. "So far we've received no response. The government should have provided the assistance on its own, without us even asking." Repeated phone calls to numerous Cabinet officials went unanswered.

According to Nasser Al-Sane, chairman of the Rada'a District Information Office—which represents all journalists working with state-run media outlets in Rada'a—all 15 of the injured girls were in various hospitals in the cities of Rada'a, Dhammar and



Survivors of the Dec. 16 attack in Rada'a include 16 children, all of whose families continue to wait for assistance.

Sana'a.

Al-Sane also condemned what he described as 'inaction' on behalf of the government. "The government has yet to even inquire about the fate of these girls and all others who were injured," he said.

"Most of them are from poor families who cannot afford treatment. They should be provided for."

He said that five of the girls are at the International Hospital and three in the Namudhaji Hospital in Rada'a, four are in intensive

care at the Al-Shifa hospital in Dhammar, and three are at the 48th Army Hospital in Sana'a.

Mohammad Obad is a father of four who lost one daughter in the attack. Two of his other daughters were also injured, one of whom was driven to Al-Shifa Hospital in Dhammar and remains in critical condition. According to Mohammad Al-Zoba, a family member and uncle of the girls, Obad and other family members are planning a campaign to collect money from local residents and businesses to pay for the girls' hospital fees. "Everyone has condemned the attack but no one has provided any assistance to these families," he said.

Al-Zoba says that the Houthis, known otherwise as Ansar Allah, have also failed to provide any support to the victims and their families. The group took control of Rada'a district on Oct. 20.

A prominent source within the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, who agreed to be interviewed on condition of anonymity, claimed that it was the responsibility of the Yemeni government to provide assistance, and that Houthis could not be held responsible for inaction.

"Members of the Houthi popular committees were also targeted, killed and injured in the attacks," he said. "We didn't provide any assistance because this is not our mandate. We're here to provide security, it's the responsibility of the government to provide assistance to victims."

out the assassination in revenge for the government's torture of Al-Qaeda operatives being held in prison. It did not accuse Al-Hakmi of directly torturing AQAP members.

"Members of the Khowlan Al-San'ani cell opened fire at 1:15 p.m. on Colonel Ali Al-Hakmi, the director of the investigative unit at the Criminal Investigation Department in Ibb, while he was driving a vehicle on University Engineering Street."

The head of the Criminal Investigation Department in Ibb, Fawaz Iskandar, said the killing of Al-Hakmi was a bad omen for the security situation in Ibb.

Ibb has lately witnessed violent

cape of the criminals," he said.

On Dec. 20, AQAP released a statement calling on citizens to keep distant from military locations or areas where soldiers are present. "These soldiers are a legitimate target for Mujahidin at any time and in any place," read the statement.

Al-Hakmi was married with seven children. "He is a security officer, and he does not belong to any political party," said Hamid.

Saeed Al-Jamhi, head of Al-Jamhi Center for Strategic Studies, said the assassination of Al-Hakmi is a way for AQAP to flex its muscle and declare that "they have a strong presence in many of the country's governorates."

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# Houthis: Government now legitimate, convert military headquarters to park

■ Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Dec. 22—The Houthi Political Office called on the Yemeni government Monday to form a committee to oversee the conversion of the 6th Military Command headquarters into a public park.

Ali Al-Qahoom, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, said the committee should move quickly.

"Now that they've been granted a vote of confidence from Parliament, they should move on this issue," he said. The headquarters of the 6th Military Command, formerly the 1st Armored Division, was supposed to have been evacuated and converted into a public park following a presidential decree issued by President Hadi in April 2013.

The park was to be named 'March 21 park,' after the day that former presidential military advisor and general, Ali Mohsen, defected from the government and joined the ranks of the 2011 Uprising.

Houthis took control of the headquarters on Sept. 21, the same day they moved into the capital. Following the Houthi takeover, Mohsen—who led six wars against the Houthis between 2004 and 2010—fled the country. Houthis have since called for the government to change the name of the future park to 'Sept. 21'.

Al-Qahoom's statement came two days after several hundred protesters took to the streets on Saturday calling for the houthis and all armed militias to leave Sana'a, and specifically, the 6th Military Command Headquarters.

Protesters called for the government to honor its commitment of converting the headquarters to a park. The protest started in front of Sana'a University and marched down surrounding streets before stopping in front of the 6th Military Command headquarters, with demonstrators shouting for the



Protestors took to the streets on Saturday demanding that all armed militias evacuate the 6th Military Command Headquarters, which is to be converted into a public park.

Houthis to leave and calling for a civil, modern state.

Several protesters claimed the Houthis hit them with batons. Abd Rabu Al-Mujahd, one of the protesters, said that over twenty armed Houthis attacked him and several others at the gate of the 6th Military Command headquarters. He then accused the Houthis of kidnapping one of the demonstrators, Shadi Khusrouf.

Dhaif Allah Al-Shami, Media Spokesmen for Ansar Allah, denied the allegations that Houthis attacked the protesters, whom he referred to as 'rioters seeking to destabilize the country'.

Khusrouf's father, retired Brigadier General Mohsen Khusrouf, told the Yemen Times his son had been held for 10 hours before being released and dropped off at the main gate of Sana'a University.

Khusrouf immediately took his son to the Jumhuriyya Hospital.

"[Shadi] sustained injuries to his eyes, back and arms, after being struck with batons," he said.

Before going to press, the Yemen Times spoke with Shadi Khusrouf, who confirmed that he had sustained injuries by the Houthis to his upper body while in custody, but declined to comment further.

Al-Shami also called on the government to move forward with the conversion of the headquarters into a park now that the Parliament has approved the Cabinet. Yemen's Parliament unanimously voted to grant the current government, formed on Nov. 9 and led by Prime Minister Bahah, a vote of confidence on Thursday Dec. 18.

The Yemen Times made repeated calls to representatives from Yemen's Cabinet and to the Capital Secretariat. Phone calls to numerous Cabinet officials went unreturned. Capital Secretariat officials declined to comment on the park.

# GPC accuses Hadi of inciting party division

■ Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Dec. 21—A GPC official accused President Hadi on Sunday of funding GPC meetings in Aden governorate in order to "encourage defiance" within the party.

Abdulmalik Al-Fuhaidi, a member of the GPC Media Committee and head of the party's mouthpiece almotamar.net, said President Hadi was funding the GPC sessions in order to divide and weaken the national party.

"The president is the one who has been funding meetings in southern governorates, which are aimed at escalating conflicts and creating enmity within the national party," Al-Fuhaidi told the Yemen Times.

A meeting of southern GPC members in Aden was held on Saturday in support of President Hadi against his predecessor and GPC party leader, former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Those in attendance confirmed their previous demands to revoke the decisions taken against President Hadi in the GPC permanent committee's session on Nov. 8.

President Hadi was dismissed from the leadership of his party on Nov. 8 after being accused of soliciting UN sanctions against Saleh. Southern GPC members opposed the move, releasing an official state-



ment to that effect on Nov. 9.

Saturday's declaration included a pledge to "work exclusively with the first deputy head of the GPC, President Hadi, and the second deputy head of the GPC, Abdulkarim Al-Eryani." The statement amounts to a refusal to recognize the head of the GPC himself, Saleh, and to work through President Hadi instead.

"We salute the peaceful Southern Movement protest squares in Aden, Hadramout and other governorates," the declaration continued, "and we urge them to adhere to peacefulness in all their activities. We thank all the GPC leaders who are participating with the rest of the Southern Movement blocs."

Publicly supporting the Southern

Movement directly contradicts the party's national unity program. Al-Fuhaidi has described the declaration as a call for secession, saying it was "spoken with a southern tongue and not a Yemeni one."

Any positions adopted at party meetings must be approved by general committee members and the GPC's general secretary, Aaref Al-Zouka. The latter released an official statement on Saturday declaring that "the Aden meeting is void and does not comply with the party line or its laws."

It continued: "The GPC general secretariat confirms that this meeting aims at dividing the country by spreading ideas that oppose the GPC ideology represented in the national covenant and the goals on which the GPC was built, chief of which is national unity as outlined under former president Ali Abdullah Saleh on May 22, 1990."

An official within the GPC told the Yemen Times on condition of anonymity that arrangements are being made for a general conference to address divisions between the party's northern and southern branches, and to discuss party relations with President Hadi.

## REPUBLIC OF YEMEN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & IRRIGATION WATER SECTOR SUPPORT PROJECT (WSSP) NATIONAL IRRIGATION PROGRAM (NIP) (IDA GRANT: H-449 RY)

Consultancy Services for Establishment of Management Information System (MIS) Linking with GIS at NIP and GARWSP

### REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

This request for expressions of interest follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in Development Business No. (758) dated September 16, 2009 and updated on September 16, 2010

#### 1. Background

The Government of Republic of Yemen has received a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of implementation of the National Irrigation Program (NIP) under Water Sector Support Project (WSSP), and intends to apply part of the funds available under component (5) of WSSP to cover eligible payments under the contract for the Consultancy Services for Establishment of Management Information System (MIS) Linking with GIS at NIP and GARWSP.

Objective of the Consultancy Services: Analysis and design Management Information System (MIS) in combination with Geographical Information System (GIS) by using the latest programming languages preferably open Source with open ERPs which are free of charge and proposed number of options to be selected by the client, The new MIS system shall be more flexible to add any additional Sources of Fund (multi-finance) in the future.

#### 2. Scope of Services

Broadly, the MIS/GIS can be designated as a water management information and monitoring system and projects activities agreed in action plan. The makeup of the MIS to be developed and tested for the WSSP (NIP Management and Field Units and GARWSP Head quarter and branches at each Governorate; Groundwater unit; Surface water unit; Irrigation advisory services(IAS); Agriculture Advisor Services and Water monitoring units of NIP and for GARWSP Rehabilitated water supply and Completion water supply schemes as well as new water supply and sanitation schemes.... etc GARWSP (outputs, activities, inputs); Projects and subprojects, Water User Associations/Groups, environmental and Social Impacts, Indicators for M&E system, financial information by each Projects and component, Procurements, training workshops, awareness campaigns, field visits and field days (staff, community by gender), Linking MIS with GIS, Privileges and user management, Archives (documents; pictures; ... etc), based on the existing system for NIP, the Consultant firm will design a new MIS system and using the latest programming languages for open Source like open ERPs which are free of charge and proposed number of options to be selected by the client.

That will include a user-friendly interface, which will allow users to link up with the relevant component of the system namely hydro-meteorological data, agronomy data, well monitoring data, data on groundwater and spate schemes and water harvesting structures, water supply schemes (rehabilitate, completion and new categories); M&E Indicators; ES data and information, etc.

The consultancy has two phases: first phase includes Analysis of the existing system and prepare proposal for a new system. Second Phase includes MIS/GIS programming (designing and programming).

#### First Phase: includes Analysis of the existing system and proposal a new system with period and action plan for the following:

- Analysis the existing MIS system.
- Analysis the current situation of work frame in light of Project Implementation Manual (PIM) of both NIP and GARWSP subsectors.
- Work with NIP and GARWSP Specialists in all level of responsibilities to
  - Prepare work flow lead to proper reports
  - Propose the future development.
- Prepare diagram for data and information working flow;
- Prepare options for selecting the database and Programming languages including Open source; free charge; web techniques...etc;
- Prepare documentation for system contains ( tables; relationship between tables; keys; diagrams and interface and reports....etc.;
- Prepare proposal and action plan for developing the new MIS/GIS system. includes the latest technologic like open Source such as Open ERPs which are free of charge and proposed number of options to be selected by the client fit to the NIP and GARWSP requirements;
- The consulting firm will complete the above analysis tasks probably less than 40days from signing the contract.

#### Second Phase includes MIS/GIS programming (designing and programming).

- Designing for the MIS system to allow the users to access and edit data in easy way (search form and edit form)
- Propose GIS map to be link with MIS and submitted to the client for review and approval.
- Compile existing data and information and testing the MIS system
- Generate reports must be flexible and allow users to export reports to multiple formats such as Excel, PDF,...etc.
- Prepare documentation for every process in the system
- Prepare user guides.
- Training and implementation MIS to NIP and GARWSP staff on development the MIS system during implementation assessment.
- The consulting firm will complete Operation and Maintenance for MIS system for 12 months.
- Durations & Conditions:
- The consulting firm will complete phase 1 of Analysis of the existing system and proposal a new system and action plan probably less than 40 days from signing the contract.
- The consulting firm will complete phase 1 and 2 of assignment and deliver the completion of services is estimated as a maximum of five months.
- The consulting firm will provide the client with Operation and Maintenance for MIS/GIS system for 12 months for the two subsectors.

#### Consultancy firm is required to meet the following:

- At least Five years experiences of implementing MIS/GIS with number of Development projects;
- Provide a List of qualified and experience professional experts needed for this assignment with duration for each.
- The consultant shall make arrangements to ensure a participatory/consultative approach with a high degree of local staff involvement, participation and providing on-the-job training to NIP and GARWSP staff.

The National Irrigation Program (NIP) now invites eligible consulting firms to express their interest in providing the services for the above mentioned study.

Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar projects, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc). The short listing criteria are: Specific Experience related to the assignment, previous similar assignments in similar areas & conditions and skills among staff

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub consultancy to enhance their qualifications

Consulting firms will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines for Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank dated January 2011.

Applications received after the closing date will not be considered. Only short listed candidates will be invited

Applications for expression of interest must be delivered under official letter to the address below by Jan. 5, 2015 at 12:00 Noon.

Director of National Irrigation Program (NIP)  
Irrigation & Land Reclamation Sector – MAI  
Al-Mithak Street, Near Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation  
Sana'a – Republic of Yemen  
Tel : 967(1)228594  
Fax: 967(1)228626  
E-mail: wssp-nip@yemen.net.ye or www-nip@hotmail.com

# NGO claims 652 people killed between Sept. 16-23

**Interior ministry: NGO statistics probably more accurate than ministry's**

■ Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Dec. 22—A Switzerland-based NGO published a report on Sunday claiming it documented the deaths of 733 people in Sana'a between Sept. 16 and Oct. 10 as a result of political violence.

The NGO, known as the Euro-Mid Observer for Human Rights, said that aside from the killings, it also documented human and civil rights violations committed in that period. The Houthis, an armed Shia group that was mostly based in the northern governorate of Sa'ada, has

expanded its presence since 2011 and recently took-over the capital on Sept. 21.

The Euro-Mid Observer said that 652 people were killed between Sept. 16 and Sept. 23 alone. Prior to their Sept. 21 takeover, clashes for control of the city lasted several days.

The NGO claims that 930 people were injured during this period, with 2,868 "other violations," including kidnappings, censoring of media, political and civil rights violations and the storming of private and public institutions.

These numbers contradict the casualty figures put out by Yemen's Ministry of Interior on Sept. 25, which relayed statistics collected by the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Interior stated that 270 people were killed 464 injured in

Sana'a in clashes between Sept. 16 and Sept. 25.

"During Sana'a's fall to Houthi control, Houthis have undertaken kidnappings of military, political and tribal figures, as well as activists, media and social figures which they thought were working against them. These kidnappings reached 1000 documented cases while the disappearances reached 215 cases," the Euro-Mid Observer report said.

Mohammad Hizam, deputy director of the Public Relations Department within the Ministry of Interior, told the Yemen Times that the figures in the Euro-Mid Observer report were likely more accurate than the statistics initially released by the interior ministry.

"The Houthis, who are often keen on underreporting the number of casualties they have suffered, hid many of their dead during this period," Hizam said. "Most were not taken to hospitals, and were therefore not recorded by the health ministry, the source from which we drew our findings."

"The observer's team recorded 66 violations committed against local and international media in the period between Sept. 16 and Oct. 10 in Sana'a," the report stated. "Thirty-seven media figures and journalists reported being physically attacked and/or detained during this pe-

riod." The report further detailed the Houthi assault on the State TV building from which three television stations operate.

The Euro-Mid Observer report said that Houthis broke into 33 separate political offices belonging to the Yemeni Socialist Party and the Islah Party, both of whom belong to the Joint Meetings Party (JMP), a coalition of opposition parties.

The Houthis have repeatedly denied through their media station, Al-Masira, that they are responsible for any break-ins or attacks against journalists or political rivals. Mohammad Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, blamed an unspecified "third party" for the break-ins of these offices.

The report further documented 37 cases of violations against educational institutions, including the storming and occupying of several public and private universities, in addition to seven student dorms. The report further documented 12 break-ins of health institutions and hospitals.

The Euro-Mid Observer also accused the Houthis of 12 break-ins of health institutions and hospitals. Al-Bukhaiti said the break-ins in of health institutions was done to root out threats posed to public safety.

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الإذاعة المجتمعية الأولى في اليمن

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للإعلام دور كبير ومهم في الدعوة للتغيير السلمي فهو ركيزة من ركائز التغيير نحو الأفضل، ولكن الصراعات السياسية اعتادت أن تفرض أجندات على المؤسسات الإعلامية مما يخلق أثراً سلبياً واضحاً على طابع استقلال الإعلام و أثر بشكل مباشر على معايير أساسية مثل الحيادية والموضوعية. وهنا تسعى "إذاعة يمن تايمز" لتعزز من دور مؤسساتها الإعلامية المستقلة لتصل إلى كل من لا تصل إليه عبر صحيفتها لتكون من الإذاعات الرائدة في اليمن التي جعلت من الحياد والاستقلال سياسة خاصة لها مواصلة بذلك سمعتها الحسنة التي استطاعت أن تفرضاها من خلال سياسة الصحافة على الرغم من عدم وجود قوانين منظمة لعمل الإذاعات الخاصة في اليمن.

### أهدافنا

يعمل "راديو يمن تايمز" على طرح وجهات نظر جديدة وموضوعات هامة للجمهور اليمني ويعايش قضايا المواطنين الذين يجيدون اللغة الانجليزية والعربية والأميين بشكل مباشر. ويسعى أيضا لإيجاد فضاءات جديدة لحرية الرأي والتعبير في اليمن عامة وفي العاصمة صنعاء خاصة ليكون راديو يمن تايمز «صوت من لا صوت لهم» وليعزز مفاهيم الديمقراطية وحرية الرأي والتعبير من خلال دوراته البرمجية المتنوعة التي تعالج قضايا المرأة والطفل وحقوق الإنسان وتدافع عن الحريات بواسطة إعلامها الهادف وبرامجها المتعددة والتي تخاطب بشفافية وموضوعية كل مستمعيها وتتسم بروح شبابية وإيجابية واضحة لكل من يتابعها سواء سكان صنعاء أو اليمن.

### التأسيس

"راديو يمن تايمز" هو أول إذاعة مجتمعية في صنعاء، حيث بدأ العمل في هذا المشروع في بداية 2012، والذي كان تأسيسه من أهم رؤى مؤسس يمن تايمز الراحل، البروفيسور عبد العزيز السقايف. ولذلك سعت الأستاذة / نادية السقايف رئيس تحرير صحيفة يمن تايمز إلى تحقيق فكرة المؤسس الراحل، من خلال تأسيس راديو يمن تايمز بمشاركة الكثير من المتطوعين والداعمين ومن آمن بأهمية الإعلام المستقل ودور الإذاعات المجتمعية.

وتعد إذاعة يمن تايمز جزء من مشروع أصواتنا، و هو برنامج دولي يدعم تأسيس الإذاعات المجتمعية في دول الربيع العربي. حيث يتمحور هذا البرنامج حول العرب الذين سعوا لأن تكون أصواتهم المستقلة مسموعة، بعيداً عن الاحتكارات الحكومية، أو التجارية، بحيث تكون نقطة انطلاق جديدة لكل من يريد الخوض في تجربة الإذاعات المجتمعية المستقلة.

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# Executions gone wrong

For those sentenced to death, a botched execution can mean a second chance at life

■ Ali Aboluhom

Life after love continues to be debated, but life after near-death has been a reality for a small number of inmates sentenced to death.

Ali Al-Muntaser, 51, spent more than 11 years in prison in Al-Mahweet governorate before being handed the death penalty this year. He was charged with murder, but insists what happened was an accident.

On the day of the crime, Al-Muntaser says he was on his way to the central market of his home village in Yemen's Mahweet governorate to sell a pistol that he owned to raise money for his son's upcoming wedding. While at the market, Al-Muntaser was cleaning his gun before making the sale. He said his finger slipped, and the next thing he knew a man—a member of a powerful tribe—was killed. The tribe's influence in the region, he claims, meant that no witness would dare testify in Al-Muntaser's defense.

Eleven years later, on Oct. 2 of this year, Al-Muntaser was being dragged out to the prison yard by jail staff to receive his execution. According to Al-Muntaser, he began reciting verses from the Quran, hoping it would protect him. He was to be executed by firing squad. After the coroner determined the location of his heart, one of the soldiers present was ordered to fire three bullets. He did as

he was commanded, but Al-Muntaser kept breathing. The soldier then shot a fourth time, and Al-Muntaser went unconscious.

All those present thought he was dead, but after his remains had been given to his family to be buried, they discovered he was still breathing. Shocked, they immediately drove several hours to Sana'a city and admitted him to the intensive care unit at Sana'a's Al-Hayat hospital in the city's Shamlan district. According to Al-Muntaser, he remained there for a week before being checked out by his relatives.

The Yemen Times spoke with Samir Al-Bana, the physician who treated Al-Muntaser. "He was very lucky," he said. "Two of the bullets were still lodged in his back when he arrived at the hospital. Several blood vessels had been ruptured as a result of the shooting, but all four bullets missed his heart."

Akram Noman, a criminal attorney, says that Yemeni law does not specify what happens to those who survive their attempted executions. In such cases, he said, the prosecution should refer back to Islamic law, which permits the death sentence, except in cases where the family of the victim forgives the murderer and grants him reprieve.

Yahya Shamsan Al-Buni, a judge working in the Legislative Affairs Department in the Ministry of Justice, agreed. "The cases of those who survive their

executions should be referred back to the victim's relatives, who must decide whether or not to forgive the murderer."

Al-Muntaser told the Yemen Times that tribal mediators have been negotiating between his family and that of the victim since his release from the hospital, and that no decisions have been reached regarding his fate.

In such situations, Buni says that it is better for the victim's family to be merciful and grant reprieve. He referenced Ayat 40 of Surat Ashura from Quran, which reads: "And the retribution for an evil act is an evil one like it, but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation—his reward is [due] from Allah. Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers."

Mohammad Mosed, 55, is a retired soldier from the Ibb governorate who was part of a firing squad at Ibb Central Prison for more than 20 years. He claims he has executed more than 50 inmates during his time at the prison. "I was nervous during my first execution," he said, "but the other staff told me I was performing a religious duty. Afterwards, I got used to it."

Those in firing squads are encouraged to cover their faces in order to hide their identity in the event that the family of the executed ever decide to take revenge.

During his time as a member of a firing squad, Mosed claims that on two occasions inmates survived their initial executions. In both cases, the individu-

als were found to be alive after their bodies were submitted to the hospital, he said.

"One of them was eventually executed, while the other was pardoned by the family of the victim," Mosed said.

One of the men in that case, Mohammed Mutahar, is from Hajja governorate and currently lives and works in Saudi Arabia. Mohammed's brother, Yahya, 22, told the Yemen Times that Mohammed was charged with murdering their neighbor while the group was chewing in Hajja. Mohammed was 23 years old at the time.

Three years after the killing, Mohammed was brought out to the prison yard to be executed. He was shot several times, but like Al-Muntaser, was found to be alive when his body was returned to his family.

"We pleaded with the victim's family to forgive him and grant him a pardon," Yahya said. "They were merciful, and allowed him to live."

The victim's brother, Mohammad Saleh, 43, said he and his family decided to let Mutahar live for reasons related to Islamic jurisprudence. He cited Ayat 14 of Sura Al-Taghabun, which reads: "But if you pardon (them) and overlook, and forgive (their faults), then verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

Al-Muntaser's family hopes he will be as fortunate. "We are willing to do whatever the victim's family wants in exchange for granting [Al-Muntaser] reprieve," his brother Ali said.



At least 13 executions were carried out in Yemen in 2013, according to Amnesty International.

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# Corruption and used clothing

Smugglers say they bribe government agencies to allow used clothing into country

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

**A**s Yemen's economy continues to crumble, the country's second-hand clothing markets have watched as business has boomed. Outdoor markets in neighborhoods such as Bab Al-Yemen, Shumaila, others throughout the country have seen an uptick in sales of used coats and jackets from abroad, according to vendors. They sell from anywhere between YR100 (\$50) to thousands of riyals.

But the journey of used clothing imported to Yemen is often one mired in corruption and bribes. Health professionals say the smuggling of such clothes, which often do not meet health and safety regulations, puts public health at risk.

Abdusalam Al-Wesabi is a local retailer who owns a shop in Sana'a's Shumaila district. "We buy clothes from wholesalers who import large quantities of clothes from flea markets in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries," he said. "Right now demand is high, I sell nearly YR30,000 (about \$150) worth of jackets per day."

Abdul Razzaq Ali Amer is a soldier who lives in Sana'a's Shumaila district. For him, the reason to buy used is simple, "I have four children and make YR30,000 (\$150) a month," he said. "Winter's coming and I can't buy new jackets for everyone. What I buy for YR100 (\$50) does the same as a new jacket that would cost YR10,000 (\$50)."

The Ministry of Industry and Trade, which regulates the importation and sale of goods throughout Yemen, passed a strict set of laws regulating the importation of used clothes, via ministerial decrees 50 and 200 passed in 2001 and 2002 respectively, according to Mahmoud Al-Naqib, general director of the ministry's Consumer Protection Department.

According to the decrees, imported used clothes have to be inspected at the ports by the Yemen Customs Authority and the Yemeni Standards, Measures and Quality Control Authority, to ensure that they meet certain health and safety standards before they are allowed into the country.

Hanan Al-Qabati, chairwoman of the License and Customs Administration Department within the Yemen Customs Authority, said that the authority adheres to and implements decree 50 passed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade passed in 2001, which stipu-

lates that all used clothes brought into Yemen must meet a number of standards.

These standards stipulate that all clothes must come equipped with a certified health certificate from the country from which they came, in addition to a second certificate from relevant agencies within Yemen that certify that the clothes are sterilized and clean. The clothes must be in good condition and cannot have been produced in Israel.

Qabati confirmed that no used clothes are allowed to enter Yemen except via maritime ports, where they are inspected and allowed in if they pass inspections. In the event that the Yemen Customs Authority seizes clothing that don't meet standards, article 70 of decree 50 stipulates that the clothing is to be sent back to the producer or to be burned, Al-Qabati said.

According to the Consumer Protection Department, the country requires strict standards for used clothing because of the potential for disease if the clothing is not sterilized and clean.

Dr. Khalid Al-Qubati, a dermatologist in Sana'a, warns that clothing that is not sterilized can have health implications.

"For most people however, there's not much they can do," he says. "The best option they have is to wash the clothes they buy."

Amer said all the clothing he purchases for his family is washed several times after purchase and laid in the sun to dry.

While the law lays forth standards for the importation of clothing, people find ways to skirt around the rules. Used clothing often makes its way into the country through a complex network of smugglers, wholesalers and others who import them from countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, and even Malaysia.

Al-Naqib said that there are no reliable statistics about the scale of illegal importation of used clothes. He also emphasized that while the decree came from the ministry, the Yemen Customs Authority and the Yemeni Standards, Measures and Quality Control Authority are responsible for inspecting clothing to make sure it meets standards.

The Yemeni Standards, Measures and Quality Control Authority was created in 2000, and although it is technically under the authority of the prime minister, it is considered an independent regulatory agency monitoring imported goods. Its chairman is always the minister of industry and trade.

## Wholesalers

Qasim Al-Dini has been importing used clothing to Yemen since 2000. He claims to import several dozen tons of used clothes per year from Saudi Arabia and several other Gulf countries. He sells them to retailers in governorates throughout Yemen.

"I get discounts because I buy by the ton," he says. "There's no where to buy clothes in bulk in Yemen, I could never get the same prices here."

He admits he purchases clothes that have not been disinfected and may not be in good, physical condition. "A lot of the clothes are often torn," he said. "People still buy them."

Despite trading in such large quantities, just getting the clothes into the country can be pricey, with Al-Dini spending roughly half of what he makes on operating costs, he claimed. "Transportation and bribes," he said, "these costs run the highest."

According to Al-Dini, Yemenis really started importing second-hand clothes in the mid-90s, after Saudi Arabia kicked out a large number of Yemeni laborers who had been working in the country. The decision came after then President Ali Abdullah Saleh sided with Saddam Hussein during the 1990 Gulf War against Kuwait, and voted against authorizing the war.

"Yemenis came back home with connections in Saudi Arabia that they could easily exploit to set up smuggling rackets," he said. "It wasn't just clothes. Used furniture, luxury items and anything people could get their hands on were brought in."

Al-Dini says officials along every step of the route take money in exchange for turning a blind eye to his business. "I pay off customs officials and people at the Yemeni Standards, Measures and Quality Control Authority," he said. "The latter falsify documents that certify that the clothes are healthy and safe." He declined to divulge how much he pays in bribes.

The Yemeni Standards, Measures and Quality Control Authority denied the allegation that they accept bribes. "That's the Yemen Customs Authority," said Ibrahim Al-Hasser, deputy general director of technical affairs within the Yemeni Standards, Measures and Quality Control Authority.

"Some Yemen Customs Authority employees are corrupt, take bribes and allow used clothes to enter the country [without meeting standards]," he added. "We're not involved in that behavior in



The decrees passed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade task two agencies with inspecting second-hand clothing coming into the country. Clothing has to meet health and safety standards, but smugglers say they bribe agencies and other government officials to overlook the stipulations.

any way."

The Yemen Customs Authority declined to comment on the allegations made by the Standards Authority.

Officials within the Ministry of Industry and Trade who have

caught wind of Al-Dini's business take a cut as well, Al-Dini claimed. "It's hard to stay off the radar, people at the ministry want to be compensated as well."

Yemen has inland ports in the cities of Haradh in Hajja governor-

ate, and Al-Baqa' in Sa'dah governorate, in addition to a number of seaports in the cities of Aden, Mocha, Hodeidah and Mukalla. Al-Dini claims that his suppliers alternate shipments through several ports in Hodeida.



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An official within the Yemeni Standards, Measures and Quality Control Authority denied that authority officials take bribes, but accused the Yemen Customs Authority of corruption.

# Yemen: Whose Law?

Family members of victims of drone strikes in the country say justice has not been done.

**This is part one of a two-part article on counterterrorism strategy in Yemen. Part two will run on Thursday.**

**Peter Salisbury**  
aljazeera.com

A report issued by the Senate Intelligence Committee on a CIA detention program has prompted a bout of introspection on the legality and efficacy of the US-led "war on terror", many in Yemen - a frontline state in that war - are also re-examining the effects of a seemingly never-ending conflict in their own backyard.

Yemen's transitional government, according to analysts and human rights groups, continues to condone extrajudicial killings of people it could arrest, detains people without due process and turns to tribal law to cover up its mistakes.

One victim of such practices was Adnan al-Qadhi.

"Adnan liked life; he didn't want to die," Himyar al-Qadhi says of his brother, who was killed in a drone strike in the family's home village, Beyt al-Ahmar, in November 2012. "The Americans killed him."

Qadhi was at the very least sympathetic to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the Yemeni wing of the extremist group, people with knowledge of his activities say. His

brother denies even a tangential connection but when, in 2008, the government called and asked him to bring his brother in for questioning in relation to an attack on the US embassy that had taken place that year, he acquiesced. He would have done the same four years later, Himyar said, but this time, he was not asked.

Other victims include the 12 people killed in a strike by a US-controlled drone outside the city of Radah in December 2013. "They were on their way to the village as part of a wedding," says Nasser Assanna, a Yemeni journalist based in the restive Mareb province, where many of those killed in the strike came from. "When I went to the hospital, the local media had already announced the attack and said it was against al-Qaeda. I talked to the sheikh; he told me it was a wedding convoy. The attack killed 12 people, and injured about 19. The sheikh's son was killed and the bride was injured."

While the wedding convoy may well have been transporting active members of AQAP at one point, by the time the four hellfire missiles, again launched from a US-controlled drone, hit the convoy, they were no longer present. Instead, 12 people with no proven links to the group were killed instantly.

For more than a decade now, the Arab world's poorest country has been the frontline of the US-led

"war on terror" - at best, an ambiguous project aimed at bringing to heel al-Qaeda and extremist groups like it in order to prevent a repeat of the events of September 11, 2001.

The campaign has involved the invasion of two countries, the detention without trial of hundreds of people - many of whom can now be said to have been tortured - and the deaths of thousands through targeted assassinations by elite US military operatives and at the hands of remotely piloted unmanned drones loaded with Hellfire missiles in countries across the world.

According to the London-headquartered Bureau of Investigative Journalism, more than 100 drone strikes have taken place in Yemen since their use was first recorded in 2002, resulting in at least 362 deaths (the actual number, the bureau says, could in fact be well above 1,000).

Around a fifth of those killed have been civilians. Others, like Qadhi, could probably have been arrested rather than killed.

The Yemeni government has detained dozens of people suspected of links to al-Qaeda on the behalf of the US, often without trial. Most famously, Abdullelah Haider Shayea, a Yemeni journalist with a contact list full of al-Qaeda operatives, was jailed in 2010 for providing material support to the group. He was later sentenced to five years in prison at a trial that Human Rights Watch

said was deeply flawed.

Yemen is often described as a lawless country, a borderline failed state where the government's authority does not stretch much further than the outer limits of its major cities, and where even then, that authority is fragile at best. The inaccessibility of its rugged interior, where tribal law trumps government writ, has created space for groups like AQAP to operate, analysts say.

But Yemenis are increasingly asking whether or not the state has any interest in upholding the laws that protect their basic rights - and what, exactly, current counterterrorism strategy is doing to improve domestic security.

Since his brother's death, Qadhi has questioned whether or not the drone strike was necessary. "I said, if you had asked me I would have brought him in like last time," Qadhi says, reiterating the fact that when his brother had been accused of working with AQAP in the past, he had brought him in and he was released without charge.

"I asked, why didn't you ask me this time? Is there new information in this case? They said, this is the US. That was it." At the time of his death, Qadhi was still enlisted in the Yemeni military and continued to collect a 120,000 Yemeni rials (\$558) monthly salary from the Post Office. "Even now the government still pays his salary," says his

brother, who believes the payment constitutes an effective payoff.

Two days after the wedding convoy attack, the governor of Mareb and a local military commander met with a local tribal leader, apologizing for the deaths. At the same time, the government was still publicly claiming that the attack had killed AQAP operatives. "I said, it is not good to announce that you have hit al-Qaeda while you are here apologizing for these drone strikes," says Assanna, who attended the meeting.

The governor brought 100 AK-47 Kalashnikov rifles and 35 million rials (\$175,000) in cash as an initial peace offering. Later, settlements were made with each of the families affected by the strike. For each of the dead, the government paid 12.75 million rials (\$59,300).

Those who were injured were paid one million rials (\$4,650). "All the families were made to sign an agreement that they could not take legal action against the government," Assanna says. "For them, the matter is closed now."

It is unlikely that an attempt to sue the government through the formal courts system would have been successful, though.

Since 2011, already ineffective courts have effectively ground to a halt. Many judges have been on strike since 2013, complaining that the government does not provide security for them or adequately

fund courts.

"Especially now, the courts, the judges and the judiciary system in general is not doing anything," says Yehya al-Mawri, a well-known Yemeni judge who played a leading role in the creation of a formal judicial system in Yemen during its early days as a republic.

"They can't do anything because the government doesn't have any effect. The law has no effect any more."

A government official acknowledges this issue. "But the government has limited resources," he says.

Yet it is also unlikely that such a case would be heard, as Qadhi learned when he went to see leading government officials about his brother's death. As long as Yemeni President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi - who relies heavily on US support to maintain his position - is in power, judges would refuse to hear his case, Qadhi says he was told.

"The judge, he told me, talked to the police," he says. "I told him, Hadi and Obama killed my brother. He said that when Hadi is not president any more you can ask this question... I don't want money. I just ask one question. Why didn't you ask me to bring him in, my brother? If you kill him you kill the information. Bring him here and ask him the question and then you know. This is crazy. I am very angry."

## ISIS is Sisi spelled backwards

It's time to resist the tyranny of false dichotomies in the Middle East.

**Ilyad el-Baghdadi**  
foreignpolicy.com  
First published Dec. 19

Western Arabs have been caught for decades between the horns of a false and oppressive dilemma, forced to either support the ruling autocrats in return for safety and stability, or to side with Islamist radicals in order to throw off the tyrants' yoke and avenge their transgressions. For a brief but historically important moment, the Arab Spring represented a generation that looked forward to a world in which we do not have to repeatedly choose between two evils.

Regional stakeholders, however, now seem to have fallen back into looking at the region through a crudely simplistic prism of "secularists versus radicals." This is a habit that informs their view of the recent counter-revolution and the toxic polarization that goes with it.

Western observers in particular are reverting to the depressing pattern of legitimizing despotic dictatorships, which they see as sources of regional stability and bulwarks against terrorism.

We've seen key Western countries stand by as their regional allies funded extreme groups in order to battle the Syrian tyrant, then turned around and funded a military strongman to suspend democracy in Egypt in the name of battling

"fundamentalism." Meanwhile, we do not hear even a whimper of protest as these very allies persecute human rights defenders who can actually present a real alternative.

It was this same kind of thinking that legitimized the dictatorships of Mubarak and Ben Ali, enabled security cooperation with both Assad and Gaddafi, and treated the Gulf autocracies as loyal friends despite their shameful human rights records. Unfortunately, this attitude is being restored as Western players shift back to a narrow, security-minded view of the region. I would like to argue that this view presents a false dichotomy between secular dictators and religious extremists - one that fatally excludes the possibility of other choices worth supporting.

This false dichotomy has been around for decades, but its latest incarnation goes back to the first few weeks of the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011. Perhaps the most poignant moment came when the second round of the 2012 Egyptian presidential elections presented a choice between Mubarak's final prime minister, Ahmad Shafik, and the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate, Moammad Morsi.

Two years and many catastrophes later, the options have become far more extreme. One is embodied by a military strongman with hundreds of deaths on his hands, the other by the self-declared leader of a messianic cult with dozens of massacres on its hands. It's tragically comical

that ISIS is Sisi spelled backwards.

The nationalist strongman and the Islamist radical present themselves as polar opposites - but they're similar in more ways than you may realize. Both extremes are born out of the same twentieth-century political culture that gave us authoritarian interpretations of just about every ideology: authoritarian Islamism, authoritarian nationalism, authoritarian socialism, and even, yes, authoritarian liberalism. Both view human rights not as inviolable or inherent, but as granted by the state, which can then reduce or suspend them at will. And both envision a state in which some people have less rights than others.

Neither tolerates freedom of thought, and both wish to punish dissent and criminalize criticism. To one side, criticism is tantamount to treason, or to membership in a foreign conspiracy. To the other, criticism is tantamount to apostasy or heresy. Journalists and intellectuals typically bear the brunt of this, as we have seen in Sisi's Egypt and in the territories under ISIS control. The objective for both seems to be to rule with as few expectations of transparency as possible.

Both want to be empowered to make laws without oversight - to rule, essentially, by decree, unencumbered by any internal debate or politics. Be it in the name of the faith or the name of the nation, annoyances such as human rights concerns are not only frowned upon but all but criminalized. In the "war

against terror" or the "war to defend the faith," criticism is dissent, dissent is treason, and treason is punishable by elimination.

Both extremes attract statisticians who wish to use the proactive power of an empowered government to establish a monopoly over society. For one side, the state is the nation and the nation is the state; for the other, the state is religion and religion is the state. Of course, the abstract concept of "nation" or "religion" must be epitomized by a person or party who then demands and expects unquestioning, uncritical loyalty, and rules in the name of "the nation" or "the faith," while conveniently shielded from accountability.

Both sides have a deeply exclusionary, "with us or against us" worldview that manifests itself in a profound refusal to coexist with others. In the run-up to the 2012 elections, we saw the Mubarak-associated figure Shafik hint at banning Islamist parties should he get elected; during Morsi's term we then watched Islamist discourse squeeze the space for civil society. Further down this slippery slope, we've seen Sisi's regime pass mass death sentences and imprison over 40,000 people - while we've seen ISIS massacre entire tribes.

Finally - and perhaps most importantly - both are failures. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's year in power ended up strengthening the military establishment and empowering it to stage its grand

comeback. Sisi's rule in Egypt, which started with a promise of security and stability, saw the official expansion of ISIS into Egyptian territories. Meanwhile, ISIS operations in Iraq and Syria, which promised to "liberate" both countries, have caused Western countries to send more aid to Iraq's government, consider re-legitimizing Assad, and coordinate with Iran.

As an Arab Spring activist who was forcibly expelled from the United Arab Emirates, my lifelong home, I'm painfully aware of what happens when you reject both fundamentalism and dictatorship. In the land of pure black and pure white, yelling "gray" is blasphemy. In my recent speech at the Oslo Freedom Forum, I argued that the path to a true Arab Spring starts with rejecting both nationalistic fascism and Islamist radicalism, and forging a path that cuts straight between the horns of the depressing dilemma.

We need to understand that tyranny and terrorism feed off each other in an ever-worsening vicious cycle. Tyranny justifies terrorism through its oppression and injustice - while terrorism justifies tyranny through its indiscriminate violence, giving the state a pretext for emergency action and a suspension of normal procedure in order to "restore stability." The lesson from our recent history is that radicalism is not the path to liberation, but only to more tyranny and foreign intervention; and that despotism is not the path to stability, but only to fur-

ther instability and radicalization.

The Arab Spring is about believing that we don't have to eternally choose between these two evils, and that we can present a real alternative. Arab Spring activists come from across the political spectrum, but they share a belief in fundamental individual rights, coexistence within one political system, and an open marketplace for ideas. These are the people who represent me - and whom I hope to have successfully, if briefly, represented in a public forum.

The West, in particular, needs to recognize as a national security threat not only terrorists who peddle radical ideologies to justify and perpetrate acts of violence, but also tyrants who through their brutality create the very environment in which such radical ideologies grow and thrive. Supporters of and apologists for tyrants must be treated with the same severity as supporters of and apologists for terrorists.

As for us, as Arabs, we need to view both extremes as an existential threat. Our region has turned into a playground for tyrants and terrorists - and with each depressing cycle the extremes become more evil, making either choice more disastrous, and making it even more important to reject both. We'll keep going from tyranny to terrorism to foreign intervention until we find our voice and break the cycle from within.

There are some of us who haven't given up.

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# Time for re-think on humanitarian funding?

IRIN  
First published Dec. 16

The World Food Programme's (WFP) celebrity-endorsed #ADollarALifetime campaign thrust the plight of Syrian refugees back into the global spotlight and netted more than the asked-for US\$64million in just a matter of days.

Thanks to the generous donor response - including a single allocation of \$52million from Saudi Arabia - electronic food vouchers for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey and Egypt that had been temporarily suspended, have been reactivated.

But in addition to raising cash, WFP's campaign has also served to underscore the precarious nature of humanitarian funding at a time when there are four concurrent Level Three Emergencies (the most serious kind according to the UN) in South Sudan, Central African Republic, Syria and Iraq, as well as the Ebola crisis in West Africa.

WFP, which is currently trying to support more than 80 million people in 75 countries worldwide, isn't the only over-stretched UN agency. It has, however, hit the headlines several times in recent months due to funding shortages threatening food distributions not just for Syrian refugees: WFP staff told IRIN there had been ration cuts in Kenya and Ethiopia, and in Afghanistan school feeding and other programming has been stopped.

These cuts reveal not just the size and number of the emergencies that WFP is tackling, but according to experts show that the current funding system is not adequate.



Students eat their first meal of the day in their classroom in Gao, Mali. The World Food Program provides two meals a day to schools in Gao and other conflict-affected cities in northern Mali, such as Timbuktu. The emergency feeding program has seen a rise in attendance in schools, especially for girls, and teachers say they see an improvement in the focus and motivation of the children.

"Unfortunately this is the reality of a system that is broken. When you have this many crises going on at once around the world, it brings to light a lot of problems in the humanitarian response architecture," said Mark Yarnell, a senior advocate at Washington-based NGO

Refugees International.

"With all the attention the Syria situation received, maybe it can force a deeper look at why the system keeps breaking down. We hope the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit can be an opportunity to address some of these chal-

lenges," he added, referring to the global industry event due to take place in 2016.

#### Reactionary system

Christina Bennett, an international aid policy analyst and research fellow at the Humanitarian Policy

Group at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in London, told IRIN that while there would always be room for end-of-calendar-year appeals to attract donors with unspent money, there was a need to get away from short-term funding cycles that both hinder

planning and create procurement delays.

"The system is [an] appeals-based one, where donors have pots of money that they are able to allocate on a short-term basis, so there is this kind of cycle of appealing and funding, appealing and funding," she explained.

"It is largely a reactionary system," she added. "If there was an ability to have more flexible and longer-term funding, you may perhaps see fewer of these last-minute urgent appeals and more of an effort to plan ahead of time."

Aid workers in the field trying to manage the dwindling funds couldn't agree more.

Angelline Rudakubana is deputy country director for operations and programming for WFP in Afghanistan, where a shortfall of \$26.9million has led to the suspension of school feeding and a reduced allocation of rations to many communities.

"For 2015 we need about \$166 million for all our activities, including our air operations," she told IRIN. "We have some donations coming in and it looks like we will have enough to cover us until March, maybe even into early June, but because of late pledges and confirmations, some of the commodities we need will not be secured in time and so we will have breaks in our pipeline."

#### Voluntary Funding

Rudakubana stressed the point that unlike many other UN agencies, which receive core funding (money coming from member state contributions) WFP was entirely voluntary funded.

*Continued on the back page*

## The Students: The untold details of the Al-Jazeera trial

atlanticcouncil.org  
First published Dec. 19

The Yemen Times is republishing this piece from the Atlantic Council in two parts. The second part will be published Thursday.

On the first day of the Al-Jazeera trial, the prosecutor read the names of twenty defendants. It included three journalists, Mohamed Fahmy, Peter Grete and Baher Mohamed, as well as three college students, Khaled Abdelraouf, Suhaib Saad, and Shadi Abdelhamid. According to all six defendants, the first time they met was behind the bars of the defendants' cage.

It was also the first time Fahmy learned of the charges the prosecution was bringing against him: forming and running a Muslim Brotherhood media network. The prosecutor referred to Mohamed Fahmy as "a member of the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood organization responsible for establishing undercover media centers." He accused Fahmy of directly overseeing the work of the three students, and other defendants, whom he also had not met prior to the trial.

In the almost year since their arrest, local and international coverage has focused mainly on the leading trio, and other foreign journalists tried in absentia. Few have looked into the identities of the other defendants, or the details of how they came to stand trial alongside Fahmy, Grete and Mohamed. The Al-Jazeera story itself announcing the verdict against its journalists makes no mention of the students.

With a deeper look into the details of these unknown faces, it appears that Egypt's authorities used the students' affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood to cement its claims that Al-Jazeera had sided with the organization. However, culpability is not for the Egyptian authorities alone. The complex details of the Al-Jazeera trial also show that the

Qatari funded network had sunk into a political dispute with Egypt's regime. The network's editorial policies and on the ground tactics recklessly risked not only the wellbeing of their employees, but also shed major doubts on the credibility of the networks coverage of Egypt's unstable political affairs.

Evidence showing the negligence of Al-Jazeera's top officials, and the details of the incriminating testimony given by Al-Jazeera's Egyptian producer Baher Mohamed, sentenced to ten years in prison, proved to be only two hidden aspects of the trial, while the story of three students who shared the cage with Al-Jazeera's employees, reveal a third dimension.

#### Who Were the Three Students in the Al-Jazeera Trial?

On January 2, 2014, police in Cairo's Moqattam district apprehended the three students at a checkpoint around 3 am. The arrest took place three days after Al-Jazeera's Mohamed Fahmy and Peter Grete were apprehended from the Marriott Hotel in Cairo's upscale Zamalek neighborhood, and Baher Mohamed from his home in western Cairo. The details of the students' arrest were confirmed by their lawyer.

It was an unlucky moment for the three students, not only because Abdelraouf had been carrying a professional camera, a magnet for trouble at the time, or because they were on their way to an apartment registered as a media office, Al-Nour Media Production Company, but because Shadi was in possession of 15,000 Egyptian pounds. The money was meant for a lawyer defending his brother Ahmed, who was arrested days earlier with Anas al-Beltagy, the son of leading Muslim Brotherhood figure Mohamed al-Beltagy. They were both later added to the defendants list in the Al-Jazeera case.

The three were transported to the nearby Moqattam Police Station where their interrogation began. The next day, a police force took the

students with them to raid the media company office that also served as their temporary residence. There, several computers, satellite broadcast equipment, satellite phones, and cameras were confiscated.

Abdelraouf, who was working with the Brotherhood affiliated Rasd News, told the prosecutor during his interrogation that he had been a member of the Muslim Brotherhood organization and worked at the Freedom and Justice Party's media office, until he defected from the party in mid-2012. Abdelraouf explained that he had met a man named Alaa Adel through a mutual acquaintance during the pro-Morsi Raba'a al-Adaweya sit in. "Adel offered me a job at his newly established video production company," he said.

Both Abdelraouf and Saad, whose fathers are members of the Muslim Brotherhood, told their interrogators Alaa Adel hosted them at the office of Al-Nour Media Production Company. He asked them to "film protests and upload the footage to his accounts on Bambuser and Ustream." Adel said he would then sell their footage to different satellite channels.

They both added that Adel gave them filming equipment and varying amounts of money. During the interrogation, they claimed they only later learned that two of their films were aired on Al-Jazeera Mubashir Misr, the controversial channel that was banned by a court ruling in September 2013. During the trial, the prosecution would argue otherwise, however, without making mention of Adel's name in court or adding him to the list of defendants, despite him being mentioned several times during the interrogation by the three students. Ahmed Abdu, the owner of their temporary residence that also hosted Al-Nour Media Production Company was listed as an absent defendant, but never appeared in court and was later sentenced to ten years in absentia.

The third student, Shadi Abdelhamid, who was elected deputy head

of Ain Shams University's Students Union in 2013, the second biggest in the country, told the prosecutor that he just happened to be with Abdelraouf and Saad on the night of their arrest. Abdelhamid's statement was confirmed by the two others who testified that he was not sharing their temporary residence or involved in their independent filming work.

The common denominator between all three, probably to the liking of Egypt's security authorities, is that they were actively sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood and had regularly participated in the organization's protests since former president Mohamed Morsi's ouster.

#### Tying the Students to Al-Jazeera

One of the first requests filed by the legal defense of Fahmy, Grete and Mohamed was the separation of Al-Jazeera's employees from the rest of the defendants. This request was ignored, despite the fact that when the defendants were allowed to address the court, the students and the Al-Jazeera journalists confirmed they had never met.

Days later, the prosecution and court revealed why the request was never heeded. The evidence presented by the prosecution against Abdelraouf, Saad, and Abdelhamid included an audio track found on a cell phone confiscated during their initial arrest. The track was played in court and described in the 57-page verdict report.

According to the court document, two people named Shadi and Khaled could be heard speaking to someone about receiving cameras from Al-Jazeera as well as \$300 each, in order to broadcast the activities of a Friday protest. They also referred to another eight cameras with live broadcasting capabilities, as well as an amount of \$500 with each camera.

The document read, "Alaa, the person speaking to them, replied saying that he was among those who commandeered the satellite broadcast vehicle in Raba'a al-Adaweya

[the pro-Morsi sit in] and that he owns thirty cameras given to him by Al-Jazeera and distributed across the country. He added that they seize any camera that films footage they don't agree to air, and that they deal with Al-Jazeera network and not only Al-Jazeera Mubashir Misr."

The court document went on to say, contrary to their original statements, that Khaled and Shadi

wanted their footage delivered to Al-Jazeera, and that they asked for compensation in order to make flags and banners for the protests. It added that Alaa said, "Khaled knows the details better," adding that "if anyone faces security issues he would be able to get them an entry visa to Qatar."

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الأستاذ / فؤاد أحمد البقال  
لوفاة المغفور لها بإذن الله تعالى  
عمته

ونحن إذ نشاطره أحزانه نسال الله العلي القدير  
أن يتغمد الفقيدة بواسع رحمته ويسكنها  
فسيح جناته وإن يلهم أهلها وذويها الصبر  
والسلوان...

المعزون  
مؤسسة يمن تايمز للصحافة والطباعة والنشر

# Fireworks and celebratory gunfire at weddings continue unabated

■ Khalid Al-Karimi

In Yemen's capital, wedding ceremonies are rarely unaccompanied by fireworks and live ammunition. The crackling of fireworks and the whistles of bullets can be deafening, and some residents find the excessive noise intimidating, particularly after nightfall. There is also the danger of stray bullets, which have been known to injure or kill innocent bystanders. Growing concerns have prompted authorities to crack down on the practice, but their apparent failure raises questions about the nature of law enforcement in today's fragile political climate.

Wedding celebrations are held every week in neighborhoods throughout the capital, particularly on Thursdays and Fridays. In spite of its illegality, many locals consider firework displays and celebratory gunfire an inherent part of the wedding ceremony.

"Many weddings are war-like, and people take pride in making such noise and think their celebration is incomplete without opening fire and setting off fireworks," says Amar Saleh, a school teacher living in Maeen district. The excessive noise creates a nuisance for other residents, says Saleh, but he thinks little can be done because "the state is absent or is unable to effect change."

Ismael Mohammed, a university graduate living in the Hizyaz area of Sana'a, says he has become accustomed to hearing fireworks and seeing people fire live ammunition at wedding ceremonies held in the area.

"They celebrate wedding occasions paying no attention to others' feelings. For me, I blame the weakness of the government. I live close

to Al-Sawad military camp, but that doesn't prevent people from breaking the law," said Mohammed.

Article 25 of the Yemeni statute pertaining to weapons possession stipulates that no one has the right to import, trade or carry weapons and munitions unless they have a government-issued permit. According to articles 40 and 46, manufacturing or trading in fireworks is also prohibited without a valid permit, and their use is illegal within Yemen. Research by the Yemen Times has indicated that a small number of weapon holders carry permits, however most are unaware of the requirement.

There are serious risks that come with using live ammunition at celebrations. Celebratory gunfire is blamed for many deaths throughout the world, particularly in Asia and the Middle East. Mohammed Alwan, the general supervisor of the Emergency and Accidents Department at Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a told the Yemen Times that the hospital has treated dozens of people for fireworks and celebratory gunfire injuries this year. In 2014 alone, Al-Thawra treated 52 injuries related to those causes and declared 20 people dead.

On Nov. 24, the new interior minister, Jalal Al-Rowishan, ordered police stations in all governorates to take action against the use of live ammunition at wedding ceremonies, declaring the practice "a threat to public security and safety." Though nearly a month has passed since the minister's directives were issued, there is as yet little indication they will be effected.

Mohammad Murait, the security chief of Dar Salm police station in Sana'a, said many are not taking heed of the interior ministry's or-



At the Al-Thawra Hospital alone, 52 people were treated for injuries related to fireworks and celebratory gunfire this year. Twenty people died as result.

ders. "Citizens know it's illegal to use live ammunition how simply don't care."

According to Mohammad Hizam, the deputy head of the public relations department at the interior ministry, the government will not be able to enforce the law on its own. "The Ministry of Interior cannot wipe out this phenomenon without the support of citizens. There should be cooperation between the government, local leading figures and local councils to tackle this issue," he said.

Beyond the need for collaboration, Hizam also thinks citizens should take greater responsibility. "When officers patrol a neighborhood looking for those who have been firing randomly into the air, local residents help hide [the perpetrators]," he said. "This complicates the job of po-

lice. Ideally, citizens should be helping officers catch those flouting the directives of the interior ministry."

The government may feel that citizens bear part of the blame for being uncooperative, but Mohammed and Saleh insist that a more effective state could prevent such lapses in security, least of all celebratory gunfire at weddings.

Firework and gunfire displays accompanied Houthi celebrations following their arrival in the capital on Sept. 21, and some of those interviewed feel the problem has reached new proportions as a result of the ir presence. According to Saleh and Hizam, Houthi celebrations have made such displays more acceptable because people are now less worried about the legal repercussions.

"When the Houthis were shooting



Illegal fireworks being sold at a local store in Sana'a

off celebratory gunfire and setting off fireworks on Sept. 22, I felt the government couldn't do anything. This has emboldened other people to follow their lead," said Saleh.

Houthis have established popular committees throughout the capital, allegedly in order to maintain security. Hizam believes that joint cooperation between police stations and the popular committees could be effective in preventing people from using fireworks and live ammunition when celebrating. "Unfortunately, this [cooperation] isn't happening," he said.

Hussein Al-Bukhaiti, a prominent Houthi member and spokesman for the group, calls these allegations baseless. "Celebratory gunfire or setting off fireworks during wedding ceremonies or other occasions

was common prior to the Houthi entrance to Sana'a," he said. "I've been living in Sana'a for years and seen people do this. It makes no sense to blame the Houthi expansion or their presence in Sana'a and other governorates," he said.

Al-Bukhaiti nonetheless hopes there can be coordination between popular committees and police officers to put an end to the problem. "I hope that the popular committees and security forces will work together in the future to get rid of this practice," he said.

For the time being, Al-Bukhaiti says wider security concerns are their priority, in particular preventing terrorist attacks. "We don't want to clash with civilians over fireworks. It's the job of the state to enforce the law regarding this issue."

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

## Time for re-think on humanitarian funding?

"That has always been the case but we are fighting hard to make a case that this has to change to either core funding or have multi-year funding commitments from the donors," she said, noting positively that Australia had recently agreed a three-year funding package.

"This type of multi-year funding helps us to be able to plan and commit and manage our resources in a more sustainable manner, as well as be able to build partnerships with the implementing partners and governments," she added.

Yarnell believes governments in countries hosting refugees receiving food aid also have a role to play.

Giving the example of Dadaab camp in Kenya, where many Somali refugees have lived for decades and which has a well-developed local market system, he said: "If more refugees were allowed to work in Kenya and use the local market system, they would be much less dependent on WFP food distributions."

"It's a big deal for a host country to be willing to allow refugees to work and have them integrate more into their economies," he acknowledged. "But at the same time, it's critical, because when you look at the number of crises and people in need, versus the amount of money that is out there, they just don't match up."

On 8 December the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) released the Global Humanitarian Overview 2015, seeking record funding of \$16.4 billion to help close to 57.5 million people across 22 countries.



A shopkeeper holds up a WFP food voucher in a supermarket in Jordan

At the report launch in Geneva, Valerie Amos, UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, noted "the rising scale of need is outpacing our capacity to respond."

OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) reveals that as of 14 December, fewer than half of the 31 humanitarian appeals launched during 2014 had attracted more than 50 percent of what they asked for.

"The funding appeal floor is rising every year, but the gap between the funds appealed for and the funds contributed is also widening... (and) what we are seeing is that there is a finite amount of money in the system for humanitarian response," said Bennett from ODI, noting the problem of donor fatigue.

"In the case of Syria... these peo-

ple are not displaced over a few years, they are displaced over potential decades, so donors are going to be on the hook for many, many years to come and I think that is dawning on everybody."

### Emerging donors

Attracting more money from the private sector is one solution. Slowly this is starting to happen; donations from the private sector to humanitarian causes increased almost three-fold, from \$2.1 billion in 2006 to \$5.7 billion in 2011, according to the latest figures available.

Experts have, however, identified a "clash of cultures" between commercial companies and aid agencies that in some instances have been barriers to fruitful partnership.

So-called "non-traditional" or "emerging" donors, like China,

Turkey, and the Gulf countries, are also stepping up. In 2013 the UAE was, according to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the world's largest donor of Official Development Assistance in proportion to Gross National Income, and in July this year it became the first non-OECD country to join the committee, though only as a non-voting participant.

Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, at the same time as allocating \$52 million to the #ADollarALifetime campaign for Syria, also announced \$42 million for refugees in Ethiopia and \$10 million for refugees in Kenya.

And, earlier in the year it donated \$500 million to the UN in Iraq to help support the more than two million people displaced since the turn of the year by the activities of Islamist militants, as well as US\$35 million for the Ebola crisis.

Bennett said the money from donors like Saudi Arabia was very welcome but cautioned that "one-off donations" were not always "consistent".

"There isn't enough history working with these emerging donors to know whether they can be counted on year after year in the same way that traditional donors have been," she said. "There is an expectation on the part of agencies that the traditional donors will always bail them out."

Expanding the donor base was

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one way, she said, but she also called for aid agencies to spend their money more effectively.

"It's about coordination and efficiency, for example, working with a local organization who might be more cost effective," she said. "Responses need to be context-specific."

In some places cash and food vouchers might make sense, but in other places in-kind solutions may be a more efficient and effective response."

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