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Car bomb kills son of tribal sheikh in Marib

■ Ali Aboluhom

SANA'A, Dec. 29—Zaid Ali Bin Abood Al-Shareef, son of a prominent sheikh within the Al-Ashraf tribe, was killed on Monday in the Matab Adban area of Marib governorate after a car bomb was detonated. Two others were injured in the attack.

Mohammad Saad, an officer working within the Marib Security Department, said the explosion happened in Matab Adban, a thinly populated area outside of Al-Ashraf district, located a few miles from Marib city.

A locally based journalist, Mohammed Al-Jadasi, said that Al-Shareef was his way to the City Campus marketplace in Marib

along with two escorts at the time of the attack.

"It's believed the explosive device was planted a night earlier by members of the same tribe, because they appear to have known about the car's movements on the day of the explosion," said Al-Jadasi. He could not speculate on who might be behind the attack, however.

Al-Jadasi says the intended target of the attack was Zaid's father, also named Ali Bin Abood Al-Shareef, a tribal sheikh with connections to the Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah. It was his son Zaid, however, that was in the car at the time of the explosion and was killed in the attack.

Al-Shareef had recently been involved in preparations for the

anniversary of the Prophet Mohammad's birth, according to local resident Mabqoot Asker. The occasion is marked by Zaydi Shias and celebrated in early January, with festivities having long been organized annually by Houthis in Yemen.

"He and his son have been amongst those preparing for the occasion, covering houses and streets in green for decoration," said Asker. "I think the Houthis' traditional enemy, Al-Qaeda, was behind the attack."

Although Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has not claimed responsibility for the attack, Ali Al-Qahoom, a member of the Houthi Political Office, also believes AQAP, "or its affiliates," were responsible.

"They always target honest Yemenis throughout the country."

In an attempt to spare Marib from the violence witnessed in other governorates, tribal leaders and Houthi officials signed an agreement in early December. The agreement read that Houthi militias would not be allowed to operate in the area, provided that tribesmen protected the governorate's public facilities and roads, in addition to any Houthis or residents living in the governorate.

"So far all the factions, including both Houthi and Islah-affiliated groups, have been committed to the agreement and I do not think this incident will affect that," said Al-Jadasi. Al-Qahoom agreed, saying that he still considered the agreement to be valid.



Zaid Ali Bin Abood Al-Shareef was killed in Marib governorate Monday morning in a car bomb.

In Ibb, Houthis order doors painted green for prophet's birthday

■ Khalid Al-Karimi

SANA'A, Dec. 29—The Ministry of Public Works and Highways condemned on Monday an order by the Public Works Office for shop owners in Al-Qaeda, Ibb, to paint their doors green in preparation for the Prophet Mohammad's birthday on Jan.3. The order from the Public Works Office came on Sunday.

"What happened in Ibb is not based on any government instructions or directions," said Sameer Al-Najar, the director of the ministry's Media Department.

Nabil Al-Muqadam, the deputy head of Al-Qaeda city's Municipality Department, signed the order that was issued by the Public Works Office. He told the Yemen Times that members of Houthi popular committees came to the Public Works Office on Sunday and instructed him to draft the order.

"The Houthis control the whole country, even the president," he said. "It's not only Al-Qaeda city. We in the Public Works Office can not refuse them."

After giving into the Houthis' request and putting together the order, "the Houthis took [the order] and [distributed] it the same day,"



Houthis have instructed the Public Works Office in Al-Qaeda city to support preparations for the Prophet's birthday celebrations.

he said.

Ahmad Miqam Al-Ayani, a member of the Houthi popular committee in Al-Qaeda city, confirmed that Houthis demanded the drafting of the memo on Sunday.

Circulated by local media outlets, it reads: "On the occasion of the

advent of Prophet Mohammad's birthday (Peace be upon Him), please raise decorative streamers and paint the doors of your stores green within two days of the release of this statement."

The order contains two stamps—one from the office of the Houthi

popular committee in Ibb and one from the Public Works Office in Al-Qaeda city.

The order was signed by Nabil Al-Muqadam; Hassan Abdullah, the head of the municipality's Department of Facilities; and Sadiq Al-Muhtadi, the manager of the Public Works Office in Al-Qaeda city.

Al-Muqadam said he saw little harm in the order. "Painting doors green and putting-up green and white streamers is taking place not only in Al-Qaeda, but in cities and governorates throughout the country. It is a sign of our love to our prophet and transcends any political disputes."

The celebration of the prophet's birthday occurs on the 12th day of Rabi Al-Awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. Traditionally, the event has been celebrated by Shia Muslims. A number of Sunni scholars oppose the festivities as a form of "bida," a practice that is outside of the Quran or the sayings and doings of the prophet.

Fawaz Murai, who owns a shop selling construction materials in Al-Qaeda city, says he approves of the office's order.

"It is a religious duty. It has

nothing to do with any political or partisan agendas," he said.

Surur Al-Wadei, a Salafi sheikh who was once the spokesperson of the Salafi institute in Dammaj, Dar Al-Hadiith, disagreed. Al-Wadei rejects the celebration of the prophet's birthday as a religious duty.

"The prophet did not do this, and he did not order his companions to celebrate this occasion," he explained. "The best way to show our reverence to the prophet is to follow his lead and abide by his instructions."

Hussein Al-Bukhaiti, a prominent Houthi activist in Sana'a, criticized the order issued in Ibb.

"These instructions did not come

from the government, and the Public Works Office should not be acting independently. We do not want any further social rifts."

Al-Bukhaiti denied any involvement of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a. This was confirmed by Al-Ayani, who told the Yemen Times that popular committee members had not received any directive from the political office and had acted on their own initiative.

The Houthi movement has spread to a number of northern and southern governorates since its takeover of the capital on Sept. 21. The Houthis took control of Ibb city on Oct. 15 and have set up checkpoints throughout the city.

Houthis remain silent on Al-Marrani disappearance

■ Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Dec. 29—Houthi representatives have refused to confirm the group's involvement in the disappearance of General Yahya Al-Marrani, an intelligence officer who was taken from his home in the capital on Thursday evening.

As the state-run Saba News Agency reported on Saturday, members of the government's Political Security Bureau accused the Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, of being responsible for the abduction of its senior officer.

Al-Marrani is Yemen's second highest ranking security official, and is responsible for overseeing internal security in the capital. He was only appointed director of the security bureau in the last month, but had previously served for five years as head of the government's intelligence unit in Sa'ada governorate.

A Houthi stronghold, Sa'ada saw ongoing fighting between Houthi militias and government forces from 2004 until 2010.

Mohammad Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi Political Office,

stated on Sunday evening that Al-Marrani was a corrupt official, but added that this allegation—which was not substantiated—did not mean he was taken by Houthis.

"We can't confirm nor deny the kidnapping. It is possible that popular committee members arrested him, but we have no information on that," said Al-Bukhaiti.

It is the first confrontation between Houthis and the state's Political Security Bureau since Hamoud Al-Sufi's appointment as head of the bureau on Nov. 23. Accused of repressing the uprisings in 2011, Al-

Sufi's appointment has been controversial in some quarters.

Nabil Al-Sharjabi, a political scientist at Hodeida University and an expert on crisis management, thinks that silence on the part of Ansar Allah indicates their involvement in the kidnapping. Houthis effectively control the capital and are responsible for its security, he said. Even if they did not order the kidnapping they must know where Al-Marrani is being held. "If the government's security bureau wasn't sure about what happened, it would not dare accuse the Houthis," he said.

Military leader survives assassination attempt, Southern Movement continues protests

■ Fouad Massoud

Aden, Dec. 28—Colonel Faraj Hussein Al-Atiqi, leader of the 31st Armored Brigade, survived an assassination attempt in Aden at 2:00p.m. on Sunday, after an IED that had been placed underneath his car detonated as he and others were riding in the vehicle. No one has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

The driver was killed while Al-Atiqi himself sustained minor injuries, including a broken leg, according to an anonymous source within Aden's Security Department. The source claimed the IED detonated as Al-Atiqi was driving along Al-Arish Road in the north east of Aden city.

The security source told the Yemen Times on Monday evening that no suspects could be identified as yet.

The 31st Armored Brigade was stationed in the Khood Maksar neighborhood of Aden city as late as 2009.

Meanwhile, members of the Southern Movement launched a new round of protests on Sunday and Monday in memory of the first anniversary of the Al-Aza bloodshed that took place last year in Sanah city of Al-Dhale governorate. On Dec. 29, 2013, army units from the 33 Armored Brigade equipped with tanks fired on a funeral procession being held in front of a local school, killing 15 people.

Dr. Abd Al-Matari, official spokesman of the Southern Movement, described the events of last year in an interview with the Yemen Times as a "massacre," adding that the Southern Movement would continue with its protests until it achieved its goals. Marches



A vehicle carrying Colonel Faraj Hussein Al-Atiqi was struck by an IED in Aden on Sunday.

and demonstrations took place in Aden, Al-Dhale, Shabwa and other governorates and were allegedly attended by a number of southern leaders who spoke at the events.

Ahmed Al-Rabeezi, director of the Office of the Official Spokesman for Ali Salem Al-Baidh, former President of Southern Yemen, told the Yemen Times that on both Saturday and Sunday mornings, hundreds of protesters left Al-Aroodh Square and marched towards the Coral Hotel located in

central Aden, where the fourth annual Conference for Family Owned Businesses was attended by Prime Minister Bahah and Aden Governor Abd Al-Aziz Bin Habbour.

Al-Matari said that the goal of the marches was to convey a very clear point to the country's business class. "Investments and capital can be of no benefit to the south while the country is unstable," he said. The Yemen Times spoke with a number of protesters as they took part in the march. Nabil, a young

college student, described the central government from Sana'a as an "occupying force" that possessed no legitimacy.

The Southern Movement was formed in 2007, initially as a movement calling for pensions to be provided to civil and military figures from the former South Yemen. It quickly expanded and became a movement demanding increased rights for southerners, eventually calling for outright secession from the north.

17 Ethiopians drown off Dhubab coast in Taiz



Over 240 migrants had drowned in Yemen this year, more than in 2012 and 2013 combined.

■ Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Dec. 29—Upwards of 17 Ethiopian migrants and one Yemeni smuggler drowned when the boat transporting them capsized off the coast of Dhubab city in Taiz governorate on Saturday evening, according to Shuja Mahdi, chief officer of the National Coast Guard Operations Department.

Ten Ethiopians survived the capsizing and were able to swim ashore, he said.

Nick Stanton, a communications officer with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Yemen, told the Yemen Times on Monday that as of now the UN has received reports that five Ethiopians had died in the incident.

The Yemen Times contacted Birhane Meskal Kihisen, a member of the Diaspora Engagement Affairs Department at the Ethiopian Embassy, who claimed that his office had yet to receive any information regarding the incident.

Local fishermen were the first to be notified that the boat had capsized, according to Mahdi. They were radioed by the Yemeni smuggler who was aboard the ship. He called them to launch a rescue attempt. However, fishermen did not arrive in time, according to Mahdi. Those that survived swam ashore themselves. The fishermen later arrived at the coastline and helped transport the survivors to health clinics in Dhubab city.

Waters around the Gulf of Aden

become hazardous between July and December, and so smugglers prefer to bring migrants into the country via the Dhubab and Al-Mokha coastlines located in Taiz governorate.

Whatever the route taken, the trek across the water remains a perilous journey that a growing number of Africans seem to be willing to risk. A vessel carrying 70 migrants capsized in the Red Sea on Dec. 5, with anywhere between 18 to 21 dying in the incident according to the UNHCR.

According to the Interior Ministry, coast guards have arrested 18 smugglers in 2014. While the national coast guard is not tasked with rescuing illegal immigrants, officer Mahdi says he and his colleagues do what they can to help those in danger.

The UNHCR reported that 65,000 migrants arrived on Yemen's shores in 2013. Earlier this month, Zaid Alalaya, a public information officer with the UNHCR reported that 240 migrants had drowned in Yemen this year, more than in 2012 and 2013 combined.

Stanton told the Yemen Times that Sept. 2014 had witnessed the largest number of African migrants coming to Yemen from the Horn of Africa, with more than 12,800 fleeing from Ethiopia, Somalia and other countries. A continued spike in human rights abuses and drought in southern Somalia were the main factors behind this increase, he said.

Prominent Salafi cleric kidnapped in Sana'a

■ Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Dec. 28—Sheikh Mohammad Al-Wadei, a prominent Salafi figure based in Sana'a, was kidnapped Saturday evening on Mazda Street near the city's Al-Hasabah neighborhood. No group has claimed responsibility for the kidnapping and his whereabouts remain unknown.

Al-Wadei is a member of the Yemeni Ulama Association, a prominent organization of Salafi scholars chaired by well-known cleric Abdul Majeed Al-Zindani. The association was vocal in its opposition to the Houthis' takeover of Sana'a on Sept. 21, and has since remained critical of the movement.

Al-Wadei is also the chairman of the Al-Sadiq Charitable Foundation and an Imam at the Omar Ibn Al-Khabat Mosque, both located in Al-Hasabah. The mandate of the Al-Sadiq Charitable Foundation includes building mosques, distributing food to the poor, and paying the salaries of various imams affiliated with the Salafi organization.

The Al-Hasabah neighborhood witnessed intense clashes in the lead up to Sept. 21 between Houthis and militia forces loyal to the powerful Al-Ahmar family, which has strong affiliations with Yemen's Islamist Islah party. Ever since Sept. 21, armed Houthi 'popular committees' spread throughout Sana'a and the movement



Sheikh Mohammad Al-Wadei has been an outspoken critic of the Houthis.

erected city-wide checkpoints.

Murad Al-Qadasi, chairman of the Salafi Peace and Development Party, and a fellow member of the Yemeni Ulama Association, told the Yemen Times that Al-Wadei was kidnapped while driving home from the Al-Sadiq Foundation's headquarters with his brother. "The kidnapers took Al-Wadei, but left his brother, Saleh," he said. "We can't accuse anyone at the moment of being responsible for the kidnapping, however we'll do our best to find out."

A source close to Al-Wadei, who

spoke to the Yemen Times on condition of anonymity, stated that the kidnapers fired at Al-Wadei's car, causing him to stop, before kidnapping him, but that Al-Wadei was not injured. He accused the Houthis of orchestrating the kidnapping. "They [the Houthis] are the only armed men spread throughout Sana'a," he said. "They control the capital. And Al-Wadei is known for speaking openly against them." Al-Wadei has given sermons in which he condemns the Houthis and their interpretation of Islamic law based on the Quran

and Sunnah, the source said.

Along with a number of local media outlets, Yemen's second Salafi party Al-Rashad echoed these sentiments, stating on its website that an anonymous source affiliated with Al-Wadei's family blamed armed Houthis for the attack.

Mohammad Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, denied these accusations. "The [Houthi] popular committees are here to make the city safer, they would never kidnap anyone." He added that although he had heard of the kidnapping through various media outlets, no popular committee members or leaders had been notified of the event or asked to intervene.

Abdul Aziz Al-Qadasi, deputy chairman of Sana'a's Security Office, stated that security forces had been notified of Al-Wadei's kidnapping and were investigating the issue. "As of now [Monday afternoon] however, we have no information or leads regarding who is responsible."

On Nov. 10, the Houthis were accused of having kidnapped Tehama Movement leader Abdulrahman Mukaram in Hodeida city. The movement's political office responded that it had "detained" Mukaram, whom they accused of having orchestrated an armed attack on the Houthis on Oct. 26. As of Dec. 4, Mukaram was still being held "in custody" by the Houthis, without trial.

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SRDC study exposes Unemployment issue in Yemen

■ Khalid Al-Karimi

Unemployment rates in 2014 reached unprecedented levels. According to a report released this month by the Economic and Social Development Research Center (SRDC), a local non-governmental organization based in Sana'a, 38.4 percent of the workforce aged 15 to 64 are currently unemployed, a figure that increases to 46.2 percent for those between 30 to 64.

Unlike many studies of its kind, the SRDC report looks at unemployment trends over a longer term. Its findings are based on figures from the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) in Yemen, including the 1994 census, the 2004 census and a 1999 workforce survey, which are compared with national estimates for population growth throughout the period covered.

The study underscores the toll that recent events have taken, particularly for young Yemenis entering the job market, but unemployment as a whole is a chronic problem that needs to be accounted for. Following unification and subsequent civil war in the early 1990s, youth unemployment has seen a steady increase, even during peacetime.

The study tracks a rise in unemployment since 1990, laying particular emphasis on, "the state's dwindling role in economic activities following unification, a poor investment climate, and widespread corruption amongst state authorities." Earliest estimates placed unemployment at 9.1 percent in 1990, a figure that rose to 9.8 percent in 1994, 13.7 percent in 1999, 16.2 percent in 2004, and up to 35 percent by 2010.

In accounting for the endemic nature of unemployment in Yemen, the authors also draw attention to factors that make it self-perpetuating. Poverty entails weak familial support, for example, leading children to drop out of school early and enter the labor market at a young age. The absence of "sustainable development mechanisms" also contributes to the cyclical nature of unemployment, the study suggests, as resource exhaustion, short-term planning, and the failure to address poverty continue to exacerbate the



Many Yemenis who cannot find permanent work have taken up jobs as part time day laborers to make ends meet.

problem.

Conflict, economic mismanagement and poor governance constitute the biggest obstacles to tackling unemployment, but the study also brings attention to ineffective training schemes that fail to prepare Yemeni youths for the job market.

Mustfa Nasr, head of the Economic Studies Media Center, a locally based think-tank specializing in Yemen's economic affairs, is particularly concerned by unemployment rates amongst Yemeni youth. Estimates from the CSO and National Population Council (NPC) found that 63 percent of Yemenis were under the age of 25 in 2014.

According to the Human Development Report for 2014, an annual publication from the United Nations Development Programme, youth unemployment (15-24 years) reached 33.7 percent this year, and child labor (5-14 years) stands at 22.7 percent. Moreover, as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported on Aug. 31, opportunities for Yemenis abroad are dwindling just as unemployment rates at home reach unprecedented levels.

Ahmed Mohammed Yahya, 31, graduated from Sana'a University

in 2006. It has been over eight years since he received his degree in sociology, but he is yet to find work. "I registered my name in the civil service office of Raima, where I am originally from, but I am still waiting," he said. "To make ends meet I've been selling qat."

Yahya is one of a growing number of unemployed hoping to find a position in civil service. According to government sources, there are currently about 260,000 applicants registered with the Civil Service Ministry.

Amar Al-Amri graduated in mathematics from Sana'a University in 2012. He says he was optimistic about his future and hopeful of finding a job, but although he was given a teaching position at a private school in the city, he soon found his salary was not enough. He has since decided to seek opportunities abroad, in Saudi Arabia.

"I have tried as best as I can to survive on the YR30,000 (\$140) I earn from my job at the school, but it will not be enough. My last resort is to find work abroad, and I have decided it is the only option I have," he explained.

As unemployment statistics indicate, Al-Amri is relatively lucky to

have found work at all, but the inability to find jobs that pay enough for basic living requirements — let alone to ensure one is eligible for marriage and capable of starting a family — is a reality faced by many Yemenis that unemployment statistics do not speak to.

As a first step towards stemming unemployment rates, the authors of the study have called for restructuring the state in line with the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) outcomes. At its conclusion in January, NDC participants agreed to transform Yemen into a six-region federation.

The authors argue that decentralizing the state will distribute authority and resources more evenly across the country. They predict that federalism will give rise to inter-regional competition as each region seeks to take advantage of the economic resources available to it, and will help encourage community participation in more localized development schemes. Thus, the study concludes, "[Federalism] will lead to economic recovery and will create many job opportunities for the youth."

It also calls for the adoption of "sustainable development mecha-

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Migrant, woman, writer: The many hats of Efrata Kasassa

■ Ahlam Mohsen

People making the journey from the Horn of Africa often come to Yemen to escape poverty, persecution, war and state violence. Efrata Kasassa, 22, came to Yemen to be a writer.

Her first book, which she hopes to self-publish, is also about an Ethiopian girl who migrates to Yemen. Hardly known as a land of opportunity, Yemen was Efrata's destination because of its proximity to Ethiopia. It's often a transit country for migrants seeking better employment prospects in the Gulf and elsewhere.

But for Efrata, Yemen was the destination. She knew people who had migrated to Yemen, and was confident she could receive help from the Ethiopian embassy to publish her work. In order to raise funds, she has taken a number of jobs, mostly cleaning homes and offices. She is also the barista at the cafe of a cultural foundation in Sana'a, the Basement.

Her work schedule doesn't leave a lot of room for writing, but Efrata did not come all the way to Yemen to lose sight of her goal.

"I write everyday, in the evenings. I will sacrifice sleep before I stop writing. I usually stay up until 3 or 3:30 a.m."

Born in Addis Ababa, Efrata traded one poor, conflict-ridden country for another.

"In Ethiopia, it was hard, but it's my country—at the very least, I know my way around, I know how things work. In Yemen, things are hard, but I am a stranger. At least in Yemen, though things are difficult here, I can work. I can make money to publish my book," she said.

Migrating to Yemen has given Efrata more than the opportunity to earn a little money. The journey of migration, building a life in a country that isn't hers, leaving university to clean houses, and all the interactions with people along the way have naturally become part of her story and are recurring themes in her writing.

"When one immigrates, everything gets turned upside down," she said. "I see everything differently now. Everything is new. I've seen so much here, I write a lot more now."

One of the issues Efrata faces in Yemen is rampant racism and classism. "They don't see us as people. There are nice, respectful Yemenis, but others see you only as cleaner, and think that's all you are and all you're ever going to be."

Efrata left Ethiopia one and a half years ago—making her a relatively new addition to the Ethiopian diaspora. Lacking in her writing is the

sort of nostalgia familiar to those works produced by those who have more permanently put down roots outside their countries of origin.

What does she miss in her homeland?

"My mother and university. That's all."

Efrata was studying civil engineering in Addis when she decided to throw herself into her writing and to pursue the money she needed to publish her book, she said.

"I didn't know any Arabic when I arrived, but at my first job cleaning a Yemeni family's home, I had to learn. I then worked at a restaurant, and everyone only spoke Arabic, so I pushed myself."

A year and half after arriving, Efrata spoke fluent Arabic in an interview with the Yemen Times.

She describes her book as a romance novel. Her protagonist, Sabella, is 16 years old. Sabella is smart—so smart, that her family has high expectations for her future, and, by association, theirs. Efrata's book revolves heavily around overcoming hardships.

A strong emphasis is placed on female empowerment, and there are many examples of marginalization. In Sabella's world, repression of women comes from the family, the state, lovers, smugglers, employers and others.

Her story starts with a secret ro-

mance. At 16, Sabella falls in love with a boy, Zarhun. He only learns of Sabella's feelings two years later. Sabella and Zarhun begin living together, but when he discovers she is pregnant, Zarhun abandons her. At 17, she has a child, and soon after starts selling sex for money. The book describes the prostitution scene in Addis, and how very young girls, many of them teenagers, get caught up in it.

The story is also about Sabella's migration to new a country as a migrant and single mother. It describes the harrowing sea voyage many refugees and migrants take to reach Yemen's shores, and the violations and hardships they endure once they arrive.

"A woman must not lose her self-worth and abandon her aspirations for a man, she must hold on to her dream and remain strong. This is the true path," says Efrata's narrator.

Efrata has been writing non-fiction since she was ten years old. It wasn't until a classmate received a scholarship for a writing program in Switzerland that it occurred to her that she could pursue her craft as a profession, she said.

"[My friend] loved to write, and then the idea came into my head that I could be a writer too."

Supporting oneself through writing—even in the West, where the



Hardly known as a land of opportunity, Yemen is a transit country for most migrants who seek better employment prospects in the Gulf. However for Efrata, Yemen was her final destination.

opportunities and privileges are a world away from those available in Ethiopia—is a risky move. The percentage of writers who can make a living and sustain themselves based only on their writing is low. For most writers, a day job is a must.

For now, Efrata is hoping to publish 100 copies of her book.

But the publishing industry in Yemen leaves a lot to be desired, writers say. Unless supported by a sponsor or contracted through a publisher, writers pay the printing costs and distribute the works themselves.

Nabeel Obadi, head of the Yemeni Publishers Union, an independent body established in 2007, told the Yemen Times in a previous interview that "the most a publisher

can hope for in terms of book promotion is a good turnout at a book fair."

Efrata says she will distribute the book herself, and is determined to also have it distributed in Ethiopia.

She has a community of support here, though that support is not financial.

"The embassy would have helped if they had the money, but they spend it on more urgent issues, like helping refugees. They support me in other ways, though. They invite me to read my writing at embassy events."

She appreciates the support, but says she can only count on herself.

"The state can't do anything for you. Ethiopia can't, Yemen can't. I make my own way."

OPINION

Egypt's freedom of repression

The freedom of expression promised by the Egyptian revolution has given way to repression and muzzling of the media.

Khaled Diab

al-jazeera.com

First published Dec. 28

In December 2011, the glimmer of hope that would spark revolutions across the Arab world was ignited in Tunisia. While Tunisians have managed to take advantage of the past four years to set in motion a process of rapid democratization, other countries in the region have not been so fortunate.

Egypt has been unfortunate to see each change in leadership come with a "winner takes all" confrontational and combative attitude. As we approach the fourth anniversary of the Egyptian revolution, the high hopes of "bread, freedom and social justice" seem as far away as ever.

In addition to the nose-diving economy, which has been kept afloat since 2011 through the largesse of the Gulf allies of the moment, this regression has been felt acutely and painfully in the area of freedom of expression, particularly for the media.

While the revolutionaries of the Republic of Tahrir had dreamt briefly of an Egypt that would be a beacon of freedom, the only thing that seems free these days is the value of human dignity. The counterrevolution—which began with the ouster of Hosni Mubarak, when the regime amputated its head to keep its body intact—seems to be reaching an end goal of sorts, through a process of heavy-handed crackdowns and co-

option.

Declining freedom of speech

In terms of repression, 2014 has been a particularly harsh year, in which Egypt found itself in the uncoveted top 10 jailers of journalists published by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Like Al-Jazeera's Baher Mohamed, Mohamed Fahmy, and Peter Grete, many of the imprisoned journalists listed by CPJ are accused of having links to the previous regime of Mohamed Morsi. These include members of the highly influential citizenship journalism site Rassd News Network (RNN), which is affiliated with or at least sympathetic to the now outlawed Muslim Brotherhood.

RNN's Mahmoud Abdel Nabi has been in jail the longest of the dozen reporters behind bars. He was arrested in July 2013, while covering clashes between pro-military and pro-Morsi supporters in Sidi Beshr, Alexandria. He is accused of inciting violence and the possession of weapons.

The other RNN staff members in jail are Sami Mustafa and Abdullah al-Fakharany, who were indicted in February, along with dozens of others, for allegedly "forming an operations room to direct the Muslim Brotherhood to defy the government."

Even for journalists without any alleged political allegiances, simply doing their jobs during the dispersal of Al-Rabaa and Al-Nahda protest camps - which led to the death of

at least a thousand, including four journalists—could easily land them in jail.

This is exactly what happened to the freelance photojournalist Mahmoud Abou Zeid, a contributor to the UK-based citizen journalism site and photo agency Demotix, who was arrested in August 2013 while covering the dispersal; the French photographer and Newsweek journalist he was with have since been released.

Some reporters have fallen victim of the regressive and controversial anti-protest law passed in 2013. These include Ahmed Gamal Ziada, a photojournalist with the online news network Yaqaen, who was arrested on Dec. 2013, 28 while covering student protests at Al-Azhar University; and Ahmed Fouad of the local news website Karmoz, who was arrested in January 2014 during pro-Muslim Brotherhood protests in Sidi Beshr.

Infringement on liberties
Despite such incidents, the anti-protest law is intended primarily for protesters and dissidents, both of the Islamist and secular variety. In fact, some are convinced that this law criminalizing dissent is part of a "targeted mission to eliminate the prominent revolutionary figures."

This political purge has targeted such leading revolutionary figures as the sibling duo, Alaa Abdel Fattah, who is accused of not being a "true" revolutionary and of seeking the country's "destruction," and

Mona Seif, who went on a hunger strike for 76 days to protest against her brother's incarceration.

Sisi's regime has also had reformists and human rights defenders in its cross hairs. These include Yara Sallam, a transitional justice officer at the independent Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), who was sentenced to three years at the end of October for allegedly participating in a political march. EIPR and other NGOs in Egypt are threatened with closure due to the government's insistence to apply the letter of a controversial law on non-governmental organizations.

But coercion is not the only tool the regime wields. It has also blended this with the co-option of high-profile voices. A number of prominent private television channels and TV personalities have thrown their support behind Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's leadership.

Beyond the media, some lawyers have taken it as their personal mission to shut down free speech. A recent example was the lawsuit brought against the famous pro-revolutionary Egyptian actor Khaled Abol-Naga which accused him of "high treason" for daring to criticize Sisi. The case has triggered a wave of anger and protest among artists.

Although "Sisimania" has cooled down considerably since the former general became president, there are still many patriotic readers who take any slight to the leader personally, as reflected in the mirthless reactions to the caricatures of Mo-

hamed Anwar.

To add insult to injury, the regime has co-opted the revolution itself and has appointed itself as its sole guardian and guarantor, as reflected in the presidential decree Sisi intends to issue which "criminalises insulting the January 25 and June 30 uprisings."

The regime is also positioning itself as the self-appointed defender of public morality, as highlighted in the recent spate of arrests of alleged homosexuals, despite the fact that homosexuality is not actually illegal, as well as the arrest of people suspected of being atheists, despite their being no law in Egypt outlawing atheism, and the recent closure of what the media dubbed the "atheists' cafe."

Freedom of speech in context

Amid this onslaught on the media and the freedom of activists and citizens to express their political thoughts, it is easy to feel despair for Egypt's future and its people's aspirations for freedom, dignity, and equality.

However, it is important to contextualize matters. Despite the deteriorating situation, Egypt, at its worst, is still freer and its people more openly defiant than just about everywhere in the Gulf at their best.

In Egypt, despite all the crackdowns, arrests and intimidations, there are still independent voices who refuse to be cowed, coerced or co-opted. This is embodied in Egypt's dynamic citizen journalism

scene and its independent publications, such as Mada Masr.

Even private TV does not always sing from the government's hymn sheet. A recent example of this was an ONTV program exposing the ill-gotten gains of the mysterious billionaire Hussein Salem, who was recently acquitted of corruption charges alongside his patron, Hosni Mubarak.

Many activists and human rights defenders are still striving to fight in the corner of freedom. The award-winning Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression has issued numerous scathing reports on the regime's infringement on liberties, including one entitled: "Has journalism become a crime in Egypt?"

Understandably, the ranks of the defiant are shrinking in Egypt, as many once-critical voices are silenced and an increasing number of journalists and activists take flight mostly out of despair, but also out of fear.

But this situation is not inevitable or necessarily indefinite. Just as a generation of young idealists defied all odds and expectations to bring the regime to its knees, the spirit they set free may be suppressed for a time but it cannot be extinguished.

Khaled Diab is an award-winning Egyptian-Belgian journalist, writer and blogger. He is the author of *Intimate Enemies: Living with Israelis and Palestinians in the Holy Land*. He blogs at www.chromikler.com.

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Egyptian media paints rosy picture of UNHRC review of Egypt's Human Rights Record

Jordan Daniels
Muftah.org
First published Dec. 19

In early November, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) undertook a Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Egypt's human rights record, a standard assessment that takes place every few years for all UN member states.

The session came just three months after Human Rights Watch issued a report concluding the methods used by Egyptian security forces to break up pro-Muslim Brotherhood protests in the Al Raba'a Al-Adaweya and Al-Nahda Squares in August 2013 "likely amounted to crimes against humanity." This accusation is only the most recent in a steady stream of criticism that human rights groups have lodged against Egypt's de facto criminalization of demonstrations; indefinite detention of dissidents, opposition figures, and journalists without trial; and crackdown on freedom of the press.

After hearing statements from the Egyptian delegation, 125 other member nations, and both Egyptian and foreign non-governmental organizations, the UNHRC issued 300 recommendations to improve human rights conditions in Egypt. These included the abolition of the death penalty, the immediate release of journalists and political prisoners, and amendment of Egypt's controversial protest law. For comparison, Iraq's review earlier this year produced 290 recommendations.

Despite the wide range of issues identified by the UNHRC, the Egyptian media described the review as an overwhelming diplomatic success and praised the Egyptian delegation for its patriotic defense of Egypt's human rights record against largely unfounded attacks. This chorus of support is the latest example

of the restricted media environment and widespread self-censorship that has developed in Egypt following arrests of several journalists over the past year.

Egyptian Media Glosses over International Criticism

Several outlets have published news pieces detailing the criticisms leveled against the Egyptian government by other countries, activists, and rights organizations. Privately-owned Al-Masry Al-Youm published an article describing Human Rights Watch's demand that the international community condemn Egypt for its human rights violations over the past year, including the Al-Rabaa and Al-Nahda massacres. Privately-owned Al-Shorouk ran a story on George Isaac, a political activist and Coptic Christian, who argued that the 300 recommendations—nearly double the number from its first UPR in 2010—represent serious regression.

There has, however, been an absence of opinion pieces in major Egyptian newspapers and popular television talk shows expressing critical viewpoints. There has also been no mention of the seven Egyptian human rights organizations that boycotted the UNHRC session for fear of retaliation, with the exception of the English language Egyptian site Mada Masr.

By contrast, in an exceptionally flattering op-ed in the state-owned newspaper Al-Ahram, Emad Hijab claimed that "Egypt scored major victories in the realm of politics and human rights" at the UNHRC session, saying that those who stood in opposition to Egypt, including the Muslim Brotherhood, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Alkarama Foundation, "lost their bet" to the prowess of Egyptian diplomacy.

Overall, coverage about the entire affair was relatively minimal. The

UNHRC review received little air-time on major Egyptian television channels and a limited number of articles in each of the major dailies.

The one big exception was Al-Ahram, which published nineteen articles before, during, and after Egypt's appearance before the UNHRC. This deluge of commentary may have been the paper's attempt to control messaging about Egypt's image and legitimacy on the international stage. Al-Ahram recently came under fire for misquoting New York Times columnist David Kirkpatrick in his account of Egyptian President Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi's appearance before the UN General Assembly and then offering contradictory accounts about the editorial blunder in the Arabic and English statements it subsequently released.

"With us or against us"

The Egyptian media largely parroted the government's official response to accusations about its human rights abuses, and pointed to domestic security challenges, especially the fight against terrorism.

What makes this rhetoric important is its implications in an international context. It is, in fact, neither new nor unique to Egypt. In her television program Hona Al Asema, Lamees Al-Hadeedy drew parallels between Egypt today and the United States following the 9/11 attacks, when the Patriot Act was passed to give the government exceptional powers.

Couching Egypt's human rights performance in terms of national security creates a dramatic "with us or against us" dynamic. In an interview with TV personality Ibrahim Issa, Mervat Al-Talawi, head of Egypt's National Council for Women and member of the Egyptian delegation to the UNHRC, described the 125 member countries who participated in the review as belonging to one of three blocks: "Supportive," "biased,"

or "hostile." In the same interview, she called human rights a "weapon" that countries use to "attack" others they dislike.

Many articles drew a line between countries who "recognize," "appreciate," and "understand" the security and stability challenges Egypt faces and those who did not. One columnist for Al-Shorouk, generally perceived as more progressive than other mainstream media outlets, characterized the UNHRC review as a "battle to determine the powers that stand with Egypt and those that stand against her on the foreign policy stage." An opinion piece published by Al-Ahram entitled "Human Rights...the Muslim Brotherhood's Last Card" took it one step further and accused the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and their "Turkish and Qatari followers" of using the UNHRC review to launch a desperate war against Egypt.

What emerged from this commentary was a dossier of international friends and foes. The United States, most European countries, Tunisia, and Turkey were at the top of the black list. Criticism from the United States and Europe was attributed to Western meddling, while those from Tunisia and Turkey were often portrayed as part of a global Islamist plot to undermine Egypt.

Qatar was the darling of the Egyptian media for its relatively positive and deferential remarks during the review. Given the bitter cold war between the two countries over Qatar's support for Islamist elements in Egypt, as well as Egypt's recent sentencing of three Al-Jazeera journalists on terrorism-related charges, Qatar's decision not to criticize its rival's human rights record was surprising. It came to light a month later that a broader reconciliation campaign is underway to thaw relations between Qatar, Egypt, and other Gulf states.

Reflecting its much warmer diplo-

matic relations with Egypt since Sisi took office, Israel's comments at the review session were also muted, and limited in scope to combating illegal immigration and human trafficking.

The Egyptian government will review the UNHRC recommendations and decide which it will accept and

reject. Its final response will be announced in March 2015.

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In this context GHNDR is seeking to recruit a Health Specialist to contribute or lead cross-sectoral lending, analytical and policy work program with a focus on universal health coverage, maternal and child health, non-communicable diseases, primary health care and health system governance. In particular, the Health Specialist will take major responsibilities in the following key tasks, among possibly others:

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Interested candidates should apply via the World Bank site www.worldbank.org/jobs section: "employment opportunities" job number **141584**, where you can find full particulars on the vacancy. Closing date for this job is **January 10, 2014**. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.



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(EASE-RFQ-15-02) RFQ Number)



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Water Desalination in Taiz

This is a two part piece about the water crisis in the city of Taiz and the feasibility of water desalination in Yemen. Part one is below, part two will run on Thursday.

Jeremy Hodge and Madiha Junaid

Yemen is quickly becoming one of the driest places on earth, and, according to some estimates, might be the world's first country to run out of water. Some parts of Yemen have suffered more from water scarcity than others, foremost among them the city of Taiz, located off the Red Sea coast in the country's southwest corner. Rampant population growth, increased urbanization and a systematic draining of surrounding ground wells and aquifers, means the city might soon be the world's first to run out of water.

The crisis in Taiz, along with the rest of the country, has prompted many Yemenis to begin looking into ways to utilize non-conventional water resources as a means of making up for shortfalls in production. Among these alternative methods are plans to utilize the country's 2,200 kilometer coastline along the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and begin experimenting with the desalination of seawater.

Compared to their full potential, desalination schemes have until now made little headway in Yemen and other developing nations suffering from water scarcity, due to their perceived high costs compared to more traditional means of water extraction, primarily from natural springs and ground aquifers. Small plants have previously been built in

ed, it would be several years before it would be able to operate at this rate and meet the city's water consumption needs. Located along the Mokha coastline, the plant would be connected to a pipeline running from Mokha to Taiz and then later to Ibb city, serving all small towns and villages located along the way.

In 2010, the Yemeni government hired JFA Consulting, a British firm specializing in the oil, gas and environmental sectors, to assess the viability of the project and the extent to which seawater desalination could be a feasible solution to Taiz's water crisis. Led by its CEO, James Firebrace, JFA Consulting conducted two field studies—first in 2010 and later again in 2013—of both the site of the plant in Mokha and a comprehensive study of the social and economic effects of water scarcity in Taiz.

The studies concluded that with proper management, not only would construction of the plant help fill the ever widening gap in the city's dwindling water supply, but that it would also be able to provide consumers with high purity water at cheaper rates than consumers were currently spending. Despite this positive feedback, construction of the plant has still not begun, and the government is currently struggling to find financiers to put money into the project.

Numbers

Despite Mr. Firebrace's claims, many within the Yemeni government have dragged their feet with regards to water desalination due to its perceived high cost compared to extraction of ground water from the country's various aquifers. A report put together by Yemen's Social Fund for Development (SFD)—the Yemeni government's official social



The same report claims that 19 out of Yemen's 21 fresh water basins and aquifers are over exploited, as consumption rates outpace the rate of natural replenishment, a phenomenon that's expected to increase and compound with the expansion of global warming.

"Annual consumption exceeds over two billion cubic meters, while natural replenishment hovers around one billion," according to Al-Sharjabi.

Such scarcity, combined with population growth, means that the amount of water actually received by residents through government run water utilities—which is administered in Taiz through the Taiz Water and Sanitation Local Corporation (TWSLC) and operated by Taiz governorate—has decreased significantly in recent years, forcing citizens to supplement public utility water with other, more expensive options in order to meet their daily needs. That being said, while harvesting groundwater may be cheaper for the state than undergoing de-

salination, Yemen's citizens get left behind, and end up paying more. "From 1996 to 2013, Taiz witnessed a youth bulge that pushed its population from 320,000 to roughly 840,000," Firebrace told the Yemen Times. "During this same period, the percentage of residents being served by the TWSLC decreased from 72 percent to 46 percent. Meanwhile those who are served have watched as the amount of time they're required to wait in order to receive public utility water for the local corporation has increased on average from two to three weeks, to anywhere between four and 12 weeks."

Abdullah Saleh is the former head of the National Water Resource Authority (NWRA) within the Ministry of Water and Environment, and currently works with the World Bank in helping to implement its Water Sector Support Project (WSSP) in Sana'a for sustainable water use

and development. Saleh worked with Firebrace and JFA when the latter were conducting their field studies regarding the feasibility of the desalination project in Mokha.

"The problem comes down to poor management," Saleh said. "Those hired to work within the TWSLC don't have the technical expertise to manage water networks. A lot of water gets wasted and lost due to degraded infrastructure, broken pipes and a lack of proper equipment."

Saleh said that apathy within the TWSLC and the federal government to better manage Taiz's public water utility network is exacerbated by the fact that the corporation often fails to collect public utility bills.

"The TWSLC is like the spoiled child of the water sector," he said. "Many Taiz residents avoid paying their bills for the water they consume through utilities. However as long as officials are given their yearly budget and salaries, they cease to care much about anything else."

Every year, the TWSLC incurs a loss according to Saleh, and cannot effectively balance its books. "That being said, there's little incentive on behalf of the local or federal government to pump additional money or invest further into the corporation. This prevents the TWSLC from being able to keep up with increasing demand for water as the city's population grows."

Such a situation has pushed locals to begin searching for secondary methods for obtaining water, including purchasing water extracted through private wells operated by local businessmen, and then sold either via water tanker trucks, or in what are known as 'kawthers'. Kawthers are local water purification stations that sell purified water to citizens in what are known as 'dabbas', or containers, usually varying in size, between five to 20 liters.

The use of kawthers has become increasingly common in Taiz over the last ten years, with roughly 85 percent of the city's households purchasing kawther water in 2013, up from roughly 5 percent in 1996. Water purchased through kawthers on the whole have higher purity levels than water purchased from tankers, a fact reflected in the difference in cost between the two.

"By 2013, citizens were paying more than \$4.5m/3 for tanker water, and \$23m/3 for kawther water," according to Firebrace. As overall water scarcity has increased with the draining of groundwater aquifers, the price of both types of water has also increased.

"By breakdown, Yemenis in Taiz today will spend on average YR50 (\$0.23) for a 10 liter dabba of kawther water, compared to YR15 (\$0.07) in 1996. During this same time period, the retail price of 3m3 of tanker wa-

ter increased from YR650 (\$3.00) to as much as YR4000 (\$18.6), depending on the location."

Yet, regardless of which water source citizens choose to purchase, both are significantly more costly than the price paid by the TWSLC to pump water into local homes, or the hypothetical costs of desalination schemes if the government were to construct a desalination plant in Mokha.

"Locals are being squeezed," Firebrace said.

Admittedly, implementing a desalination scheme would require a restructuring not just of the TWSLC itself, but also of the city's public utility water distribution network, including the construction of new filling stations connected to a main pipeline, and a means to effectively and cheaply transport desalinated water to residents' homes, measures that would put a further strain on the state's already stretched budget.

"This is a good chance for those within the TWSLC and the public water sector to make a good decision and sponsor an initiative that would benefit consumers in the long run," according to Saleh. "Such a project could reduce the price of water and improve management. Whether it'll actually get built or not is a matter of politics."

Additional reporting by Bassem Al-Khameri



To supplement water shortages in the city's public utility network, many Taiz residents purchase water at inflated prices from tanker trucks.

Aden and recently in 2007 on the small Socotran island of Abdul Kuri. Despite the country's current crisis, however, Yemen's government has failed to implement a serious plan to desalinate seawater despite the fact that much of the country's per capita consumption of water has decreased significantly in recent years.

But this is not for lack of trying. According to Towfiq Al-Sharjabi, deputy minister of the Ministry of Water and Environment, in 2008 the Yemeni government began looking into the possibility of constructing a water desalination plant in the coastal city of Mokha, 94 kilometers west of the water scarce city of Taiz. According to Al-Sharjabi, at full capacity the plant would be able to pump a total of 100,000m³ of water per day, more than enough to meet the daily needs of Taiz city, which he estimated to be 55,000m³. However, Al-Sharjabi said that if the plant was construct-

ed and development body chaired by the prime minister—was presented at the Yemen National Water Conference in Sana'a held on Jan. 15, 2011. In this report, the case for desalination is shot down due to its apparent high cost.

"Desalination is a non-rainfall dependent water source, therefore it's expected to be the most sophisticated and costly option," the report reads. "The cost of one cubic meter (1m³) of desalinated water is anywhere between \$0.6/m³ and \$1.2/m³, a number that increases to anywhere between \$0.9m³ and \$1.8m³ after transport and administrative costs are factored in. The cost of extracting groundwater meanwhile runs at just \$0.26m³."

"For poor governorates such as Taiz, building water desalination plants is always a last resort," says Al-Sharjabi. "Yet, at the same time, the city is in desperate need of a sustainable water source," he added.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَلِيَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَلَائِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ اللَّهِ فِي سَمَوَاتٍ مُّوَدَّعَاتٍ

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Raising the level of awareness against Gender Based Violence



From peace at home to peace at world let's end the Gender Based Violence social violence everywhere

What is gender-based violence (GBV)? It is the violence committed against a person for social reasons, mostly gender, and it appears in many forms, including domestic violence, rape and surveillance, sexual abuse and harassment, and assault on human and legal rights due to race or color.

Violence and social enslavement are actions and behaviors present around the world and don't belong to a specific area in the world, whether rural or urban, because violence exists in all countries around, though how it is dealt with varies depending on the knowledge and legislation of a specific region or country.

Social violence in Yemen:

Gender-based violence is considered one of the main forms of violence against Yemeni women on a large scale and it is necessary to examine the causes and to come up with solutions. This can start by visits to shelters. These visits, combined with close monitoring, follow-ups and evaluations can help address the causes of gender-based violence. It is important to document the opinions of communities, in addition to the authorities and human rights groups, to get a more clarity on the issue.

One domestic violence victim gave her story.

"I am twenty-five years old and my story is one involving an early marriage to a relative. I got married at an early age, a setup by my brothers after the death of my father. They married me off so they would no longer have to shoulder the burden of my upbringing or my educational expenses. My mother was also left in a bad situation. My brothers also refused to accept responsibility for her. Instead, they just wanted to sell the house and use the money for their wives and children. They married me to the first person who knocked on the door. I was too young to understand what marriage was. My childhood, my dreams, were taken from me. Two years later I gave birth to two children. My mother died, and I had a very nasty husband with a bad temper. He was addicted to qat and spent most of his time chewing and smoking. I told myself I need to say, but my husband was a nightmare and treated me like his servant. If I tried to change his mind about something, he would beat me in front of my young children.

I dreamed that my life would change. My husband never went to work, I continued to be robbed of the basics that I had been robbed of most of my life—so I took my children and left. I went to my father's house, which was now occupied by my brothers and their families. They welcomed me like one would welcome a criminal.

'Why are you abandoning your husband?' they asked accusingly. I told them that he hit me, that there is no longer food for my children and I to eat. They rejected my plea for help and demanded that I return to my husband. When I refused, they beat me and demanded that I sell

my share of the house. I agreed, but they took every penny. Their kids beat my kids, their wives cursed at me. My husband came to retrieve me, to satisfy his needs, and I had little choice in the matter. I needed to take care of my children.

I tried to convince my husband to change his behavior. He expected me to take care of the children using the money from the sale of my father's house; he does not know that brothers have taken everything.

I had no choice but to go out and find work. My husband agreed to let me work so that he could afford to chew qat. I didn't know where to start, and then I heard about women who work in agriculture. I went to the fields to harvest, irrigate and grow crops. I would leave my children at a neighbor's house.

On my way to work, I hear the dirtiest things said about me and my body. They want to use me to entertain themselves in exchange for money, but I've chosen to keep working hard in agriculture and to accept the little payment that I get. It buys the qat and a little food for my kids. My husband's qat demands have increased, however, and he also expects cigarettes and energy drinks.

I gave birth to a third child, which has only increased my suffering. The harassment has continued, my husband's demands have as well, and when I try to reject his advances, kicking and screaming, he is violent towards me.

I have suffered harshly trying to take care of my children and enduring the treatment of my husband and of society. Where to go? My brothers refuse me, they refused to meet with me or give me any money. My husband does what he wants, and if he doesn't get what he wants he takes it violently. Society insults my honor by telling my husband that I do undignified things for money. I have been beaten by my husband, and he has tried to kill me. I have been kicked out of the house, along with my children. I do not know where to go. I take my children and I walk the path of the road ahead of me, trying to find shelters that will accept us. I finally reached the capital, where I slept in front of a mosque with my kids. I met a good man there and he offered me work in two shops. I also started looking for work as a housekeeper—anything so that I could raise my children, otherwise I would have to contemplate suicide.

Gender-based violence is wide-spread, resulting in severe social, political and economic underdevelopment. There are currently a limited number of efforts to root-out gender-based violence. A failure to prosecute cases of domestic violence in Yemeni courts, as well as the role of weapons and traditions in society, reduce the voice of Yemeni women.

How specialists see the issue of gender-based violence:

All cases of violence based on gender, which are documented in social welfare centers, confirm that the family and the community are the main cause of cases of violence. Some acts of violence used by the family include: beatings, restriction of movement and a lack of dialogue.



How staff at shelters see the issue of gender-based violence: Violence and family breakdown is a major cause of domestic violence, as well as the attitude and behavior of women and girls

Social Studies Centers: Social Studies Centers say that the cultural and social dimension has a big role in the increase or decrease of the proportion of social violence, as well as the violence of early marriage and forced marriage, and violence from other women.

Legal assistance centers: Legal assistance centers affirmed the rights granted to women in Islam, and affirmed the harm done to women as a result of social aspects. Women and girls are at risk of violence from relatives and often are not given their legal rights to inheritance. Many women are also deprived of education and face institutional violence. The legal centers reject the family and the tribe as the protectors of social rights. Women are often refused by society and left behind for a number of reasons, and it is not uncommon for their to be murder attempts or killings.

Individuals and groups in Yemeni society can participate in providing charitable services, maintenance, housing, legal services and reconciliatory justice for victims of violence. Any form of assistance to victims or advocacy is the first step to eliminate this problem.

Solutions To reduce social and gender-based violence in Yemen:

Cultural programs to elevate the respect of family, awareness of the rights and obligations of men and women and the necessity for mutual respect and family dialogue. Religious institutions play a vital role through preaching and guidance, the most important speeches come on Friday. Emphasize the importance of consensus and understanding between couples and the importance and integrity of women, and the use of peaceful resolutions.

The role INGOs:

The role of civil society has not slowed. There are a number of INGOs and NGOs, including Islamic Help (UK), the are working at many type projects including GBV Projects which is targeting raising the awareness against Gender based Violence, Islamic Help (UK) conducted the International 16 days activism against Gender Based Violence funded by UNFPA. targeting 5 governorates (Ibb, Hodeidah, Amran, Al-Jawf, and Saada) the raising awareness were in many type of activities such like interactive theater, drawing competitions, trainings for social workers at schools and hospitals, training for TBAs and many community gatherings. One of these activities involve training courses for field teams to monitor cases of gender-based violence and courses in social work in five governorates. There are also sessions about gender-based violence for university students and the formation of committees to monitor and follow-up to prevent violence. There is also the establishment of a course entitled 'Renovation of Information' about midwives, drawing contests for university students. These contests and activities all set out with aim of envisioning a country free of Gender-Based Violence and awards prizes to winners for their visions for creative community solutions to violence.





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Keep Calm and Learn to Listen



By Rabab Ayash

Along with reading, writing and speaking, listening is one of the four core skills of language acquisition. Listening is a very crucial skill that helps in learning languages. Without this skill, humans would not be able to acquire their languages it is the skill children use first to acquire their mother tongue. It is known that babies spend their early years in listening and they build up the base of their languages in their minds. People in general spend most of their times in listening.

It is estimated that people spend 40% of their time in listening. Therefore, listening is a skill which has to be at the forefront of English language learning skills. Language learners should concen-

trate on this skill and try not to neglect its vital importance in learning. It is through this sense that learners get to know the different aspects of the language they are learning.

Without listening, learners can never know the correct pronunciation of the language words neither can they differentiate between the different stress patterns of words, phrases and sentences. The learners need to listen as much as they can in order to sound natural when they start to speak the foreign language. They need to know where to go up and down and how to show different voice tones and pitches for others to be able to get their messages.

Some would start asking what should we listen to? Should we listen to English songs or watch movies? My answer is as follows, try first to find the zone of your in-

terest. As yourself am I interested in listening to songs or watching movies. Then collect your collection of songs or movies and start listening to them. Make watching movies or listening to music or both a habit that you do daily. Listen to music or any English spoken text as you drive to your work, while waiting, in your free hours, before you go to bed and whenever you find a good chance to do so.

By the passage of time, you will find yourself repeating some expressions that are frequently repeated in these materials now and only now you can celebrate the success of your language learning...! For the impacts of your efforts start to take its shape in the form of a fluent language speaking skill. Do not stop but do more listening to improve your speaking skill more.

Synonyms

By Shaima'a Ankamah

Synonyms are words with the same or nearly the same meaning as others in the language or words that more or less meant the same thing. Knowing the importance of synonyms and how it can sometimes affect English learners' communication with people in a negative way, we decide to dedicate this part of this page to clarify the points of

differences between synonymic words and their suitable uses. In each edition of the educational page, we will try to illuminate the differences between a couple of synonym words and how they are related to each other. We are also going to provide some examples to show the right usage of similar words in sentences and phrases. English learners face a lot of challenges when deciding which word to use in their speech or writing materials. Therefore, they need to

be guided to know what words to choose to show their exact intended meaning.

"Speak, tell, talk, and say" are synonyms that English learners get confused which one to select when trying to use one of them. These words are related to each other in some way. However, they cannot have identically the same meaning and cannot be used in each phrases, sentences, and texts. This table is going to highlight the different uses and examples to show them.

Word	Use	Example
Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used with direct and indirect speech. Say is most often used without a personal object. If we want to put a personal object after say, we use to. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> She said that it was my last chance. He said, "Good morning." She said that she would be late. (not She said me..) And I say to all the people of this great country...
Speak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is often used for one-way communication and for exchanges in more serious or formal situations. Speak is the usual word to refer to knowledge and use of languages. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I'll have to speak to that boy -- he's getting very lazy. After she had finished reading the letter, nobody spoke. She speaks three languages fluently.
Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is not very much difference between speak and talk. Talk is the more usual word to refer to conversational exchanges and informal communication. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> When she walked into the room everybody stopped talking. He speaks four languages. Stop talking nonsense!W
Tell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use tell when we are giving facts or information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tell somebody (that) ... tell somebody something tell somebody about something tell somebody who/when/where. We use: tell + clause when we include a pronoun such as me, him, us, etc. We use: tell + somebody. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Did you tell him? She told me (that) she was ill. Tell me about your new job. He told me where it was. 'I don't want to tell you again to get your homework done.'

Learn through Hadith

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "The Dua of a person for his Muslim brother in his absence will be answered. At his head there is an angel, and every time he prays for him for something good, the angel who has been appointed to be with him, says, 'Ameen, may you have likewise'." [Saheeh Muslim and Sunan Ibn Majah]

Among the beauties of Islam is that you make dua for your brothers and sisters in Islam without knowing them and in return the angels make dua for you....!

GRAMMAR POINT

Already

By Katie Cuma

We use **already** to say that something happened sooner than expected. **Already** usually goes in the middle of a sentence:

'When is Sue going on holiday?' 'She has **already** gone.' (= sooner than you expected)

Shall I tell Liz the news or does she **already** know? I've only just had lunch and I'm **already** hungry.

Study Idioms

Think on your feet

Meaning: Adjusting quickly to changes and making fast decisions.

Examples

- A good sales man must be able to think on his feet to close the deal.
- We need to hire a sales man who can think on his feet to close the deal.

Sail through something

Meaning: Being successful in doing something without difficulty.

Examples

- The presentation at the national conference was extremely important for the company. We sailed through it.
- We sailed through establishing a good relationship with our neighbors.

Tricks of the trade

Meaning: Clever or expert way of doing something.

Example:

- 1- Being into the construction business for last 10 years, I know all tricks of the trade.
- 2- I know all the tricks of the trade of how to control my class.

Stories with moral lessons

A Soldier's Story

A story is told about a soldier who was finally coming home after having fought in Vietnam. He called his parents from San Francisco. "Mom and Dad, I'm coming home, but I've a favor to ask. I have a friend I'd like to bring home with me. "Sure," they replied, "we'd love to meet him."

"There's something you should know," the son continued, "he was hurt pretty badly in the fighting. He stepped on a land mine and lost an arm and a leg. He has nowhere else to go, and I want him to come live with us." "I'm sorry to hear that, son. Maybe we can help him find somewhere to live."

"No, Mom and Dad, I want him to live with us."

"Son," said the father, "you don't know what you're asking. Someone with such a handicap would be a terrible burden on us. We have our own lives to live, and we can't let something like this interfere with our lives. I think you should just come home and forget about this guy. He'll find a way to live on his own."

At that point, the son hung up the phone. The parents heard nothing more from him. A few

days later, however, they received a call from the San Francisco police. Their son had died after falling from a building, they were told. The police believed it was suicide.

The grief-stricken parents flew to San Francisco and were taken to the city morgue to identify the body of their son. They recognized him, but to their horror they also discovered something they didn't know, their son had only one arm and one leg.

Moral: The parents in this story are like many of us. We find it easy to love those who are good-looking or fun to have around, but we don't like people who inconvenience us or make us feel uncomfortable. We would rather stay away from people who aren't as healthy, beautiful, or smart as we are. Thankfully, there's someone who won't treat us that way. Someone who loves us with an unconditional love that welcomes us into the forever family, regardless of how messed up we are. Tonight, before you tuck yourself in for the night, say a little prayer that God will give you the strength you need to accept people as they are, and to help us all be more understanding of those who are different from us!

Laugh and learn



A police man is driving down the road when all of the sudden the freeway starts to get backed up. Not long after, he finds himself stuck in traffic going about 20 miles an hour. So he drives up around the traffic to see what the problem was.

When he gets to the front, he sees 3 nuns driving in a car at about 20 miles an hour. So he pulls them over and lets the traffic get by. He then asks them "Do you know the speed limit."

They answer, "Yes" and they point towards the 22 freeway sign and say "We were going 22 miles per hour."

The policeman shakes his head and says, "No, that's the freeway sign... the speed limit sign is over there." And with that he points to the correct MPH sign.

"Ohhh..." said all of the nuns until the nun in the back starts cracking up.

"What's wrong" asks the police man...

The nun replies, "Well, you should have seen us yesterday on the 405!"

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ADVERTORIAL

Qatar Airways Becomes First Airline in the World to Operate Every Family of Airbus' Modern Airliner Portfolio

DOHA, Qatar – Qatar Airways wrote another page of history as its – and the world's – first Airbus A350 XWB (Xtra Wide Body) and its fourth A380 arrived in Doha simultaneously yesterday, allowing the airline to further capitalize on its rapid expansion plans.

The delivery of the newest members of Qatar Airways' fleet of 146 aircraft are the first of 80 A350s and the fourth of 13 A380s on order and mark yet another major 2014 milestone for the five-star airline. The A350 aircraft, for which Qatar Airways is the global launch customer, is set to commence service on the Doha-Frankfurt route starting in January 2015.

The world's first A350 XWB aircraft to be delivered flew to Doha from France, following the handover ceremony and press conference which were attended by Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, senior Airbus and Rolls Royce officials, and more than 150 international media in Toulouse.

With the delivery of the A350 XWB aircraft, Qatar Airways be-



Qatar Airways A350 XWB alongside the airline's A380 as they both take-off, bound for Doha.

comes the first airline in the world to operate every family of Airbus' modern airliner portfolio, comprising the A320, A330, A340, A350 and A380.

After acquiring the A380 earlier this year, the addition of the A350 XWB aircraft is the second significant fleet milestone for Qatar Airways in 2014. The A350 XWB

comes the first airline in the world to operate every family of Airbus' modern airliner portfolio, comprising the A320, A330, A340, A350 and A380.

After acquiring the A380 earlier this year, the addition of the A350 XWB aircraft is the second significant fleet milestone for Qatar Airways in 2014. The A350 XWB

features the very latest in aerodynamics, design and advanced technologies and will set new standards in passenger experience, operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Welcoming the arrival of Qatar Airways' first A350 XWB aircraft and its latest A380 in Doha, Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker said: "We take immense pride in taking delivery of two aircraft at the same time joining our modern and dynamic fleet that is connecting the world. As 2015 commences, we are looking forward to a new period of enhanced growth with our fleet setting fresh benchmarks for the aviation industry. "The A350 XWB, in combination with the recently-introduced A380, will offer unprecedented levels of interoperability and a highly efficient solution to meet long-haul passenger demand on the rapidly expanding Qatar Airways' network. This will further strengthen our leadership position as a world-class airline providing customers with a premium five-star travel experi-

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ence, exceptional hospitality and seamless connectivity around the globe."

Qatar Airways A350 XWB powered by two new-generation Rolls Royce Trent XWB engines is a perfect combination of innovative airline product design, environmental advances and the intrinsic comfort of an entirely new cabin set-up which are the hallmarks of this aircraft.

Passengers will benefit from a new boarding experience achieved by a unique dome-design entrance with welcome light distribution. The aircraft also offers wide seats with generous room in all classes of service thanks to a number of design developments offering greater comfort to all passengers.

The Business Class cabin has 36 seats in a 1-2-1 configuration featuring an 80" full flat bed and 17" HD in-flight entertainment screen and a spacious inflight bar. The Economy Class features 247 18-inch wide seats in a 3-3-3 configuration, each with a 10.6" in-flight entertainment screen, and more space at shoulder level for passengers in window seats due to the vertical side wall panel design.

Qatar Airways A350 XWB features the state-of-the-art Oryx entertainment system, with more than 1,000 entertainment options on individual screens in all classes. The jet also offers advanced air condi-

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tioning technology and LED mood lighting to enhance the comfort of passengers while reducing fatigue after a long flight. In addition, the jet will also offer in-flight Wi-Fi connectivity for all passengers allowing them to surf the web on the go.

Qatar Airways is one of the fastest growing airlines operating one of the youngest fleets in the world. Now in its 17th year of operations, Qatar Airways has a modern fleet of 146 aircraft flying to 146 key business and leisure destinations across six continents.

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