

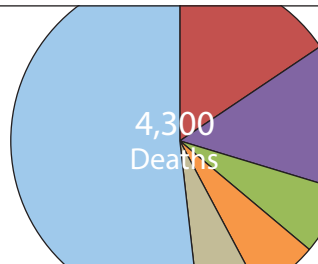
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Heavy clashes between Houthis and government troops in Sana'a

■ Ahlam Mohsen

SANA'A, Jan. 19—Intense fighting broke out in Yemen's capital Monday between security forces and the Houthis, threatening Yemen's recently appointed Cabinet and the presidency itself.

Heavily artillery and gunfire could be heard throughout the city Monday starting around 6:45 a.m., with intense fire surrounding numerous residential areas, including the Yemen Times building and Misbahi roundabout.

Fighting lasted until the late afternoon with several short, sporadic lulls.

Despite reports of heavy fire near the Presidential Palace, President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi called a meeting with his political advisors at 11:00 a.m.

The president released no statement regarding Monday's events.

Information Minister Nadia Al-Sakkaf told the Yemen Times that Prime Minister Bahah's conveyer came under heavy fire leaving the president's residence, though the prime minister was unharmed. It took the prime minister two hours to reach home after leaving the palace, she said. The president is currently safe, according to Al-Sakkaf.

Tensions had been mounting between the two sides, who signed a Peace and National Partnership Agreement on Sept. 21 following the Houthi takeover of Sana'a. The most recent clashes are the most intense since Sept. 21 and came two days after the Houthis kidnapped the president's chief of staff, Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak.

The chief of staff had pledged to move forward with a new constitution that would divide the country into six federal regions—a move opposed by the Houthis.

Dividing the countries into two regions, as the Houthis are pushing for, would allow the group to better consolidate power over Yemen's northern region.

Late Monday even, Al-Sakkaf said the Houthis had met with the president to agree on terms to release Bin Mubarak. Al-Sakkaf said Bin Mubarak would be released in exchange for changes in the constitution and the National Authority for the Implementation of National Dialogue Conference (NDC) outcomes.

Bin Mubarak is reportedly safe, though the information minister worried earlier in the day that he could become "collateral damage."

Al-Sakkaf claimed there were three parties involved in the fighting, and said the Republican Guards—along with Ahmed Ali Saleh—were assisting the Houthis in the fight against state security forces, and described the day's activities as an attempted "coup".

It is unclear who fired first. The Houthis claim security forces fired on them following the deployment of more forces around the city. According to Hussein Al-Bukhaiti, a prominent Houthi activist based in Sana'a, a Houthi popular committee vehicle was on routine patrol down Sabaeen Street in the early hours of the morning when it was allegedly attacked by government troops.

"Houthis are in control of Sana'a and most of the north of Yemen. If [we] were after Hadi—who has offered to step down—[we] would just give him a phone call."

Shortly after, Al-Bukhaiti said, another Houthi patrol truck was attacked near Misbahi Roundabout, which caused fighting to break out.

Al-Sakkaf said the president deployed the forces Sunday night in response to the Houthis' kidnapping of Bin Mubarak on Saturday. The move was an effort to reaffirm the government's authority.

"He [President Hadi] said the government is the legitimate authority," said Al-Sakkaf.

As of publishing time, the Houthis had gained control of one of the

two Nahdayn hills overseeing the Presidential Palace, giving the rebel group a stronger grip on power in a city where they have been the de-facto authority since Sept. 21.

Al-Bukhaiti denied that the clashes were a coup attempt.

"Houthis are in control of Sana'a and most of the north of Yemen. If [we] were after Hadi—who has offered to step down—[we] would just give him a phone call."

The group took over a state news agency and TV station. The Houthis took over state newspaper Al-Thawra in mid-December, and attacked the Yemen Today TV station when it first took the city in September. It also controls a number of state radio stations.

The Houthis, a Zaidi Shia rebel group traditionally based in Sana'a's northern governorate of Sa'ada, began to consolidate power in the north during the power vacuum that followed Yemen's 2011 uprising, which saw the stepping down of Yemen's 33-year president, Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The group entered the capital in August, where they set-up camp and staged month-long protests, capitalizing on popular anger following the removal of fuel subsidies which were draining the country's treasury. Following days of clashes, the Houthis took Sana'a on Sept. 21.

The Houthis say they want the full implementation of the National Dialogue outcomes and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement, "without any tricks," according to Al-Bukhaiti.

The Peace and National Partnership Agreement stipulated that the Houthis would hand over power and withdraw their fighters from the capital following the establishment of a new government, which was sworn in Nov. 9.

Brett Scott contributed to this report



The Houthis took over a state news agency and a TV station during Monday's clashes.

Hadi's office silent on Bin Mubarak kidnapping

■ Bassam Al-Khameri

SANA'A, Jan. 18—The whereabouts of Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak, President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi's chief of staff, remain unknown after he was kidnapped on Saturday. As of Monday evening, President Hadi and his office had yet to release a statement regarding his kidnapping.

Bin Mubarak's car was stopped by Houthis in the Faj Attan area in Sana'a's Hadda neighborhood. The group later claimed responsibility for his kidnapping.

"Bin Mubarak was on his way to attend a meeting to hand over the draft constitution to the National Authority for Monitoring the Implementation of NDC Outcomes," said a source in Sana'a's Security Department, who asked to remain anonymous. Houthis announced responsibility for the kidnapping hours later.

In a statement released Saturday afternoon, Houthis accused members of the National Authority of vi-



Houthis were upset that Bin Mubarak was forging ahead with the new constitution.

olating the articles of the Peace and National Partnership Agreement via the new constitution. "Those

people [members of the National Authority] tried to pass off a draft of the new constitution that con-

tained articles that violate NDC outcomes," the statement read.

The statement added that Houthi popular committees would take further steps to prevent additional violations of the NDC outcomes. Houthis later stated on Saturday that they would release Bin Mubarak on the condition that Hadi appoint a chief of staff.

Mohammed Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, told the Yemen Times on Sunday that, "The problem isn't Bin Mubarak. It's more than that, this is about the shape of the state and future of the people," he added. He would not specify which specific articles of the constitution the Houthis considered to be a violation of the NDC outcomes.

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Oil companies in Shabwa halt production

■ Khalid Al-Karimi

SANA'A, Jan. 19—Petroleum companies in Shabwa stopped production, and a number of businesses shut down on Sunday in reaction to the kidnapping of Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak, the president's chief of staff, on Saturday.

"All the petroleum companies operating in the governorate stopped production voluntarily. This was in response to a call made by the leading tribesmen in the governorate who called for the immediate release of Bin Mubarak," said Shabwa governor Ahmed Ali Bahaj in a statement to the Aden Al-Ghad news website on Sunday.

This statement came after the governor gave the Houthis a 24-hour deadline, starting at 3 p.m. on Saturday, to release Bahaj or oil production in the governorate would stop.

"We give the state 24 hours to release Bin Mubarak and call on southern ministers, political commanders, members of parliament, Shura Council and members of the National Authority for Monitoring the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) outcomes to suspend their participation and work in state institutions," read a statement issued by a number of prominent southern figures, sheikhs, and military commanders who met in Sana'a Sunday.

In response to the call made by southern leaders, a number of government institutions in Shabwa also shut down their offices, in protest over Bin Mubarak's kidnapping.

Bin Mubarak continues to be held illegally by the Houthis. The group kidnapped him on Saturday in the capital city. On Sunday, the presidential committee, which included the ministers of

interior and defense, returned to Sana'a from Marib. The committee was trying to end tensions in Marib and Al-Jawf between the Houthis and opposing tribesmen.

According to the governor of Shabwa, this step aims to express the governorate's solidarity with Bin Mubarak, a southerner who formerly served as general secretary of the NDC.

Awad Al-Awlaqi, a tribal sheikh in Shabwa, told Al-Jazeera on Sunday that the tribes in Shabwa called on the petroleum companies in the governorate to stop operating, asserting that the kidnapping of Bin Mubarak is a violation of the partnership agreement. He also said all public offices in the governorate were closed the same day.

"Tribesmen in the area informed oil companies in Shabwa governorate to suspend their work in solidarity with Bin Mubarak," he said. "Kidnapping politicians goes against the principles of national partnership," he added.

In the same vein, the Hadramout Tribal Federation sent a memo to the local oil production companies in Hadramout to stop operating in line with the escalating events in the country. However, as of mid-day Monday the governor of Hadramout had yet to announce that production had stopped.

The Southern Movement, a secessionist movement which has garnered widespread support in the south, issued a statement denouncing the kidnapping of Bin Mubarak. The movement said it "could not be described as anything other than a backward criminal terrorist incident carried out by Ansar Allah [the Houthis], who kidnapped Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak, taking him to an unknown location."

"Committing such a cowardly



Sheikhs of Shabwa, in coordination with the Local Council, gave orders to all oil companies in the governorate to halt production until Bin Mubarak was released from Houthi custody.

action by this armed group denotes its real intentions, its eternal grudge and its aim to toy with the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement. We thought they were our brotherly partners, but their action is a matter of reneging on all the agreements, pacts, and treaties," the statement added.

They also demanded his immediate release without any restraint or condition, saying that the Houthis are accountable for the consequences of the kidnapping.

So far, the whereabouts of Bin Mubarak are still unknown. The Houthis claimed responsibility for the kidnapping.

Mohammed Abdulsalam, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, told the London-based Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper on Sunday that the group's popular committees were obligated to detain Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak in

order to prevent the passing of the draft of the new constitution. According to Abdulsalam, passing it without the approval of all the political factions would be against the partnership agreement.

Abdulsalam said the Houthis object to dividing Yemen into the planned six federal regions, and this matter contradicts the NDC outcomes and the partnership agreement.

Shabwa governorate is home to a number of oil fields with a number of foreign oil companies operating out of the region.

Mohammed Abdulalim, a journalist in Shabwa city of Shabwa governorate, said all public institutions were closed on Sunday.

"Public offices, such as the health, education and telecommunication offices throughout the governorate, were all closed after orders given by the sheikhs of Shabwa and the Local Council," he said.

Houthis and GPC refuse to vote on constitution



■ Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 18—Representatives for both the General People's Congress (GPC) and the Houthis in the National Authority for Monitoring the Implementation of NDC Outcomes refused to discuss the final draft of Yemen's new constitution on Saturday.

GPC and Houthi representatives withdrew from a meeting on Saturday attended by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, saying they were surprised by the request to vote on the constitution's draft.

Mushtaq Al-Zabidi, a member of the authority, said that the authority does not have any bylaws yet, which are currently being discussed.

"A vote cannot take place before the authority's bylaws are set," said high-ranking GPC member Abdulmalik Al-Fuhaidi. "Saturday's session was supposed to discuss the authority's bylaws and not the voting on the draft constitution."

In April of 2014 a presidential decree was issued stipulating the authority's establishment, tasking it with the supervision of the implementation of NDC outcomes.

Al-Motamar Net, media mouthpiece of the GPC, published a

statement on Saturday listing three reasons for the GPC's withdrawal from the authority's Saturday meeting: 1) The authority is not finished drafting its bylaws; 2) the authority has not responded to demands put forth by the GPC and the National Democratic Coalition parties; and 3) representation ratios in the authority were not corrected to match the NDC's representation ratio.

The statement did not specify the requests allegedly made by the GPC and the National Democratic Coalition parties and Al-Fuhaidi refused to comment on them.

GPC and its allies in the NDC make up 122 members out of 565, which constitutes around 21 percent. Al-Fuhaidi said the GPC is holding a lower percentage of seats in the authority.

Ali Al-Qahoom, member in the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, said the Houthis' withdrawal signalled their objection to ratifying the constitution, which he said will "tear the country apart."

Al-Qahoom agreed with the GPC's emphasis of the bylaws and the party's demand that political blocs in the authority should get the same percentage of seats as that held during the NDC.

FEATURE

TEDxMukalla Goes Back to the Future

■ Yemen Times Staff

TEDx has made its way around the world, and this week—found itself in Mukalla, Hadramout. From his remote village, a young man named Mahfoud emerged to lead a team of pupils in an Arab Robotics championship. Mahfoud told the audience just what it took to emerge on top and walk away with first place two years in a row for 2013 and 2014.

Over five hundred participants took part in the latest in Yemen's latest TEDx event on Jan. 15 under the theme 'Back to the Future'. This event follows similar TEDx events which have taken place over the past couple of years in Sana'a, Aden, and Taiz, and included 16 talks which mainly concentrated on education development and social resilience themes, as two pillars which will enable the return to the Hadramout region's era of glory and prosperity.

The event, largely sponsored by a Saudi business Tycoon of Hadrami origin through a local youth foundation, was described as the

first event in the Hadramout region which carried an international theme and concept.

The event started with a talk on the impact of the Hadramout Foundation, which has sponsored higher education in Yemen and beyond for over 2,000 Hadrami. Other education-centric talks included one on a local initiative on illiteracy eradication among youth, remote schooling through an inverted education approach, career guidance based on individual research, and the journey of one woman from illiteracy to leadership in education.

Talks with a social resilience theme included a talk on developing an integrated public health system that is focused on prevention, social support delivered to prisoners to improve the rehabilitation role of the prisons system, social integration within expatriate communities, overcoming breast cancer, as well as a number of experiences on overcoming hardships and difficulties. A noteworthy talk focused on the efforts of a high school teacher to use science in recycling waste in the town of Tarim, Hadramout.

The event was described as high-

ly energetic and inspirational, as well as a feat for the region and a milestone for the TEDxMukalla core team and volunteers, despite their limited experience in organizing events of this size and nature. Dr Monther Ishaq, Professor of Sociology at Taiz University, said that "although TEDxTaiz raised the bar for TEDx events in Yemen, it was overshadowed by the quality of talks and experiences presented at TEDxMukalla."

The event included a number of entertainment segments including traditional and modern dance, several videos documenting the Hadrami culture and way of life, as well as live performances. The crowd was also entertained by the comedic stylings of the hosts Khaled Bamashmouh and Khalil Bamatraf.

In a post-event social gathering, the sponsor reiterated that investments such as this demonstrate the capacity and ingenuity of the Hadrami people, adding that human capital is the most valuable asset the region has, and that he is thankful to have the opportunity to be a part of TEDxMukalla.



Mr. Aydarous Al-Jefri, a known artist and sculptor during his TED interview, explaining the themes behind some of the sculptures he made in Mukalla city's public spaces.

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Encouraging community engagement to counter cancer in Yemen

■ **Bassam Al-Khameri**

“My wife suffers from stomach cancer and I have to pay YR200,000 [about \$1000] every 21 days to get an injection,” said Salah Ahmad, a father of five and resident in Sana'a who is originally from Taiz.

Ahmad is worried that his wife will die once he runs out of money and can no longer pay for her treatment.

“I have sold my car to get money and buy medicine for my wife. Now I'm planning to sell my grocery store,” he said. “Doctors told me that it would have been better if we had discovered the cancer early, but in Yemen we don't go to a doctor unless we feel pain or feel sick,” he explained.

Reliable statistics are difficult to

Papilloma Virus (HPV).

In Yemen, it is mainly the NCCF and the National Oncology Center—a government center established in 2006—that are actively promoting the prevention, detection, and treatment of cancer.

The NCCF, a non-governmental and non-profit organization that was established by Yemeni philanthropists and doctors in March 2003, aims to raise awareness about cancer and preventive measures against it by handing out brochures and organizing workshops.

With branches in the governorates of Ibb, Hodeida, Taiz, and Aden, the organization also provides assistance in the treatment of cancer by covering or subsidizing expensive medical treatment. The full cost of the Mabthera injection Ahmad's wife receives every three weeks costs about YR380,000 (\$1,800), but with the help of the NCCF Ahmad is able to pay

management.

“Some schools have already contacted us and provided the donations, others are still collecting money,” said Al-Shamiri, who did not know how much money was collected so far.

NCCF director Al-Aghbari proudly declared that the campaign was the first of its kind in Yemen and said that it had received significant attention. “The campaign took place in Sana'a, Taiz, Aden, Hodeida, and Ibb governorates, where the NCCF has branches,” he said. “The money raised through the campaign will be used to establish new centers of early detection throughout Yemen.” So far, the NCCF only has detection centers in Ibb and Sana'a.

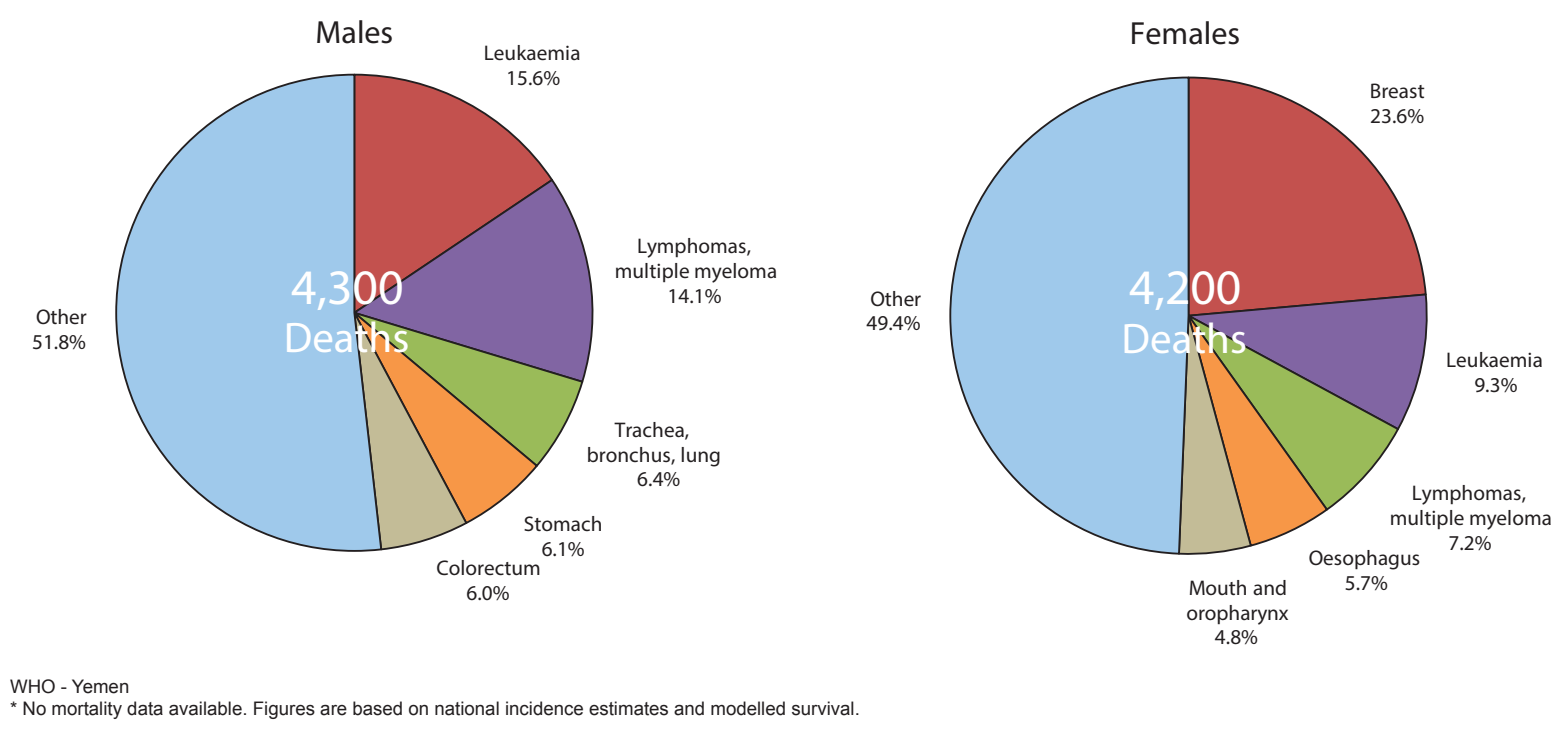
Details about the campaign, the money raised, and its investment will be announced at a press conference at the end of January, according to Al-Aghbari.

a steady growth in middle- and low-income countries like Yemen. In fact, an estimated 60 percent of global cancer cases are now thought to be found in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

While there are more than a hundred different types of cancer, all with different risk factors, a few can be singled out as being particularly common in Yemen. The 2014 cancer report on Yemen lists Leukemia (cancer of blood-forming cells) and Lymphoma (cancer of lymphocyte cells) as the most common types of cancer among Yemeni men. Among Yemeni women, the report read, breast cancer ranks highest, accounting for 23.6 percent of all reported cancer cases.

Obesity and physical inactivity are thought to be important causes of breast cancer. In high-income countries, the most important contributor is being overweight

Cancer Mortality Profile*



come by, but research has shown that Ahmad's family predicament is a tragically common one in Yemen. Lack of awareness, a shortage of treatment centers, and expensive medical treatment mean an unnecessarily large number of Yemenis are suffering and dying from cancer.

Dr. Yasser Noor, head of the National Cancer Control Foundation (NCCF) branch in Hodeida, says early detection is crucial, since cancerous cells are more responsive to treatment at an early stage. The outlook is poor if the cancer is at an advanced stage when first detected. Because at its early stage stomach cancer has few symptoms, the disease is usually further advanced when the diagnosis is made.

“The problem here in Yemen is that people only go to the doctor at a late stage, when it's difficult to treat the disease,” explains Noor.

To develop the habit of seeing doctors regularly, Yemenis need to be informed about the dangers and causes of cancer and the importance of regular check-ups, Noor said. Spreading awareness about the disease and preventative measures are thus essential in efforts to tackle the disease. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), over 30 percent of cancer can be prevented by informed lifestyle choices and immunization against cancer causing infections, such as Hepatitis B or the Human

YR200,000 (\$1000) instead.

Awareness raising campaign

“The center received 7,000 new cases during 2014, 51 percent of patients were men and 49 percent were women,” according to the NCCF's director, Dr. Labib Al-Aghbari. Other than these figures, Al-Nabehi says no accurate statistics exist that could point to the overall number of cancer cases in Yemen.

The NCCF is understaffed and does not have enough branches to register all cancer patients and provide an accurate nationwide total, according to Al-Aghbari.

The WHO 2014 country report on cancer showed 163,000 Yemenis died of cancer that year. These numbers could be much lower if proper treatment and early detection programs were in place.

In an effort to do just that, the NCCF initiated a nation-wide awareness campaign on cancer in December 2014. According to Abdulmonam Al-Shamiri, the campaign's communications officer, the campaign was organized and run almost entirely by volunteers.

Campaign organizers visited schools, companies, and a range of public and private institutions, informing employees and students about cancer and the plight of cancer patients. They also asked for donations, which were either deducted from employees' salaries or handed over by students to school

President Hadi ordered the government in 2012 to establish a fund for improving the control and treatment of cancer. However, as of Jan. 2015, the fund has yet to be established.

On the morning of Jan. 1, the doctors and employees of the NCCF, journalists, activists, students and public and private-sector employees staged a protest in solidarity with people suffering from cancer in Yemen. They called for the implementation of Hadi's 2012 order and for the creation of an income tax on tobacco, qat, and pesticides, all of which are thought to contribute to the country's cancer cases.

“We organized this protest in Al-Siteen Street, near the NCCF's headquarters. We wanted to send a message to President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and the government, demanding greater support for people living with cancer and the establishment of early detection centers nationwide,” said Al-Aghbari.

Cancer in Yemen

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like cancer constitute a major threat to human health. According to the WHO, more than 60 percent of deaths worldwide stem from NCDs, with a global total of 8.2 million people suffering from cancer.

Once considered a “disease of affluence,” cancer rates have seen

or obese, according to the WHO, whereas in low- and middle-income countries physical inactivity constitutes a key determinant

Mohammad Derhem, a doctor in the National Oncology Center, told the Yemen Times that a lack of exercise is one of the factors that can lead to breast cancer in Yemen. “People, especially women, are using cars and transportation too much instead of walking or running every day,” according to Derhem.

Dr. Afif Al-Nabehi, head of the National Oncology Center in Sana'a, insists that next to Lymphoma it is mouth cancer that ranks high among Yemeni men.

“Our statistics show that mouth cancer is rampant in Hodeida, Hajja, and Aden governorates,” Al-Nabehi said. NCCF figures support these findings, and Al-Aghbari says lung, mouth, and throat cancer are the most common kinds of cancer in Hodeida and Hajja governorates.

Another reason for high rates of mouth cancer, Al-Nabehi says, is the wide-spread tradition of chewing qat leaves—a mild narcotic that is common throughout Yemen and the Horn of Africa. Several pesticides used on qat farms are toxic and their prolonged use can cause serious diseases, including cancer. Al-Nabehi asserts that qat leaves can not be harvested, sold, and consumed immediately after the use of pesticides.

“Qat farmers have to wait before

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they take and sell the leaves, but they don't care. They harvest qat leaves shortly after spraying pesticides on them.”

Lacking facilities

Spreading awareness is fundamental, but successful cancer prevention in Yemen still has a long way to go. Financial restraints and logistical difficulties, particularly in more remote areas that lack roads and hospitals, make it difficult to detect and treat cancer, according to Al-Nabehi.

Many patients complain that chemotherapy treatment is not widely available in hospitals. Ahmad says he has looked for Mabthera injections for his wife in several public hospitals. “Such expensive medicine isn't available in public hospitals and we have to get this medicine from the NCCF or the National Oncology Center.”

Many others can't afford expensive medicine and treatment. As Ahmed points out, chemotherapy treatment can cost as much as YR150,000 (\$750).

Saleh Hizam Al-Mahali, a 50-year-old farmer in Maghrah

Ans district of Dhamar governorate, discovered last year that he had Leukemia.

“I wasn't feeling well and was suffering physical pain, so I visited Al-Thawra hospital in Sana'a with my son,” Al-Mahali said. “There the doctors told me that I have Leukemia.” Now Al-Mahali needs to travel to Sana'a once a month to receive treatment at the National Oncology Center.

Al-Mahali has struggled to pay for his expensive treatment. “I spent all the money I have and now I depend on businessmen I know in Sana'a who donate money and buy me medicine,” he says. “The government should provide free treatment for people who suffer from cancer.”

Though reliable statistics do not exist, it is clear there are a large number of Yemenis suffering from cancer who do not have the kind of support that Ahmad and Al-Mahali have found, whether it be individuals or organizations like the National Oncology Center. It is for these and other reasons that the NCCF has launched this month's awareness and fundraising campaign.

Cruel, inhumane and illegal?

Locking up children with adults

Yemen's penal code and international human rights law have done little to protect juvenile offenders from being imprisoned with adult convicts, leaving them liable to abuse and subject to the inhumane conditions that are common in the country's prisons. As a signatory to Article 37 of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Children, Yemen has an obligation to protect its children from capital punishment and life imprisonment, as well as any "cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment."

State prisons may provide segregated quarters for juvenile offenders, but some are serving death sentences for crimes committed while they were minors and all are enduring what human rights groups describe as appalling conditions.

In spite of a lack of political will and limited resources, a number of individuals have been determined to address the situation. The Yemen Time spoke with Mohammed Abdulla Al-Orafi, director of the state-run Social Guidance Center for boys in Sana'a. He spoke with us about the children under his care, efforts made to improve their conditions and prospects following detention.

■ Interview by Bassam Al-Khameri



"Here at the center, we work on their behavioural problems and make sure they are able to reintegrate into society once they leave."

Tell us about the center.

The center is attached to the government's Social Affairs and Labor Office in the capital Sana'a. It was established in 1978 through the efforts of the late businessman Mahfood Shamakh, who lobbied for the creation of a "Juveniles Law" to prevent children from being incarcerated in adult prisons.

How many juvenile delinquent centers does Yemen have?

There are about seven or eight centers nationwide that are specifically for juveniles, who are legally defined as "children in disagreement with the law", under 15. Our center is the only one in the capital and the only one supported by the state, although there are also juvenile sections in Sana'a Central Prison and within the Reserve Prison. Others depend on civil society organizations for funding.

How many juveniles are currently in the center?

We currently have 30 children at the center, although the number fluctuates as children come and go from time to time. It is mostly children aged between 12 and 16 years.

The number of juveniles being housed at the center has decreased a lot in recent years, in the past any child would be taken in without proper regulations or standards. For example, fathers would bring their children to the center because they were misbehaving, but hadn't broken any laws. Some juveniles were also sent directly to the center from police stations without any information of who is responsible for them. We have put an end to this, we won't accept any children unless they are sent from the Juvenile Prosecution or from the Juvenile Court.

Where do they come from and what do you do for them?

Children received from the Juvenile Prosecution or Juvenile Court are given guidance to lead a better life in the future. Here at the center, we work on their behavioral problems and make sure they are able to reintegrate into society once they leave. We also have programs designed to address any emotional or psycho-

logical issues a child might have.

How many departments are there in the center?

There is a school within the center, which is run by the Ministry of Education, as well as a dormitory and workshops to help the children learn new skills. At the moment our workshops are not up to standard because they lack the proper funding.

There is also a "Family House" where children less than 12 years old are kept with female case workers. These children are kept separate from the older children at the center.

How long have you been working here?

I came here about a year ago and I'm trying to improve the center using my experience as a human development coach and human rights activist advocating against arbitrary arrests and imprisonment. As a team, we are working to change social stereotypes about juvenile delinquents. Society treats them as criminals and stigmatizes them, but we try to show that they are also victims.

What are the main reasons that children turn to crime?

Poverty and family disintegration are the main causes. Poor children need to steal to get by, taking simple things like gas cylinders and trying to sell them. Broken families leave children emotionally damaged and looking for new attachments with their friends on the street, which often leads them to bad company and unethical behavior.

Are there children who left the center and came back again?

This was common in the past but it no longer happens.

In recent years the center has adopted an approach that ensures children do not return, such as a project launched in 2014 we called "Building My Positive Personality." We conducted a nine-day training program for the families of children at the center and taught them the same things we teach their children, enabling children to receive

the same treatment at home once they leave us. We also make sure children don't leave us unless they have received all the guidance they need and are fully prepared to reintegrate into society.

How many employees are currently working in the center?

The team is composed of 64 male and female employees: 24 teachers in the school, 12 security guards, eight cleaners, five cooks and storekeepers and 15 psychologists and administrative workers.

How long do the children stay in the center?

Children spend different periods in the center depending on their charge and the sentence received. The Juvenile Prosecution or the Juveniles Court determine the period. We aren't involved in investigations at all and we don't ask whether the child has been treated unfairly. We only inquire about his charge in order to provide the most appropriate solutions to help him overcome his problems and get integrated into society.

Do families visit their children regularly?

Yes, it's very important that the families visit their children regularly in the center and we take it very seriously. We have a social service worker who contacts families that don't visit their children for more than a week. If two weeks have passed before a family member comes in for a visit, we go to the house with the child.

Is the center a replacement for prison?

Yes, to some extent. This center is especially for children under 16, but there is a center for children between 16 and 18 years old in the Sana'a Central Prison.

What are the steps taken when a child first arrives at the center?

A child comes to us with an official document from the prosecutor's office. We register his name, our psychologists evaluate him, and we fill him in on the rules and regulations of the center that must be respected. After basic medical check-ups, he gets two sport suits and is taken to the dormitory with the other boys.

We have a reception department that oversees all of this, but it's not fully operational due to a lack of funding. It's a critical part of the process, so we are trying to update it in 2015. The department is also responsible for reintegrating children into society by taking them out for some time prior to leaving the center, as well as monitoring their progress once they're released. We handle all of these things to the best of our abilities, but it's not really an institutionalized process yet.

Do you have any other upcoming projects?

We've begun to prepare a draft for a national program known as the Behavioral Treatment Program, and it will also be implemented in 2015.

and reports provided by some of the organizations working in our field and was surprised to find them so inaccurate — none of them have consulted us or visited our center for their studies.

For example, some reports claim there is no connection between juvenile offenders and prosecutors but that obviously isn't true, we only receive children that have been prosecuted and we inform the courts when a child finished his sentence.

I call on local and international NGOs to visit our center and others in order to learn more about our activities and needs. We're not asking for direct funding, but if they learn more about the situation they themselves can implement projects to benefit the children. The most important thing is that Yemen's juvenile offenders are granted their rights under Yemeni and international law.

Additional training will be provided for the staff, while the Building My Positive Personality program of 2014 will be extended to help the boys and their families.

We are also seeking funding for workshops that will focus on giving the boys new skills that will help them find employment and generate their own incomes. Most of the children are poor and providing job

opportunities for them is essential if we are to address the root cause of their misbehavior.

UNICEF has promised to open two workshops during this month.

Do local and foreign organizations work in cooperation with you?

No, we don't get enough help from other groups. I have seen statistics

Republic of Yemen Social Welfare Fund (SWF) Social Welfare Fund Institutional Support Project VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Proc ref: C32

The Government of Republic of Yemen has received grants from the International Development Association towards the cost of the Social Welfare Fund Institutional Support Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds of these grants for the recruitment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. The Social Welfare Fund (implementing agency for the project) now invites qualified individual applicants to apply for this position.

Duties and Responsibilities

Under the general direction of the Social Welfare Funds (SWF) Managing Director, the Mentoring and Evaluation Officer (M&E) is responsible for the following tasks

1) General responsibilities

- Provide overall management for the design and implementation of the projects' M&E systems;
- Serve as the primary point person for all monitoring and evaluation related work and be the primary M&E resource to the partners and grantees.

2) Development of M&E Plan

- Support the development of the M&E guidelines for the Projects funded by the World Bank in the SWF, including a results framework, detailed indicators and data collection arrangements, M&E management, M&E responsibilities, timeline, and budget;
- Assist in generating indicators as needed with relevant SWF and IDA specialists and review these with the Technical Coordinator;

3) Development of M&E Instruments

- Develop and test data collection instruments according to the needs of the M&E Plan, such as registration forms, baseline surveys, focus groups, checklists, monitoring forms, etc.;

4) Regular data collection, monitoring, and reporting

- Support the implementation of data collection instruments to capture necessary data on beneficiaries, project activities, and results, and ensure monitoring activities are conducted on schedule
- Regularly review indicators and data collection process and ensure it is functioning well in all activity locations; perform data quality assessments and make adjustments as needed
- Ensure that key project indicators are captured through the SWF's Management Information System;

Qualifications & Experience: Required:

- A Graduate degree in Economics, Social Sciences, Education or a closely related field;
- Minimum of 3 years of professional experience in M&E and preparing projects' monthly, bi-annually and annual English and Arabic progress reports, with a minimum of 2 years managing monitoring and evaluation activities in a multi-stakeholder environment;
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- Strong computer skills, particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint, internet browsers; experience with other types of database, data analysis and management software being an added advantage (e.g., SPSS, STATA);
- Strong proficiency of English and Arabic, both oral and written;
- Strong interpersonal skills and pro-active approach to problem solving;
- Ability to work independently under limited supervision;
- Willingness to adhere to all SWF's policies and procedures; and
- Working effectively in a team environment

Applications in the form of detailed CV should be submitted by individual consultants to the address below, indicating that they are qualified and would be able to perform the services. Short-listed candidates shall be interviewed to finalize the selection.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures for selection of individual consultants as set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers (May 2004; revised October 1, 2006 and May 1, 2010)

Applications must be delivered to the address below on or before February 15, 2015, 11:00 PM – Yemen Time.

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Turkey introduces tough new border policies for Syrians

IRIN
First published Jan. 14

Turkey has quietly increased travel restrictions for Syrian refugees that could very negatively affect aid agencies working in the country, IRIN has learned.

Since Jan. 1, those intending to cross back and forth between the two countries will only be able to spend three months out of every six inside Turkey or face a fine of 570 Turkish lira (US\$250). In addition, those who arrive at the border without a valid passport or travel documents will be turned back, NGO and UN sources have confirmed.

Until Dec. 31, the estimated 1.6 million Syrians in Turkey were exempt from normal visa regulations in recognition of the civil war raging in their homeland. As such they had been able to move relatively freely between the two countries.

The Turkish government has yet to make a formal statement about the new rules and Turkish officials were not immediately available for comment.

Yusuf, a 45-year-old father of four from Aleppo had waited with his family at the Bab Al-Salameh border crossing for two days.

"My house was burned down so I don't have any documents," he said. "I don't care about these rules. We'll enter illegally if we have to."

Operational hurdles

The tighter rules will also have a major effect on NGOs, many of whom are based in Turkey but oversee aid operations within Syria run by local staff.

Many are worried the changes will



More than half of the refugees are children and teenagers (Islahiya camp, southern Turkey)

cause significant hold-ups in their operations, and could leave their staff stranded inside the war-ridden country.

Adem Saad, 22, a member of the volunteer civil defense force in the town of Maarat Numan in Idlib province who now works primarily in Turkey, said it was becoming increasingly difficult for them to organize cross border aid. "The border crossing situation has become very difficult since about last week," he said.

"If a Syrian wants to stay in Turkey now, he either has to take out a residence permit or register as a refugee."

The Syrian Expatriate Medical Society (SEMA), which provides medical care to Syrians inside the country, said the new policies were also hampering their work.

"Our employees don't have residency permission, so now they have to take the time to apply—sometime it takes a month to get the residency, sometimes longer," Hani Himsi, Programs and Partnership Manager at SEMA, told IRIN.

He said that already their representative for the central Syrian city

of Hama had not been able to enter Syria because he was forced to apply and wait for his Turkish residency. To add to the anxiety, those who overstay the 90-day ruling and pay a fine on their way out of Turkey are scared they won't be allowed back in.

Tightening sanctions around the region

Turkey's tougher entry requirements follow similar moves in Syria's other neighboring countries. On Jan. 5, Lebanon introduced new restrictions demanding all Syrians apply for a visa, while Jordan has also increased its entry requirements.

Turkey has been more open to Syrian refugees than the country's smaller neighbors—with the government providing free healthcare at public hospitals. Yet late last year, the Turkish government introduced new rules demanding that all Syrians in the country register with the authorities—either as a resident or as a refugee in one of Turkey's 22 official camps. Almost half of all Syrians currently in Turkey are unregistered partly because to obtain a Turkish residency permit they need a valid passport.

The Turkish government says it aims to regulate the supply of aid across the border, as well as respond to accusations that it does not do enough to prevent the flow of foreign fighters into Syria along its long and porous border. The female accomplice of the alleged gunman in last week's attack on a Jewish supermarket in Paris is believed to have crossed the Turkish border into Syria.

The new restrictions also pose a number of challenges for Syrian refugees already inside Turkey, many of

whom first arrived without a passport or have also seen their passports expire while living inside Turkey and are either unable or too afraid to apply for another one.

Humanitarian aid organizations say the recent rule change is just the latest difficulty in getting aid into northern Syria.

"They are trying to limit the movement of the terrorist groups in and out of Turkey," said Orhan Mohammed, the chief executive officer of the opposition Syrian Coalition's Assistance and Coordination Unit (ACU)—which is the humanitarian wing of the political opposition to Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad.

"Before I had some relations [with the Turks], and they would allow some trucks to cross the border even without enough documentation. But right now they need certain papers, they need some kind of insurance and they need all the people crossing the border to be registered and verified before they cross," he said, adding that while he understood the Turks' concerns, he was worried that the move would prevent legitimate humanitarian aid reaching desperate people in Syria.

NGOs have called for further exemptions for their staff to allow them to continue providing aid to those inside Syria.

Inconsistencies

To make matters worse, humanitarianians say there is a lack of clarity with

different rules applied at different border crossings.

"What our staff get told each time they cross seems to be different. The biggest problems are rumors, uncertainty, constantly changing information about which rule is now working," one country manager at an international NGO providing cross-border aid told IRIN.

"If the Turkish government were transparent and consistent with the rules, we could designate staff to cross more frequently so that we can train staff who work inside Syria to provide better humanitarian services."

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