



Culture The sounds of tradition

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Opinion Why the great Sunni-Shia conflict is getting ever closer to the surface Page 7



Interview Sana'a's newest displaced population Page 8











### خط سباً الجديد كلياً ... تحدث ، إربح ، شارك ، قل مرحباً بمزايا لا حصر لها .

- 📕 قيمة خط الفوترة سبأ مجاناً ( فقط دفع مبلغ التأمين ).
- 📕 إشتراك شهري يبدأ من 400 إلى 750 ريال ، وذلك حسب سَنة الإشتراك حيث يحصل المشترك على 5% تخفيض عن كل سنة.
- 💻 🛛 فقط 150ريال إشتراك لخدمة الأهلٍ والأصدقاء ،أول 6 أرقام تضاف مجانا وبتخفيض في الإكالمات والإشتراك الشهري يصل إلى67%.
  - 💻 تأهل للسحب ضمن 200 فائز شهريا بجوائز قيمة وذلك لكل 2500 ريال يتم سدادها شهريا وتستطيع مضاعفة فرصك للفوز .
    - 📒 باقات إنترنت متنوعة تبدأ من 800 ريال فقط ( 40 ميجا بايت ).
  - 🔳 ( الأسعار غير شاملة للضريبة )



تلفزيونات إتش دي و إل إي دي فائقة الوضوح ، أجهزة كمبيوتر محمول، غسالات فل أتوماتك ، بلاي ستايشن 3 ، مسرح منزلي وجوائز لُخرى متنوعة .





خدمة الأهل و الأصدقاء تتيح لمشتركي نظام الفوترة إضافة 6 أرقام و لنظام الدفع المسبق إضافة 3 أرقام و الحصول على تخفيض في المكالمات و الرسائل يصل إلى 60%.

لمزيد من المعلومات عن الخدمة أرسل كلمة "أهل" إلى 211 مجاناً

المُشغِّل الأول و الأكبر للهاتف النقال في اليمن





Tuesday, 28 January, 2014 • Issue No. 1750 • Price 50 Yemeni Riyals



A 'classroom' of their own: The Mobile School initiative is giving children who work as child laborers near the Remas roundabout in Sana'a a shot at an education. Using a minibus as a classroom, volunteer teachers are delivering lessons to some of the city's most marginalized adolescents. Read more on Page 3 (Photo by Samar Qaed)

# **National Dialogue Conference concludes**

#### Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Jan. 27-The National Dialogue Conference's (NDC) closing ceremony was held at the Palace of the Republic in Sana'a on Saturday.

High-profile regional and international figures attended the ceremony that marked the conclusion of the ten-month-long reconciliatory talks.

To mark the closing ceremony, thousands of balloons were released in Sana'a and paratroopers –displaying the Yemeni flag– parachuted into Sabeen Square while numerous helicopters hovnal document, which paves the way for a new constitution. The document also stipulates that Yemen will become a multi-region federal system.

Perhaps the most contentious decision the document allows for is a one-year extension of Hadi's term in office. Proponents of the extension say it empowers the president to reform the government to achieve more efficiency and integrity. Hadi will also be in charge of restructuring the Shura Council-an advisory board to the Parliament—so that it is composed of equal numbers of Northern and Southern representatives. At the closing ceremony, Hadi told those gathered that the nation was close "to achieving national security following two years of successful political partnership...and the restructuring of the security forces and the army." "We will begin immediately to implement many other changes...in order to implement the NDC final document and its guarantees, and [we will establish new] procedures to ensure that the country moves forward from the visionary to the practical, working hard to build a new, modern Yemen." The president also praised the country's youth for leading the peaceful anti-government protests that ousted former President Ali Abdulla Saleh. Hadi said the 2011 uprising completed the 1962 revolution against the imamate's rule and the October 14 revolution against British colonization in the South. In his remarks, Benomar said the conference "was no picnic but [on the contrary] an onerous journey interrupted by considerable obstacles and challenges that sometimes reached the extent of sacrificing life." The U.N. representative also honored the delegates who lost their lives or whose lives were threatened as a result of their participation in the NDC. In a video message aired by Yemeni State TV, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon said, "This is a historic day that proves that the Yemeni people made the right



# Food security in Yemen is an uphill battle

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Yemen in desperate need of humanitarian funding

#### Khalil Al-Khaubar

SANA'A, Jan. 27-Yemen is dangerously food insecure, according to a new food table from Oxfam International. In the food table, which compares 125 countries, Yemen comes ranks only higher than five nations.

According to the table, Yemen also has the second worst rate of malnourishment and underweight children, with about 1 million acutely malnourished children. Only Burundi and India, respectively, were found to be worse off.

In its Humanitarian Bulletin released on Jan. 7, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that 14.7 million Yemenis are in need of aid assistance

and \$591 million is required for humanitarian action in 2014. Currently only a little over half of that need is being met, the bulletin says.

"I completely support the data released by foreign organizations in regard to the food security situa-tion in Yemen," said Abdullah Abdalwali, Yemen's deputy minister of trade and ministry for industrial development affairs and investment.

"Frankly speaking, the best the ministry has done in regard to food security is to create strategies [on paper] that have not been acted upon during the administrations' of a long succession of ministers," Abdalwali said.

"[Issues like food security] have never previously received a fair ture production, experts say.

One of the staple foods in the average Yemeni's diet today's is riceimported rice, Al-Motawakil said. He advocates for the return of the local cultivation of foods such as corn, which-not so long ago-was a mainstay of the Yemeni diet.

Another complicating factor is that farmers have been battling a severe locust infestation. According to OCHA, Hodeida and Hajja governorates lost 90 percent of their sesame and millet crops due to the noxious insect. The locust infestation spread to Hadramout, Shabwa, and Lahj governorates as well. While the country is heavily dependent on imported food, the OCHA bulletin noted that "local harvests are an important contributor to the diets of many vulnerable Yemenis,' thus the invasion of locusts has put many Yemenis at risk of not having enough to eat.

"[Regarding] access to safe water," the Oxfam index reads, "Yemen is one of the worst performers with over half of the population-12 mil-



Almost 1 million children under 5 in Yemen are acutely malnourished, according to Oxfam International.

budgetary allocation," Abdalwali lion people-lacking access to clean water in order to prepare their food

ered above.

President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and several international guests delivered speeches during the ceremony.

"This day will be a milestone in the life of these great people who vearn for a better future after decades, or perhaps centuries, of oppression," Hadi said. "Now we are meeting...to formally conclude the NDC.

"We have managed to overcome all intentional, natural and expected difficulties and obstacles encountered during the NDC. Out of necessity, we extended its duration to 10 months from the originallyplanned six months," he added.

In addition to representatives from nations that backed the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) Initiative-which stipulated that a national conference be held-Jamal Benomar, Yemen's special envoy to the U.N. attended the celebrations.

Thousands of police and security personnel, as well as military vehicles, were deployed at the city's gateways and in the streets to ensure security.

The NDC began on Mar. 18 and was scheduled to end Sept. 18. When participants failed to reach consensus on major issues, including what to do about unrest in the South and Sa'ada and Yemen's future form of the government, the conference was extended an additional four months.

NDC Secretary General Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak said that NDC members on Tuesday reached a consensus on the conference's fi-

After 10 months, Yemen's National Dialogue Conference draws to a close in Sana'a amid much fanfare.

choice in preferring reconciliation on moving forward, former Presiover division. They have proved to the world that dialogue is the best path to the future for all countries.'

While the focus of the event was

dent Saleh told the Yemen Today TV Channel that the nation should take "the positive things from the past" as it begins planning the next stage of the country's future.

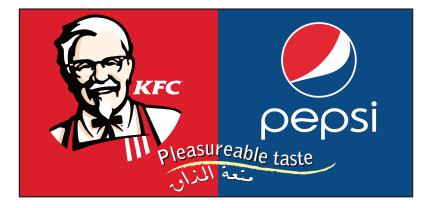


added. One major factor that threatens Yemen's food security is that it depends almost entirely on imported food supplies, according to Wajih Al-Motawakil, the head of the monitoring department at the General Authority for Agricultural Research and Assistance. A water supply that is being depleted at an unsustainable rate largely due to the nation's dependence on gat, which is a water-thirsty plant, has contributed to Yemen's deteriorating local agricul-

in safe and hygienic conditions."

The OCHA bulletin puts this figure higher, at 13.1 million people who do not have access to clean, drinking water.

"This index should sound alarm bells across the globe. Without urgent action, millions of ordinary Yemenis will continue to struggle to feed their families and find clean water to drink," said Colette Fearon, Oxfam's country director for Yemen.





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# التأمين الهندسي



## Will a government shakeup finally happen?

#### **President Hadi** promises that big decisions are coming soon

#### **Mohammed Al-Hassani**

SANA'A, Jan. 27-The nation is waiting for President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi to make good on a promise he made at the National Dialogue Conference's (NDC) concluding plenary session last Tuesday when he promised to make some tough decisions, including the removal of several ministers.

The president's press secretary, Yahia Al-Arasi, told the Yemen Times that the nation's leader will be issuing several presidential decrees shortly, though he was unwilling to offer a timetable for the announcements.

"I will leave now to meet with the Supreme Security Committee and will issue strong decrees, and you [NDC delegates], should supspeech during the plenary session which was aired on state-run TV.

Al-Arasi attributed the president's delay in issuing the decrees to Hadi's busy schedule as he prepared for the NDC's concluding ceremony, which was held in the Republican Palace on Saturday.

"President Hadi is holding intense consultations with political components regarding the changes [he wants to make in] government and military and security positions," Al-Arasi said.

Some political parties seem to be getting worried about Hadi's pending decisions. Local media outlets on Wednesday reported that prominent officials in the Islah Party were lobbying the president to keep the current interior minister and member of the Islah Party, Abdulgader Qahtan, in office. There have been rumors that the minister is on the chopping block due to an unprecedented number of assassinations in Yemen this year, including the most recent one of Dr. Ahmed Sharaf

port me," the president said in his Al-Deen, a prominent Houthi representative at the NDC.

> "President Hadi was elected by the people and he is entitled to make any decision that serves the national interest," said Saif Al-Sharabi, the deputy head of the Islah Party's political department.

Many are speculating about the politics at play in Hadi's decision making process. There are many major groups, including the Houthis, the Southern Movement, the Salafis and women and youth that are not currently represented at the ministerial level.

A local political analyst, Adel Ameen, predicts that Hadi is likely going to have to allot some ministerial positions to those groups when he decides on new appointments.

But Ameen says it is unlikely that everyone will be pleased.

"The changes in the government may not meet people's aspirations because we are still in a reconciliatory phase where all political parties must reach a consensus," he

## Yemen to build trust between citizens and security forces

**Special Security Forces** look to rebrand their image

#### Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 27-In an attempt to build support for human rights among Yemen's security personnel, Brig. Gen. Ahmed Al-Maqdashy, the chief of staff for Special Security Forces met with security delegations from the U.K. and the EU in Sana'a on Monday.

Many outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) regarding army and security regulations stipulate that procedures be created that foster a relationship between security enforcement while simultaneously respecting human rights.

During the meeting, Al-Maqdashy said he welcomed these outcomes and added that he felt honored to have provided security for the conference, which ran from March 18 to Jan. 25.

Also at the meeting, the British military attaché in Sana'a, Col. Iain Smailes, encouraged security forces to build trust among citizens. The British representative said Yemen's general public still associates security forces with gross human rights violations, including the "Day of Dignity" in which 45 protesters were killed by govern-



ment forces at an anti-government protest in 2011. An estimated 200 were also injured on that day, March 18, 2011.

Yemen's security personnel are consulting with security delegations from the U.K. on respecting human rights, despite the English High Court having received more than 700 allegations of torture and abuse by British security forces in Iraq, the court said last year.

Al-Maqdashy promised he is ready to make use of expertise and experience as well as coordinating with other security departments to involve citizens in security issues in order to gain the public's trust.

Yemen's security forces, Al-Maqdashy said, will work with their British and European counterparts to create exemplary security checkpoints and set up random security checkpoints in different areas of the country to thwart kidnappings, something Al-Maqdashy says is a priority his units.

"The Special Security Forces have foiled three kidnapping attempts over the past six months and continues to enhance security nationwide in cooperation with different bodies," he said.

"The Special Security Forces carries a heavy burden of responsibility for kidnappings because they obtain the initial information during the first few hours of the abduction, which is called the 'golden hour' because the chance of catching a criminal is high," said Jonny Tottman, the rule of law attaché for the EU delegation in Sana'a.

"There is no objection to carry out the [NDC] outcomes, and political parties must support the security departments in implementing them," Al-Maqdashy concluded.

## Following an almost month-long break, clashes renew in Arhab

#### Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 27–Armed clashes between Houthi supporters and anti-Houthi tribesmen broke out on Saturday in the Arhab area, 30 kilometers north of the capital, Sana'a. The clashes are the first in three weeks after a truce between the two groups was signed at the beginning of January.

The two sides originally began fighting at the beginning of December when anti-Houthi tribesmen began setting up unofficial checkpoints on the Sa'ada-Sana'a road. The tribesmen were trying to cut off the route into Sa'ada, a Houthicontrolled region, as part of the then expanding Houthi-Salafi conflict that began in Dammaj and was spilling over to other parts of the country.

The Houthis are a group of Zaidi Shiites and the Salafis are conservative Sunnis.

"The fighting between the pro-Houthi supporters and their tribal opponents reemerged after the Houthis opened a headquarters in Arhab district. This led the tribesmen to-once again-set up checkpoints on the road leading to Sa'ada," said Sheikh Abduljallel Sinan, a tribal leader in the Arhab district.

Sinan said there have been a number of casualties on both sides but could not provide exact numbers. He said at least one child was killed Friday in a fire exchange near one of the disputed security checkpoints.

Locals, along with Sinan, are angry that the central government has not intervened to stop the clashes. Instead, tribal sheikhs have attempted to mediate the conflict, he said.

"Arhab district is being divided

into two. One group opposes the Houthis, and the other part sides with them. All of them belong to Arhab, but some groups are bigoted and [feel they can] use force to [suppress] other views," said Mohammed Al-Bukkhaiti, a leading Houthi figure and a former representative at the National Dialogue Conference, saying there is no reason for the sides to be fighting in Arhab.

While many had praised the three-week ceasefire agreement, mediated by local tribal sheikhs, others are not surprised it did not hold.

"The state did not interfere to stop the creation of checkpoints or control the expansion of either side," said political analyst Nabil Al-Sharjabi. "Consequently, fierce clashes were expected to renew."

Sharjabi said the central government needs to intervene if they want a truce agreement to hold.

### Eritrea releases over 100 Yemeni fishermen, almost 300 still in captivity

Horn of Africa nation demands release of three Eritrean fishermen

#### Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 27-Eritrean authorities are still holding close to 300 Yemeni fishermen, who have been in custody for over a year, according to Yemen's Fishermen's Union. On Thursday, Eritrea released 135 men who were in custody for allegedly fishing in Eritrean waters. According to those released, Eritrean authorities have said they will not release the remaining 285 prisoners until Yemen returns three Eritrean fishermen they say are being held. However, Yemeni authorities are denying that there are Eritrean fishermen in custody. In a phone interview with the Yemen Times, Abdulla Basunbl, the deputy minister at the Fisheries Ministry, said Eritrean authorities have never officially contacted the ministry regarding the issue.

also denied Yemen's detention of Eritrean fishermen.

The Yemen Times contacted the Eritrean Embassy in Sana'a, but the

embassy declined to comment on the story. According to Salem Alyan, a

member of the Fishermen's Union, the men were not released as a result of diplomatic negotiations, but were told by Eritrean authorities that they were returned as a gesture of goodwill in line with the new vear.

Eritrea has long been upset at Yemeni fishermen who are accused of straying into their waters and negatively affecting their fishing economy.

Arif Omar, who was picked up by Eritrean authorities in September 2012, is one of the men recently re-

All fishermen know where Yemen's regional waters are," he said.

Omar's year and over three months in Eritrean captivity was inhumane, he added.

"We were subject to hard labor such as loading the tankers. If we didn't work, we would not be given food," he said.

Another fisherman who was also arrested in September 2012, Abdulla Ayash Ayash, said he and fellow prisoners who were kept at two different camps, Marfa and Al-Qadam, were not provided shelter or anything to protect themselves from the elements like the cold and rain

Unlike Omar, Ayash says Yemeni fishermen know they are entering foreign waters, but that they have no other choice as fish are becom-

#### Work of women and youth highlighted in event

#### Story and photo by Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Jan. 27–A three-day handicrafts exhibition centered around Yemen's cultural heritage was held last week.

According to Alwan Al-Shaibani, the head of the Universal Group, the travel agency that sponsored the event, the exhibition was designed to encourage women and young people to work in the handicrafts field.

Handicrafts exhibit in Sana'a

supports cultural heritage

"Such an exhibition helps boost the national economy while fighting poverty and unemployment among youth and women. Handicrafts create job opportunities that enable youth and women to support themselves and improve their lives," said Fadhl Al-Aĥmadi, the deputy minister of culture.

The exhibit included a variety of handicrafts such as silver and copper products, wooden sculptures, precious stones and embroidered cotton pieces. Fifteen groups and foundations took part in the event, in addition to a number of students from the Lebanese University, who exhibited Yemeni architectural designs and paintings.



Many centers in Yemen train women in sewing, embroidery and handicrafts. Often, centers will provide the raw materials necessary to get started.

There are several non-profit centers in Yemen that train women in sewing, embroidery and handicrafts. These centers often offer the trainees the raw materials necessary to get them started, in addition to funding the purchase of sewing and embroidery equipment and tools.

"We appreciate all those who supported us [...and in turn, we encourage greater participation of women in handicrafts]," said Sumya Al-Shadhabi, who participated in the event.

Yemeni handicrafts are known for their variety and elegant designs, Al-Ahmadi said. This, he added, earns Yemeni handicrafts well-deserved international repute.

Yemeni silver work, for example, has gained renown far and wide. Work in semi-precious gemsmostly agates-is also extremely popular. Agates are practically synonymous with Yemen.

Majed Al-Hamdani, a painter, was pleased with the exhibition. He said that similar previous events had helped him sell his work.

"I have sold more than 1,000 paintings in the past few years. This [success has] inspired me to continue honing my painting skills," he said.

"We will keep working to revive the traditional handicrafts and arts that are so characteristic of Yemen," said Haifa Naji Salah, an architecture student at the Lebanese University, who also participated in the event.

The operations manager for the Yemeni Coast Guard, Shuja Mahdi, leased.

He says he wasn't aware he was in Eritrean waters and blames both the Yemeni and Eritrean governments for not creating transparent fishing agreements.

"The Yemeni and Eritrean governments should make clear border restrictions," Omar said.

However, Mahdi said the fishermen are making excuses.

"These justifications are feeble.

ing more and more scarce in Yemen's waters.

Alyan is critical of what he calls government apathy in securing the release of the other detained men. He acknowledges that Yemen's ambassador to Eritrea visited a detainee camp last year, but no governmental action was taken after that.

As of now, Alyan is unaware of any plans in motion to secure the release of the remaining men.

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Report

# **Bringing education to the streets**

Mobile school gets child laborers excited about learning

#### Story and photos by Samar Qaed

wo days a week at 3:00 p.m., 11-year-old Hamdi Ali shows up for school. When he enters his unconventional classroom, he is warmly greeted by his two teachers, Nizar Al-Sakkaf and Mohammed Al-Ariqi and his seven other classmates aged seven to 13.

As class starts, the students begin reciting the Arabic alphabet in chorus. The students are noticeably barefoot and their clothes ripped and dirty. They each have a notebook and a pencil, but they also carry supplies with them you won't find in the average school. Next to each student's feet are a bottle of water and scraps of clothing they will use to clean vehicles once class has ended.

They are children of the street, helping their families by earning small change wiping car windows. But thanks to a youth initiative in Sana'a that began in October 2013, called the Mobile School, the children are also receiving an education.

Their "classroom" is a small bus



that parks at the Remas roundabout in Sana'a. Pedestrians can peak into the learning environment, often stopping to ask about



There are 1.2 million child laborers in Sana'a. The challenge is to offer them an education with a less demanding schedule so that they can still support their families.



its purpose. The teachers gladly explain what they are doing—trying to chip away at illiteracy rates among marginalized adolescents, whose likelihood of receiving a

formal education is small.

"It is the first time to hold the pen and write for me," said Ali, one of the students. Having never attended school

before, Al-Ariqi says even the small things, like how to properly hold a pen, is something the students struggle to master.

"Every child needs instruction," said Al-Ariqi, who every once in a while has to disrupt his lessons to break up a fight.

According to a 2012 survey from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, over 1.2 million children nationwide work as child laborers, a majority of them concentrated in large cities like Sana'a.

Such a lifestyle is not conducive to receiving an education, prompting 39-year-old Al-Sakkaf, who also works as marketing manager, and a woman from Slovenia to create and fund the mobile education project.

The overhead costs of the initiative are low. The funder from Slovenia rents the bus from its owner twice a week for two hours. No one takes a salary for their efforts and even the owner of the bus sometimes steps in to teach a lesson. Al-Sakkaf chose to park the bus at the roundabout because of the high concentration of children working in the streets nearby, either vending or offering services like car or shoe shines. The initiative has faced some challenges. Because of the limited number of hours the children spend in the bus learning, their progress is slow, Al-Sakkaf says. But he and Al-Ariqi are hesitant to increase hours as they already have difficulty convincing some families to allow their children to go to school at all. The families rely on the children for income so an hour in the classroom is an hour they are aren't making money. "I had to persuade the relatives that we do not take money from the children," said Al-Sakkaf. Yahia Ibrahim, one of the students, says he has his family's support to attend classes, but he knows the majority of his friends who also work in Sana'a will never step foot in the mobile bus. They prefer to work or their families are not supportive, Yahia said.

Clutching rags and a water bottle, the students immediately recognize him as one of their fellow car cleaners. As Aseel timidly enters

As Aseer timility enters the bus out of curiosity, the students break out in applause and Al-Sakkaf offers him an invitation to join. Aseel gladly accepts the coloring book and bright pens Al-Sakkaf hands him.

"We give [the children] sweets and coloring books at first. We want them to continue," said Al-Sakkaf, who immediately goes to work teaching Aseel how to hold a pen.

"They are strong-willed," said Al-Ariqi. "Their determination and enthusiasm make us hopeful for their progress."

Al-Ariqi, who has been with the project since the beginning, will soon be leaving for Saudi Arabia for a job offer. But he hopes to launch a similar project in his new host nation.

Al-Sakkaf is optimistic about the future of his small-scale project. Provided funding comes

## SANAA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



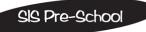
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"We give [the children] sweets and coloring books at first. We want them to continue," said Al-Sakkaf.



The overhead costs are low. Teachers offer their services free of charge and classes are held in a bus that is rented twice a week for two hours.



Those behind the project say they hope to chip away at illiteracy rates, which hover at around 65 percent in the general public, according to the CIA World Factbook.

During one class session, a young boy named Aseel passes by the bus while the students are in the middle of a writing lesson. through, he has plans to rent a larger bus that he can equip with a white board, chairs and desks and to accommodate more children.

"Our efforts will continue," he said. His students share his enthusiasm.

"My family has encouraged me to continue. I will not stop," Ibrahim said.

The project hopes to raise the funds to rent a larger bus that will allow them to hold desks, chairs, white boards and more students.



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Report

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# **2013 Oil pipeline sabotage chronology**

#### Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

ver the course of 2013, oil pipelines in Yemen sustained 41 attacks, according to the staterun Safer Oil Company and published Yemen Times' reports.

Two of the attacks took place in

used to build schools and factories"

Shabwa governorate, one in Hadramout and 38 in Marib. There was a total of 23 attempted attacks in the three governorates.

In its annual report, the staterun Safer Oil Company said that oil infrastructure is under constant threat including, "the blockage of oil wells, the prevention of access to the pipelines for repairs, clashes with oil pipeline

guards, the theft of oil and the use "These [lost] funds should have been

of bombs to explode pipelines." According to the report, 37 attacks were recorded in 2012 and 21 in 2011.

"The Oil Department at the Ministry of Oil and Minerals sustained about \$5 billion in losses due to acts of sabotage, and losses of more than \$310 million in revenue (100,000 barrels monthly) due to the halt of oil production from March 2011 to the end of 2013," the report added. "Yemen's economy sustains huge

losses due to attacks on oil pipelines...they reduce public income as oil is Yemen's number one export, at more than 90 percent. The public coffers lose millions of dollars annually because of the need to purchase oil to meet local demand," said Mustafa Nasr, an economist.

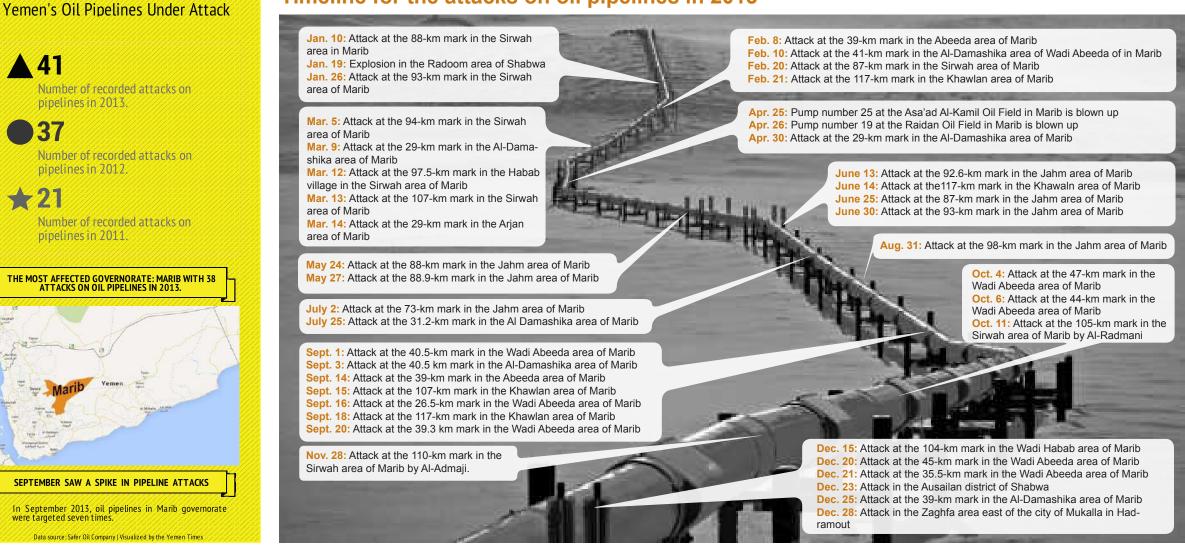
Nasr said the \$5 billion in losses constitutes roughly half of the annual public budget, adding, "These funds should have been used to build schools and factories. The state must fight saboteurs with an less in 2013 than they did in 2012. iron fist because it cannot afford more losses.

Yemen earned about \$2.25 billion in total revenues from oil exports during the last 10 months of 2013, according to a report released by the Central Bank of Yemen in December. This is about \$750 million less compared to same-period in 2012.

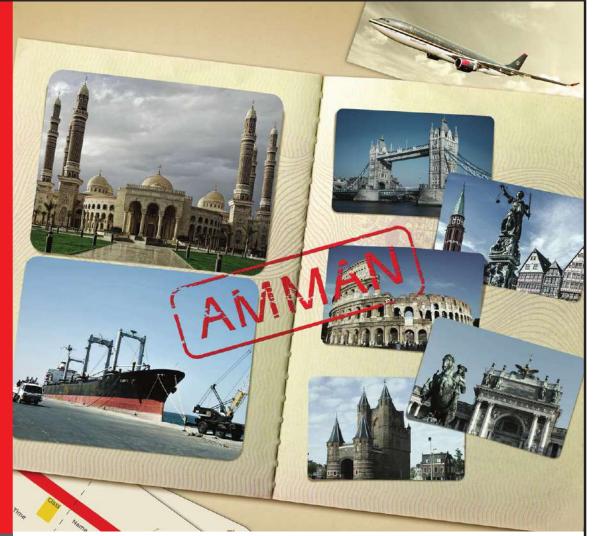
The bank's report also says that Yemen exported 5 million barrels

Although the government is often aware of the culprits behind attacks on oil infrastructure, they are typically criticized for their inability to both capture saboteurs and punish them. Disgruntled tribesmen often use the attacks as a bargaining tool with the state to gain concessions like the release of a family member from prison, local jobs or the building of local infrastructure like schools.

#### Timeline for the attacks on oil pipelines in 2013







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#### 6 Culture



# The sounds of tradition 'Al-Madeeh' singing troupes hang on in Yemen

Story and photo by Ali Abulohoom

itting on a piece of cloth on the ground in a busy commercial district in Sana'a, 22-year-old Bakeel Al-Guhali, along with his veiled sister, bangs his tambourine and sings to an attentive audience. They hope the audience will show its appreciation by rewarding them with some change.

As time passes, their faces begin to drip with sweat, and their voices rise. At the peak of their performance, nearly 10 minutes after their start, banknotes and coins start to fall at their feet.

Every day, with one or two family members in tow, Bakeel heads to Bab Al-Yemen, the main gateway to Sana'a's Old City. There, they perform Al-Madeeh songs, Islamic songs of praise that honor the Prophet Mohamed and Islamic customs.

He chooses this location because "it is impossible to find this place [empty] because it is located on the way to Souk Al-Milh [the salt market]," a principal shopping destination and a hub for tourists.

For Bakeel, his performances are a family business. The young man began singing Al-Madeeh songs with his father when he was just eight-years-old. He now pledges to pass this tradition along to his siblings, sons and daughters. There isn't a day that goes by that someone from Bakeel's family isn't in their usual spot near Bab Al-Yemen, singing. He, along with his seven sisters, two brothers and 13 aunts switch off days.

"My only job is performing Al-Madeeh, and I am satisfied by it as long as [I have an appreciative audience that] will pay me for my work," Bakeel said.

It isn't common to find females performing in the streets, but Bakeel says his family has no compunctions.

"This is our profession, and we have been taught [to take pride in what we do]," he said.

Al-Madeeh singing is a very old type of a cappella that uses the tambourine, similar to types of singing that predate the era of the Prophet Mohamed. Traditionally, Al-Madeeh is sung on religious occasions such as Eid Al-Adha, and Al-Yemen.

Ramadan, but for those like the Bakeel family, singing the prophets praises is not only an income-but a lifestyle. Mohammed Al-Boraq, an expert on Islamic heritage, said that there used to be numerous Al-Madeeh troupes who traveled across Yemen to perform prior to the 1980s, but due to the growth in popularity of more modern musical instruments such as the violin and piano, the presence



the prophet's birth- Performers say the increased popularity of TV has affected their own popularity. Many of their fans prefer to day, Eid Al-Fitr, listen to Al-Madeeh on TV in their comfort of their own mafraj. Above: Bakeel and his sister perform at Bab

of Al-Madeeh performances slowly began to decline.

Al-Boraq also ascribed the neartotal absence of Al-Madeeh nowadays to the advent of electronic media, especially television and computers.

"People found [TV] a convenient means to follow series, films, songs and whatever they wanted. Even Al-Madeeh could be seen on TV,"

said Al-Boraq.

But the ancient art form still has its loyal devotees. "Because some people depend on Al-Madeeh as their main source of income, they perform almost daily in one place or another for the purpose of reminding people of God and the Prophet and also to earn money," said Al-Boraq.

Mohsen Al-Harazi is another Al-

Madeeh singer who also performs near Bab Al-Yemen, but he does it alone in the alleyways of Old Sana'a. At one time, he performed with two of his brothers, but since, one has passed and the other moved abroad.

Al-Harazi has tried several times to leave this career because "people do not love this kind of singing as much as they used to." But he hasn't been able to bring himself to quit because he enjoys it and is accustomed to the daily routine.

"When I used to sing almost 10 years ago ... crowds of people would gather, and I would make quite a lot of money," he said, adding that he would travel all over the country.

Both the Bakeel family and Al-Harazi each earn about YR2000 (almost \$10) daily, an amount they find acceptable.

"We would [stay in] this profession even if we were to earn only YR100 [less than 50 cents] a day because we love our work and we love to praise our prophet," said Bakeel.

Many people who gather to listen to Al-Madeeh say they do not consider the money they give to performers to be charity but, rather, a reward for their efforts and performance.

Essam Mofleh, 35, said that he comes to Bab Al-Yemen every day to listen to Bakeel and his family.

"I am very impressed by their performances because they sing as one, in perfect harmony. I find myself gladly pulling money out of my pocket for them," he said.

Mohamed Saleh, 25, mentioned another motive for giving them money.

"I give them money because they remind me and all the people gathered of our God and encourage us to have good behavior, like how we should love each other," he said.

Bakeel and his family return the praise to their audience. They say their fans are more important to them than the money.

"I often lose myself in the songs and just focus on how I can please the audience," Bakeel said.



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Opinion

#### Iran, Saudi Arabia and the Middle East's 30-year war

# Why the great Sunni-Shia conflict is getting ever closer to the surface

#### **Douglas Murray** Spectator.co.uk First Published Jan. 25

yria has fallen apart. Major cities in Iraq have fallen to Al-Qaeda. Egypt may have stabilized slightly after a counter-coup. But Lebanon is starting once again to fragment. Beneath all these factsbeneath all the explosions, exhortations and blood-certain themes are emerging.

Some years ago, before the Arab "Spring" ever sprung, I remember asking one top security official about the region. What, I wondered, was their single biggest fear? The answer was striking and precise: "That the region will clarify." That is a fear which now appears to be coming true.

The Middle East is not simply falling apart. It is taking a different shape, along very clear lines—far older ones than those the Western powers rudely imposed on the region nearly a century ago. Across the whole continent those borders are in the process of cracking and breaking. But while that happens the region's two most ambitious centers of power-the house of Saud and the Ayatollahs in Iran-find themselves fighting each other not just for influence but even, perhaps, for survival.

The way in which what is going on in the Middle East has become a religious war has long been obvious. Just take this radio exchange, caught at the ground level earlier this month, between two foreign fighters in Syria, the first from Al-Oaeda's Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the second from the Free Syrian army (FSA). "You apostate infidels," says the first. "We've declared you to be 'apostates,' you heretics. You don't know Allah or his prophet, you creature. What kind of Islam do you follow?" To which the FSA fighter responds, "Why did you come here? Go fight Israel, brother." Only to be told, "Fighting apostates like you people takes precedence over fighting the Jews and the Christians. All imams concur on that.

The religious propulsion of many of the fighters who have flooded in the Middle East is what happens

civil war–400 or more from Britain alone-is beyond doubt. From the outset this has been a confrontation inflamed by religious sectarianism. In the first stages of the Syrian conflict the Shia militia of Hezbollah were sent by their masters in Iran to fight on the side of Iran's ally Bashar Al-Assad. But those of a different political and religious orientation made their own moves against this. Across Britain and Europe, not to mention the wider Middle East, many thousands of young men listened to the call of religious leaders like the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz Al-Asheik and Sheikh Yusuf Al-Oaradawi, who last year declared that Hezbollah is in fact not the "army of God," as its name almost suggests, but rather the "army of Satan." Sheikh Qaradawi declared that "every Muslim trained to fight and capable of doing that [must] make himself available'

for jihad in Syria. It is perhaps inevitable that with the amount of regional influence at stake, and the quantity of natural resources, there would be numerous powers involved in trying to dictate the Syrian endgame. But as the country's civil war has ground on and the region as a whole has started to fall into a maelstrom, there is not a party or country that has not been shocked by one particular new reality. That is the fact that what has hitherto been the most important global player has decided to take a back seat. When two major Iraqi cities fell to Al-Qaeda forces last week, the American secretary of state, John Kerry, expressed concern but stressed that for the Iraqi government this was now "their fight.

One of the cities was Fallujah, the site of the bloodiest battle of the Iraq war, where 10,000 British and American troops fought to depose the Islamists. It is now back under jihadi control, with the black flag of Al-Qaeda proudly flying-and the West does not want to know. Although there are Syrian cities also now under Al-Qaeda control, the U.S. and its allies remain unmoved over acting in that country either. To an extent, what is happening

into Syria in the three years of its when America and the West suddenly lose interest. But for the U.S., the reasons for that new lack of interest are obvious. With America soon predicted to attain energy independence, why should the country continue to involve itself deeply in a region which has cost it so much in blood, treasure and international reputation? Why should the U.S. Fifth Fleet continue to attempt to maintain regional security in a continent whose regional resources are increasingly rewarding nobody so much as the Communist Party of China?

> For the U.K. and other lesser western powers, declining involvement in the region is neither a moral nor an interest-based decision. It is simply a decision based on the fact-as the last decade has proved-that we no longer have either the cash or the commitment to effect any decent outcome in the region.

> If this remains a reality which is too rarely admitted here at home, it was long ago scented in the winds of the region. And as the new reality dawned, it was inevitable that the various factions in Svria's civil war would reach out to anybody in the region who shared their broadest goals. Vice versa, the regional powers ended up looking for anybody who could plausibly assist them with the means and methods to reach their own ends. And so it is that a Middle Eastern proxy-war which had already reached as far as Washington, D.C. has found its way right back to the very doorsteps of the countries that were propelling it. And how a war of religion also become a war of good old-fashioned statecraft.

> From the outset of the Syrian uprising, it was inevitable that Iran would weigh in on the side of its client in Damascus. Indeed, so desperate were the mullahs in Tehran to do everything they could to protect their own interests that they even put up with protests at home from people starved of basic supplies complaining about their own government pouring millions into Svria's civil war.

But the next step was just as predictable. Saudi Arabia, which fears Iranian influence spreading any further than it has already throughout the region, began to back the opposition. Starting cautiously, in recent months that caution has retreated and Saudi is now supporting groups as close to Al-Qaeda-linked forces as to make little difference. Desperate measures, certainly. But for the Saudi leadership these are desperate times. Though it is a battle that has been brewing for decades.

There has always been the ongoing tension of Bahrain, which is under Saudi domination but which Iran seeks for itself. But then there is the quieter battle for influence in the Gulf states, which, while interventionist at times, quiver before the clashing of these bigger beasts. It was only as Syria fell apart and the regional powers were pulled inexorably into a more open battle, that the cold war between Iran and Saudi found its hot battleground.

There are those who think that the region as a whole may be starting to go through something similar to what Europe went through in the early 17th century during the 30 Years' War, when Protestant and Catholic states battled it out. This is a conflict which is not only bigger than Al-Qaeda and similar groups, but far bigger than any of us. It is one which will re-align not only the Middle East, but the religion of Is-

There is a significant likelihood as intra-Muslim sectarian tension has had fallout even in Britain and Europe—that this could be the case. Or perhaps the region is going to descend into a complex miasma of slaughter as surely as Europe did a century ago. Either way there will be a need for a Treaty of Westphalia-style solution—a redrawing of boundaries in a region where boundaries have been bursting for decades.

But for the time being, a distinct and timeless standoff between two regional powers, with religious excuses and religiously affiliated proxies will in all probability remain the main driver of this conflict. Certainly the sides remain fundamentally irreconcilable. As one of Saudi Arabia's most important figures, Prince Turki Al-Faisal, said on a recent visit to London, "Saudi Arabia is the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and the birthplace of Islam. As such,



it is the eminent leader of the wider Muslim world. Iran portrays itself as the leader of not just the minority Shiite world, but of all Muslim revolutionaries interested in standing up to the West."

Prince Turki decried Iran's "meddling" and its "destabilizing efforts in the countries with Shia majorities-Iraq and Bahrain-as well as in those countries with significant minority Shia communities such as Kuwait, Lebanon and Yemen.' As he said, "Saudi Arabia will oppose any and all of Iran's actions in other countries, because it is Saudi Arabia's position that Iran has no right to meddle in other nations' internal affairs, especially those of Arab states.'

Saudi officials more recently called for the Iranian leadership to be summoned to the International Criminal Court in The Hague for war crimes. Then, just the month before last, as the P5+1 countries eased sanctions on Iran after arriving at an interim deal in Geneva, Saudi saw its greatest fear-a nuclear Iran-grow more likely. And in the immediate aftermath of the Geneva deal, Saudi sources darkly warned of the country now taking Iranian matters "into their own hands." There are rumors that the Saudis would buy nuclear bombs "off the shelf" from their friends in Pakistan if Iran ever reaches anything like the nuclear threshold. In that case, this Westphalian solution could be prefaced with a mushroom cloud.

An unlikely scenario, perhaps. But this standoff between Iran and Saudi has been full of unlikely scenarios. It is only two years ago that the Iranians attempted to assassinate the Saudi ambassador in Washington. The plan was thwarted only because the two suspectsan Iranian-American and an officer from Iran's Quds Force-unwittingly connected with an informant from U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Of course Iranian officials denied the assassination plot, but America's attorney general. Eric Holder, announced at a press conference in Washington that the plot had been "directed and approved by elements of the Iranian government and, specifically, senior members of the Quds force which is an integral part of the Iranian government.'

The war between Saudi and Iran has already reached America's shores. It has been devastatingly fought out across Syria's wasted land. In fact the only place where it has yet to strike meaningfully is on the soil of the main protagonists. If what has been happening so far looks bloody, it is the work of an Armageddon-ist to consider what will happen when those gloves come off. In a region replete with bitter rivalries and irreconcilable ambitions, that will be perhaps the ultimate clarification.

Douglas Murray is the associate director of the Henry Jackson Society and an author, most recently of Islamophilia.

Yemen's economic development:

# A paradigm shift

#### **Rafat Al-Akhali**

mid widespread poverty, unprecedented levels unemploymentestimated to be over 50 percent among youth widespread corruption and a maior deterioration in services (such as water, electricity and security), Yemenis and international development partners are increasingly realizing the need to focus on economic development in Yemen. Yemen's last two years of transition were characterized by intense scrutiny of the political process which overshadowed a focus on economic development in the country.

However, the economy doesn't just need shallow attention. If Yemen's dire economic prospects are to be changed that attention needs

to operate within a very specialized framework. Development experts and consultants often characterize Yemen's economic challenges as technical in nature-such as lack of government capacity, the depletion of oil resources and population growth, in addition to several other factors.

There needs to be a paradigm shift in the way Yemen approaches economic development.

Yemen operates as a rentier state with a web of elites at the top. The ex-president, who left power after the 2011 anti-government protests, managed and sustained these elites for over two decades using a complex, patronage system. This patronage system not only enabled its beneficiaries to control the major aspects of the fragile economy and the state in Yemen, but it also allowed them to

siphon money from the public budget through various means (such as allocations of subsidized fuel and public wages of ghost workers).

Therefore, the two key questions that should frame economic development efforts in Yemen are:

-How does Yemen disassemble the patronage system gradually without driving the country into chaos and collapse?

–What role can international aid play in addressing an environment of poor governance?

Political economic analysis is the first step towards addressing these questions. Yemeni reform champions and international development partners can no longer afford to develop their agendas and programs based purely on technical assessments without fully understanding the patronage networks and accounting for

different interests and incentives. Another tool to address these two questions is to insist on conditions

and stipulations that build scrutiny around the budget process. A portion of aid money—and more importantly the donors' influence-should focus on building local accountability and ensuring budget transparency. Looting the public purse is one way to divert public funds to the hands of the elite and funding the patronage system. If the Yemeni people are enabled and empowered to scrutinize their government's budget, it will be more difficult to use public funds to support the patronage system. For example, Yemen does not currently, publish a "People's Budget," which is a simplified form of the budget that can be read and understood by the average citizen. This is a small step that could have a multiplier effect on

the improvement of governance in Yemen.

Real change in Yemen begins by having the right people with the right mindset INSIDE the government, working on addressing these issues. Infusing a layer of senior civil servants in the government with appropriate capabilities, and ensuring they have a degree of authority and protection from political pressure, could yield great results. This is outlined as a priority in the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) document signed in September 2012 by Yemen's government and its development partners.

Under the document's good governance pillar it states the government agrees to, "Observe independent and transparent merit-based recruitment through the vetting process of senior civil service appointments."

However, despite this commitment in the MAF, there has been little effort to achieve this and none of the appointments of senior civil servants since September 2012 have adhered to any sort of transparent process.

New approaches to addressing Yemen's development challenges, combined with widespread change and renewed commitments within the government, are all vital to move the country forward. As one of the guiding principles of the MAF states, "Business as usual should be discontinued to create a successful transition.'

Rafat Al-Akhali is a public policy specialist and the chairman of Resonate! Yemen, a non-governmental organization that works on engaging youth in public policy.

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### Sana'a's newest displaced population

# 'There are still more than 700 families in Sana'a in need of [long-term] shelter'

Following three months of violent Salafi-Houthi clashes in the Dammaj area of Sa'ada that left hundreds dead and injured, the Salafis left Dammaj earlier this month based on a ceasefire agreement that was supported by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi. Sa'ada continues to be controlled by Houthi rebels, a group of Zaidi Shiites.

The Salafis, led by the head of Dar Al-Hadeeth Salafi Seminary, Yahia Al-Hajouri, say that the evacuation did not go as planned. According to the agreement, the displaced persons would be resettled in Hodeida governorate. However, local leaders in Hodeida rejected the influx of a new population and the central government failed to intervene. With few other options, seemingly overnight, an estimated 10,000 Salafis, a conservative Sunni sect, found themselves homeless in the capital Sana'a. The majority are living in tents and mosques in the Sawan district.

Such a large displaced population is placing strain on local communities with no clear answer as to who is responsible to deal with the situation. The Yemen Times spoke to Mohamed Al-Ahmadi, a human rights activist who studies Salafi groups, and Khalid Al-Madhla, the head of the Al-Ihsan Charitable Association (AICA), an organization assisting the displaced, about what can be done now that Sana'a has been forced to absorb such a large population.

Interview and photos by Mohammed Al-Hassani



Let's begin with Mr. Al-Ahmadi. Do you have any details of the agreement forcing the Salafis to leave Dammaj?

**Al-Ahmadi:** The Salafis had only two choices: either to die at the hands of the Houthi militia...or to leave Dammaj and live. It was very difficult for them to continue living in the area following more than three months of shelling and siege. The Salafis aren't the first to be driven out by the Houthis. About 30,000 residents were forced to leave Sa'ada following the [government's] six wars in the governorate, and previously, the Al-Salem Jews were also expelled.

#### Did the Salafis leave of their own accord, based on the proposal presented following the ceasefire?

**Al-Ahmadi:** No, [the agreement] was not proposed by the Salafis. They authorized President Hadi to make an appropriate decision on their behalf, but he abdicated his responsibility to protect them. They have appealed to the government and to the whole world to help them, but no one has listened. The state is attempting to disavow its responsibility for the crime of evicting the Salafis from Dammaj and [failing to protect the Salafis where they were living], in Dammaj. The

whatever might happen to them if they were to stay] in the area.

#### Do you think that the Salafis are now in a better situation? Al-Madhla: The situation is undoubtedly tragic, and in my opinion, the Salafis are now better off than if they had remained in Dammaj. They didn't prepare for their evacuation because they thought that the state would [stop the fighting] and that they would be able to remain in their area. But the evacuation decision caught them off guard. They were given only four or five days to leave. The situation wasn't good when they arrived in Sana'a, but the AICA helped receive them in the Hashid area of Amran governorate before they arrived in the capital and provided an ambulance, food and other essentials. There are still more than 700 families in Sana'a in need of [long-term] shelter. The situation here in Sana'a is not good but at least they are safe from bombings and gunfire.

#### The original plan was that the Salafis would move from Dammaj to Hodeida, but they ended up moving to Sana'a. What happened?

**Al-Ahmadi:** The Salafis were supposed to move to Hodeida according to the agreement but some officials from the former regime not only kept this from happening, but they also played a part in [Hodeida's] local population refusing to provide Al-Hajouri and his students refuge in Hodeida.

siege on the local populace. If the Houthis were truly acting in selfdefense, why wouldn't they allow the media to enter Sa'ada governorate? A media delegation wanted to visit Dammaj a month ago, but the Houthis denied them entrance. This indicates that the Houthis want to cover up their actions, their transgressions.

#### The Houthis say the foreign students in Dammaj were posing a danger. What do you think?

*Al-Ahmadi:* This is false. They do not pose any security threat to Yemen. I challenge the Houthis to prove that the Interior Ministry, over the past 30 years, has received any notifications of terrorist activities or violent acts committed by foreign students [studying in Dammaj].

#### From your point of view as the head of a relief association, did any governmental authority assist in the evacuation of Salafis from Dammaj? *Al-Madhla:* We [the AICA] arranged for transport and coordinated it in according with the

Al-Maanta: We [the AICA] arranged for transport and coordinated it in cooperation with the head of the Dar Al-Hadeeth Salafi Seminary, Sheikh Yahia Al-Hajouri. So far, we have not found a particular official authority to talk to. It is not, in fact, our business to speak with the official authorities about the issue of the Salafis' evacuation from Dammaj and their residence in Sana'a. Our job is to deliver urgent relief to these people. I think it is the role of humanitarian organizations or Sheikh Al-Hajouri [to insist on government intervention]. Currently we are occupied with providing food and housing, and also transportation to those who want to go to their families' villages. We are trying to give them what they want and need.

#### How would you describe the living situation of the Salafis residing in Sana'a now?

**Al-Madhla:** Right now, there are 700 families who have inadequate shelter. The men are sleeping in one mosque and the women are in another. Food is delivered to both mosques....husbands cannot meet their wives. If they want to meet, they make contact by phone so they can meet somewhere outside of the mosques. There are about 200 displaced families whose situation has improved upon returning to their villages and areas [in which they have relatives]. Those who do not have families [elsewhere] are living a somewhat tragic situation.

#### Are the displaced Salafis being about this?

accommodated in mosques in the Sawan area of Sana'a only?

Al-Madhla: No, they are distributed among many mosques in Sana'a besides the Sunna and Al-Ferdos mosques in Sawan, where women are staying. There are three or four other mosques in the capital in which displaced families and individuals are living. Others live in neighborhoods of Sana'a where they have relatives. Generally speaking, there is a big problem associated with housing all of the displaced persons due to their large number and because of [their sudden, unplanned departure from Dammaj]. I heard them saying that they thought the president had prepared a special residence when he ordered that they leave Dammaj.

Are there any other associations working with you? *Al-Madhla:* Yes, there are several

associations, including the Wadi Hadramout Association.

Some local media outlets have suggested that the displaced Salafis be accommodated in the now-vacant former headquarters of the First Armored Division (FAD), an area called "21 Park." What do you think about this? Al-Madhla: Honestly, I have no information about this. It is disheartening that [the government] does not know where to house [the displaced]. They have already suffered a lot. The government should have prepared for the move of the displaced. [This was part of the ceasefire agreement.] I think talking about accommodating the Salafis in the former camp of the FAD is a matter of political artifice [and not being seriously considered]. This is a pure humanitarian issue, [not a political issue] and on this basis, everyone who can help, should help.

#### Back to Mr. Al-Ahmadi—some see the exit of Salafis at this time as dangerous for the political situation in Sana'a. What do you think?

**Al-Ahmadi:** Yes, it is not only a political danger. There are other imminent dangers that threaten the social fabric of the country. I also wonder about the international humanitarian organizations' double standard. We have not heard one organization condemning the displacement of Salafis. It is regretful that human rights in the [rest of the] world have reached an advanced stage of development, but here in Yemen, we still just talk about the very basic right to have a safe place to live.

third article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that every citizen has the right to live anywhere within his country's borders.

But some of the state officials and members of the [presidential] mediation committee [that brokered the ceasefire agreement] said that the Dammaj Salafis left the area at Al-Hajouri's request?

**Al-Ahmadi:** We are sorry to hear that the president's consultant, Faris Al-Sakkaf, is attempting to deny the government's responsibility to protect the residents of Dammaj and the foreign students from the Dar Al-Hadeeth Salafi Seminary, and blame the victims. The Salafis didn't leave their area to go on a stroll! They left because they were subject to murder, displacement and siege.

#### So, in your opinion, the Salafis did not leave Dammaj willingly?

*Al-Ahmadi:* They had to leave because they were afraid of being killed. I believe that this Salafi displacement was premeditated by the Houthis. I remember that in 2011, when the Houthis allowed a team of journalists to visit Dammaj to investigate a siege, a letter was sent from the Houthi's political office to one of the journalists saying that the Salafis should immediately leave or they would be responsible [for

#### Were there any alternative options?

*Al-Ahmadi:* The students we contacted at Dar Al-Hadeeth said they had no other options but to go to Sana'a.

# Were all of the terms of the ceasefire agreement implemented?

Al-Ahmadi: I do not think so. According to a statement from the head of the presidential committee, Yahia Abu Osbu, the Houthis refused to allow for the deployment of the army in Dammaj. This is in violation of the agreement. The problem is that the Houthis [have not defined themselves politically, religiously or socially]. That is to say, their methods are violent, yet they go to Sana'a and give lip service to the National Dialogue [Conference].

### The Houthis have said they use violence for self-defense.

**Al-Ahmadi:** This is not true. The Houthis were the first [group] to sweep across the mountainous areas surrounding Dammaj with their tanks and military equipment. They stormed the area, using a wide variety of weapons, and imposed a



The EASE program focuses on providing humanitarian assistance to displaced people, returnees and host communities in the southern governorates of Yemen. The overarching goal of the EASE program is to the early recovery needs of conflict-affected populations through a holistic approach to rebuilding productive livelihoods and improving WASH outcomes.

As part of the above objectives, Global Communities is planning to distribute WASH Kits to program beneficiaries; as such Global Communities is publishing RFQ: WASH Kit Items (EASE-RFQ-14-01).

Interested vendors can receive the documents for the above mentioned RFQ by contacting the email address listed below. The below information & qualifications must be submitted with the quotation:

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- 2. Valid Commercial Record ID card
- Valid Tax ID Card
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#### The last date for submission of quotations is (6th Feb'14).

Accompanying data, background information, Terms of Reference, WASH Kit Item specifications and other requirements for this RFQ are available upon request.

For further information about this (RFQ) please contact: Email: <u>Procurement-EASE@globalcommunitiesyemen.org</u>

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# في حوار مع «يمن تايمز».. الأحمدي: خروج السلفيين من دماج خطر يهدد النسيج الإجتماعي اليمني المضلع: هناك خطر عليهم وليس منهم

بعد ما يزيد عن ثلاثة أشهر من حرب شعواء في دماج بمحافظة صعدة حصدت أرواح مئات القتلى والجرحى، خرج السلفيون من دماج بناء على اتفاق رعاه الرئيس عبد ربه منصور هادي لوقف الحرب .. لكن هذا الخروج لم يأتي كما اشتهاه السلفيون بقيادة زعيمهم رئيس مركز دار الحديث يحيى الحجوري، كما يقولون، إذ تم رفض انتقالهم للحديدة.. وكانت العاصمة صنعاء هي الحاضنة.. وهكذا بين ليلة وضحاها تحول سلفيو دماج إلى مشردين في مساجد العاصمة صنعاء بلا مأوى وسط أوضاع معيشية غاية في الصعوبة.. ماهي خلفيات خروج السلفيين من دماج وكيف تم الإتفاق على ذلك، ومن المسؤول عن تشردهم وتحول قضيتهم إلى أزمة إنسانية.. «خروج السلفيين من دماج و تداعيات إقامتهم في صنعاء» موضوع هذا الحوار الذي تستضيف فيه الصحيفة كلا من الناشط الحقوقي والباحث في شؤون الجماعات السلفية محمد الأحمدي ورئيس جمعية الإحسان الخيرية إحدى الجمعيات العاملة في مجال إغاثة المهاجرين من دماج ولد الضلع..



#### حوار وتصوير/ محمد الحسني

أبدأ معك محمد الأحمدي.. هل لديك تفاصيل عن خلفيات الإتفاق الذي تم بموجبه خروج السلفيين من دماج؟

في الحقيقة كان هناك خياران لا ثالث لهما إما الموت البطيء على أيدي مليشيات الحوثي التي قصفت دماج بمختلف الأسلحة الثقيلة والمتوسط وإما خروج أهالي دماج منها وإنقاذ من تبقى فيها.. كانت هناك حياة غاية في الصعوبة يصعب الاستمرار فيها أكثر إثر ما يزيد عن ثلاثة أشهر من القصف والحصار.. وللعلم ليس هذا أول تهجير يقوم به الحوثي، فقد هجر في السابق وعقب الحروب الستة التي شنت المحافظة نحو 30 الفا من أهالي صعدة وقبل ذلك هجرت يهود آل سالم.

#### ولكن ألم يكن خروج السلفيين من دماج بمحض إرادتهم وجاء بناء على اقتراح قدموه في اتفاق وقف إطلاق النار؟

لم يكن اقتراحا، وإنما بحسب السلفيين أنفسهم هم فوضوا رئيس الجمهورية باعتباره ولي الأمر، لكنه تنصل عن مسؤوليته في حمايتهم، وكانوا لمدة ثلاثة أشهر يستغيثون بالدولة ويطلبون حمايتها وبالعالم، ولكن لم يسمعهم أحد.. الدولة تحاول التنصل من مسؤوليتها في جريمة التهجير، وهذا غير مبرر في الحقيقة، لأنه لو كانت الدولة جادة في إنقاذ أهالي دماج لكان عليها أن تتحمل المسوؤلية في بقاءهم في موطنهم.. المادة الثالثة من الإعلان العالمي لحقوق الإنسان تؤكد حق كل فرد الإقامة في أي مكان في حدود الدولة.

لكن عدداً من مسؤولي الدولة وأعضاء لجنة الوساطة تحدثوا أن

من دماج كان من اختيارهم؟ الم لم يكونوا مختارين بل خرجوا، كما ذكرت <sup>ال</sup> وأنا أؤكد لك أن نية الحوثي في تهجير السلفيين كانت مبيته منذ فترة.. وأنا أتذكر **و** انه في العام 2011 عندما سمح لوفد من الصحفيين بزيارة دماج والتأكد من حصار <sup>ال</sup> دماج وصلت رسالة من المكتب الإعلامي <sup>ال</sup> للحوثي لأحد الزملاء تقول أبلغوا السلفيين <sup>م</sup> بالخروج فورا ما لم فقد أعذر من انذر.

#### اسمح لي أن أنتقل إلى الأستاذ خالد المضلع.. هل تعتقد أن السلفيين بخروجهم من دماج الآن أفضل حالا من بقائهم فيها؟

الوضع بلا شك مأساوي.. وكان وضع السلفيين في دماج في اعْتقادي أسوأ مما عليه الآن.. عندما خرجوا من دماج لم يرتبوا لانتقالهم ولا لإقامتهم، حيث كانوا ربما ينتظرون من الدولة بسط نفوذها على منطقتهم ومناطق الحرب ليبقوا ف مناطقهم.. لكن جاءهم قرار الخروج فجأةً، كما كانت المدة التي أعطيت لهم لتجهيز خروجهم أربعة أو خمسة أيام، وهى مدة قصيره جداً.. فكان وضعهم سيئا عندما وصلوا إلى صنعاء، ونحن في الجمعية بدأنا باستقبالهم في منطقة حاشّد في عمران.. يعنى قبل وصولَهم إلى العاصمة صَنعاء، وقد وفرنا سيارة إسعاف وكمية الغذاء والحاحبات الضرورية التي يحتاجونها.. وفي صنعاء الآن لا تزال أكثر من 700 أسرة عالقَّة بحاجة إلى مأوى وإلى سكن.

#### يعني الوضع بالنسبة للسلفين في صنعاء أفضل من وضعهم في دماج؟ ليس هناك شك.. فقد زار وفد من جمعيتنا

ليس هناك شك.. فقد زار وفد من جمعيتنا من انتهاكات. الشيخ الحجوري عندما كان في دماج.. الوضع

الشعبي في الحديدة لرفض إقامة الشيخ كان تنسيقنا وترتيباتنا بشكل كامل يتم الحجوري وطلاب مركز دار الحديث في مع رئيس مركز دار الحديث الشيخ يحيى محافظتهم. نخاطبها..ولسنافي الحقيقة كجمعيات خيرية وهل كانت هناك خبارات أخرى مهتمين بالتخاطب مع الحهات الرسمية في

وحمل فصحت تعليق العيارات (عربي) بديلة؛ الحقيقة، وبحسب تواصلنا مع طلاب دار الحديث، لم يكن هناك أية خيارات أخرى مطروحة إلا التوجه إلى العاصمة صنعاء.

هل تعتقد أن الاتفاقية سندوم بخروج السلفيين من دماج؟ لا اعتقد.. لأنه وبحسب تصريحات رئيس اللجنة الرئاسية يحيى أبو اصبع، فقد رفض الحوثيون نشر قوات الجيش في دماج.. هذا يعتبر نقض للاتفاقية من طرف الحوثي.. الإشكالية في جماعة الحوثي أنها حتى الآن لم تعرف نفسها للشعب اليمني فهي تمارس العنف وتشارك في السياسة.

لكن الحوثيون يقولون إن لجوئهم للعنف هو اضطرارا وللدفاع عن أنفسيهم؟

غير صحيح.. الحوثيون من زحفوا أولا بدباباتهم وعتادهم العسكري إلى جميع الجبال المحيطة بدماج وبدأوا يقصفون المنطقة بمختلف الأسلحة وفرضوا حصارا خانقا على أهاليها.. إذا كان الحوثيون كما يدعون أنهم يدافعون عن أنفسهم لماذا يغلقون محافظة صعدة أمام وسائل الإعلام ويمنعون دخولها إليها.. هناك وفد من وسائل الإعلام كان يرغب بزيارة دماج قبل شهر للإطلاع على الوضع هناك فرفض الحوثي دخولهم.. هذا يدل على أن

نخاطبها.. ولسنافي الحقيقة كجمعيات خيرية رات أخرى مسألة خروج السلفيين من دماج وإقامتهم مسألة خروج السلفيين من دماج وإقامتهم مسألة خروج السلفيين من دماج وإقامتهم خيارات أخرى مق صنعاء.. نحن في وضع إغاثي طارئ لهؤلاء نحيارات أخرى مق صنعاء.. نحن في وضع إغاثي طارئ لهؤلاء نحيارات أخرى مق صنعاء.. نحن في وضع إغاثي طارئ لمؤلاء نحيارات أخرى مق صنعاء.. نحن في وضع إغاثي طارئ لمؤلاء نحيارات أخرى مق صنعاء.. نحن في اعتقادي أن مسألة البحث عن مق صنعاء. مع صنعاء. مق صنعاء.. نحن في التسكين.. في التعذية.. من من مريد من طلاب دار الحديث ريحات رئيس الخاص المغر إلى قريته، حيث كان بينهم من يريد

ذلك فنقوم بتوفير له اللازم. هل يمكن أن تصف لنا الوضع العيشي للسلفيين المتواجدين هنا في صنعاء؟

هذاك نحو 700 أسرة لم تحصل حتى الآن على مأوى.. الرجال في مسجد والنساء في مسجد آخر وبحاجة إلى إعاشة.. بالنسبة وللنساء في مسجدهن.. والرجل لا يستطيع الإلتقاء بأهله إلا بالإتصال بهم أول ومن ثم اللقاء إن سمحت الظروف خارج المسجد.. هناك نحو 200 أسرة من المهجرين وضعهم مناك نحو 200 أسرة من المهجرين وضعهم الرجال اللذين ليس لهم عوائل فحالتهم إلى حد ما مأساوية، لأننا نعطي الأولوية لوضع الأسر والنساء والأطفال من حيث السكن والتعذية والجانب الصحى.

هل هم موزعون الآن على مساجد سعوان فقط؟

لا.. هم موزعون على عدة مساجد في صنعاء أبرزها مسجد السنة الذي في سعوان ومسجد الفردوس الذي تتواجد فيه النساء، وهناك ثلاثة أو أربعة مساجد أخرى في العاصمة يتواجد بها المهجرون كأفراد وكعوائل، فيها أقارب لهم.. وعموما هناك مشكلة فيها أقارب لهم.. وعموما هناك مشكلة كبيرة في تسكين جميع المهجرين بسبب عددهم الكبير وعدم وجود ترتيبات مسبقة لانتقالهم إلى صنعاء، وسمعت منهم أن رئيس الجمهورية بحسب ظنهم قد يكون قد هيأ لهم سكنا خاصا عندما أمرهم بالخروج.

حضرموت التي تقدم مشاريع كثيرة.

هناك من يتحدث عن توجه لتسكين من خرجوا من دماج في حديقة 21 مارس التي كانت في السابق مقرا لقيادة الفرقة الأولى مدرع؟

بصراحة ليس لدي معلومات عن ذلك.. والحقيقة يؤسفني أن نحتار إلى أين نذهب بهم، رغم أنهم هجروا بعد ثلاثة أشهر من الحصار، والمفترض أن الدولة خلال هذه المدة تكون قد رتبت مسألة إنتقالهم وجهزت الاحتياجات لذلك.. والحديث عن نقلهم إلى معسكر الفرقة في اعتقادي ليس إلا من باب المكايدة السياسية، والقضية هي إنسانية بامتياز، وعلى هذا يجب أن يتعامل معها الجميع.

هل انتم مع من يؤكد على ضرورة دراسة وضع أي منطقة أخرى سيتم نقل سلفيي دماج إليها مستقبلا؟

صحيح.. ولكن كان يجب ذلك قبل أن تحل المأساة الإنسانية من تهجيرهم دون ترتيب، وكما قلت لك كان على الدولة أن ترتب لخروجهم وانتقالهم، لكن أن تأمرهم بالخروج ثم تتدارس المنطقة التي سيتم نقلهم إليها.. هذا يعتبر تقصير منها في حقهم.

أعود إليك أخ محمد.. هناك من يرى خروج السلفين من دماج في هذه الفترة خطورة على الوضع السياسي في صنعاء.. كيف ترى ذلك؟

نعم.. ليس على الصعيد السياسي، فهناك أيضا مخاطر محدقة تهدد النسيج الإجتماعي اليمني.. كما أننى استغرب التعامل بازدواجية

اعتقد أن هناك خطر عليهم وليس منهم.. لأن فكرهم قائم على السلمية والتعايش مع الآخر.. وإن كان ينظر إلى بعض الأفكار التي لديهم بأنها أفكار متشددة، لكنها لا تصل إلى حد اللجوء إلى العنف واستخدامه.. إذا استمر تعاطي الدولة مع هذه القضية بنوع من اللامسؤولية ستتفاقم مأساتهم بشكل أكبر، كما سيتسع حجم الغضب الشعبي من موقف الدولة في التعاطي مع القضية.



ماوی.

لا تزال أكثر من 700 أسرة من مهجري السلفيين عالقت في صنعاء وبحاجت إلى

خروج السلفيين من دماج كان بناء

على طلب من شيخهم الحجوري؟ من المؤسف أن نسمع مستشارا لرئيس الجمهورية يحاول التنصل عن مسؤولية الأجانب الدارسين في مركز دار الحديث والقاء المسؤولية على الضحية.. ألا يكفي والتهجير والحصار.. لذلك لم يخرجوا من موطنهم للنزهة وإنما لحالة الضيق التي لم يعودوا يطيقونها بسبب الحصار والقصف.

يعني أنك تنفي أن خروج السلفيين

سيء جدا لا يستطيع الرجل مُنهم أن يلتقي أهله، فالرجال في مكان والنساء والأطفال في مكان آخر لا يلتقون لا في أوقات من الليل.. وهنا بالنسبة لهم في صنعاء سيئ، لكن على الأقل هم في مأمن من نيران وقذائف المدافع والدبابات.

اعود إليك أستاذ محمد.. كان من المقرر إنتقال السلفيين إلى الحديدة كيف تم تغيير المكان إلى صنعاء؟ صحيح.. كان بحسب الإتفاق إنتقالهم إلى الحديدة، لكن قوى في النظام السابق حالت دون ذلك، وتحركت فيما يشبه التحرك

ومادا عن حديث عن خطر الطلاب الأجانب الدارسين في دماج؟ غير صحيح.. لم يشكلوا أي تهديد أمني لليمن.. وأتحدى الحوثي أن يأتي ببلاغ واحد من وزارة الداخلية على مدى 30 سنة يتعلق بأحد الأجانب الدارسين في دار الحديث، أو أنه قام بعملية إرهابية، أو أية أعمال عنف خلال هذه الفترة.

اسمح لي أن انتقل إلى خالد.. ما مدى تعاون الجهات المعنية في الدولة أنتم كجمعيات في ترتيبات نقل السلفيين من دماج؟

هل هناك جمعيات أخرى تعمل إلى كيم جانبكم؟ نعم.. هناك عدة جمعيات، مثلا جمعية وادى الذي

مَن قَبَّل المنظَّمات الحقوقية الدولية مع تهجير السلفيين، حيث نسمع عشرات بيانات الإدانة في قضايا حقوقية بينما لم نسمع منظمة واحدة أدانت تهجير السلفيين من دماج كحق إنساني.. من المؤسف أن العالم قد بلغ مرحلة متقدمة في الحقوق الإنسانية ونحن في اليمن نتحدث عن أبسط الحقوق الغائبة كالحق في الحياة والحق في الإقامة.

كيفتنظر إلى مستقبل المهجرين في ظل الاضطراب الأمني والسياسي الذي تعيشه صنعاء؟





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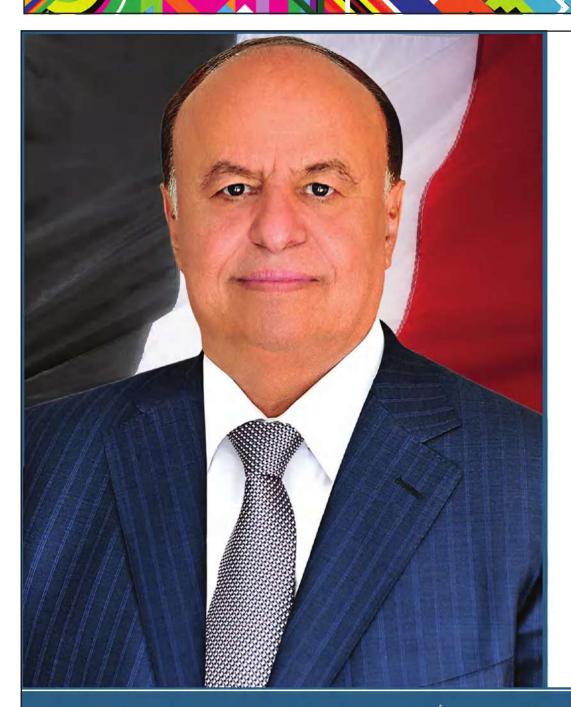
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# Living without the state in Cairo's slums

Irinnews.org First Published Jan. 21

or the residents of the Middle East and Africa's largest city, Cairo, 2013 ended with the often repeated government promise to finally provide basic services and development in the slums, where half of the city's residents live.

But instead of waiting for Prime Minister Hazem Al-Beblawi's slum renewal project, announced in November, to bear fruit, many are simply coping as best they can without the state.

When basic services are lacking, it is often down to slum dwellers to use their own initiative. They dig land, construct septic tanks and water pipes, install storage barrels, and raise community funds to get private engineers to build sewage pipes and connect them to the main network.

"These communities have an inherent self-reliance in finding ways to get by," said Thomas Culhane, co-founder of Solar CITIES, an NGO that invests in solar and renewable energy in poor communities.

Few sit around waiting for the government to fulfil its promises.

"There's a lot of mistrust among slum residents regarding the government's intentions. They've been promised so many things, yet nothing's been delivered," said Khalil Shaat, technical advisor at the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ).

According to official government figures, Cairo has 112 informal areas. Out of those, 24 are classified as "category I", or life-threatening. Twenty-eight are "category II", meaning unsuitable housing; 11 are "category III", meaning health-threatening; and 49 are "planned".

Ezzat Naem Guindy, the founder

of the Spirit of Youth Association for Environmental Service (SOY), which works in Manshiet Nasser, one of Cairo's largest slums, says the area is a "model" in terms of self-reliance. While the government is not completely absent, poor infrastructure and the irregular provision of public services create serious problems.

IRIN took a look at how Manshiet Nasser slum residents survive, and how they compensate for the lack of state support with their own networks of services.

#### Water and sewage

Most informal areas in Cairo find ways to access water and electricity, though Shaat estimates only 20 to 30 percent of homes are connected to the formal water network. Almost 60 percent are hooked up to an informal network, while around 10 percent have no water at all. No more than 5 to 10 percent of these areas have a formal sewage network, with the rest getting rid of waste water through septic tanks, many prone to leaking.

Back in the mid-1980s, the World Bank granted funding to the Cairo governorate to supply Manshiet Nasser with water, sewage and electricity. "Only half of the money had been spent because of corruption leaving many parts of the area cut off," Guindy told IRIN. Two main sewage and water pipes were built, too few for the 65,000 residents of Moqattam Village, part of Manshiet Nasser, he says.

Less than half of the residents, mainly living in the lower zone, access water regularly – though with frequent interruptions. In the upper zone, things are far worse says Guindy. Until recently, they only had water in the taps on Sundays, when recycling workshops - which operate with water-intensive machinery - are closed; that is when they fill



Menshiet Nasser - home of the zabaleen [rubbish collectors] and one of Cairo's largest slums. [Date picture taken: 06/17/2006]

up private water tanks for the rest of the week.

"Four months ago, we raised 300 Egyptian pounds [\$43] from each family to buy a big engine, and placed it at the top of the lower zone's pipe to pump water up," said Guindy. Water now runs three to four hours a day outside of Sundays.

Those living in other streets have installed their own private connections to the main water or sewer. "I see water coming at night time," resident Said told IRIN. "I store it in tanks to use during the day."

After pressure from the local community, the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Cairo's governor visited Manshiet Nasser around three months ago. A project was subsequently announced to provide new water and sewage networks, and it has been promised that the whole area will be supplied by September 2014.

velop their own solutions for waste.

The so-called Zabaleen, or rubbish

#### Waste disposal

Slum dwellers have also had to de-

pickers, collect 9,000 tons of rubbish every day – almost two-thirds of the estimated 15,000 tons produced by the city each day. They collect and dispose of garbage, recycling 85 percent of it.

"We can sort and reuse all materials. It's a very good value system,' said Guindy.

As for organic waste, most people either take their rubbish to informal landfills or pay garbage pickers to collect their rubbish door-to-door. The Ministry of Environment

has been working on a new formal

scheme to contract 12 companies to clean Moqattam and three other districts of Cairo, though residents are waiting to see the results.

Report 11

#### **Education and health**

Slums housing thousands of Egyptians often have just one or two governmental schools. There is only one public school in Manshiet Nasser catering for around 2,000 school pupils, with each classroom having over 70 children.

Continued on the back page



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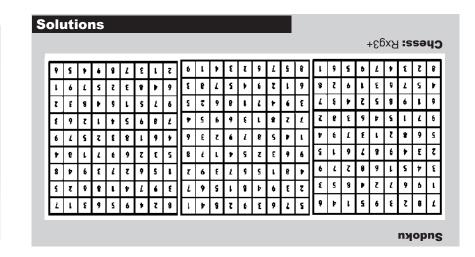
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Tim Clark, President Emirates Airline, receives a signed shirt from Real Madrid President Florentino Perez during a meeting in Dubai.

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#### **Continued from page 11**

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#### Living without the state in Cairo's slums

"Vocational training in areas like plumbing, electricity, mechanics or construction should be integrated into formal education to allow kids to study, graduate and move on to work life," GIZ's Shaat told IRIN.

He observed that education programs should also tackle the high drop-out rate, as widespread poverty pushes a lot of children out of school to help their families.

Mashiet Nasser has only two public healthcare facilities, both poorly serviced. Instead, residents largely depend on private centers, which are also poorly equipped, and char-

ity. "Like in any slum, the government is not around here to provide services widely. We have no police stations, no firefighters either,"

Guindy told IRIN.

"We only have St. Simon church hospital. The nearest [state] hospital is a half an hour drive from here," said Antonis, owner of a recycling workshop in Moqattam. He complained about the government not helping in the slum. Residents have to rely on community leaders to lobby government officials to get what is needed.

#### Putting the civil in society

Major interventions are generally the work of civil society organizations; at least four associations and two churches are serving Manshiet Nasser.

SOY offers non-formal education programs that build literacy and skills through vocational training

at a "recycling school". So far, they have helped 250 boys get certificates from primary school. Twenty-five of them have enrolled in preparatory school, 10 of whom are now in high school

In addition, SOY's recycling school provides hepatitis and tetanus vaccines; teachers carry out home visits to raise awareness about healthcare, hygiene and reproductive health; and doctors are invited to speak in monthly forums.

Since 1984, another NGO, the Association for the Protection of the Environment (APE), has worked with the Zabaleen and others in the slums to improve health, income and education, with a focus on women and children. Among its various programs, APE runs literacy

and preparatory classes for girls, and teaches them vocational skills such as rug weaving and patchwork recycling.

"We have numerous health programs including hepatitis B and C prevention, health awareness, and monthly provision of blood tests, medicines and healthy food to the poorest families," said Bakhit Mettry, who manages APE's recycling project.

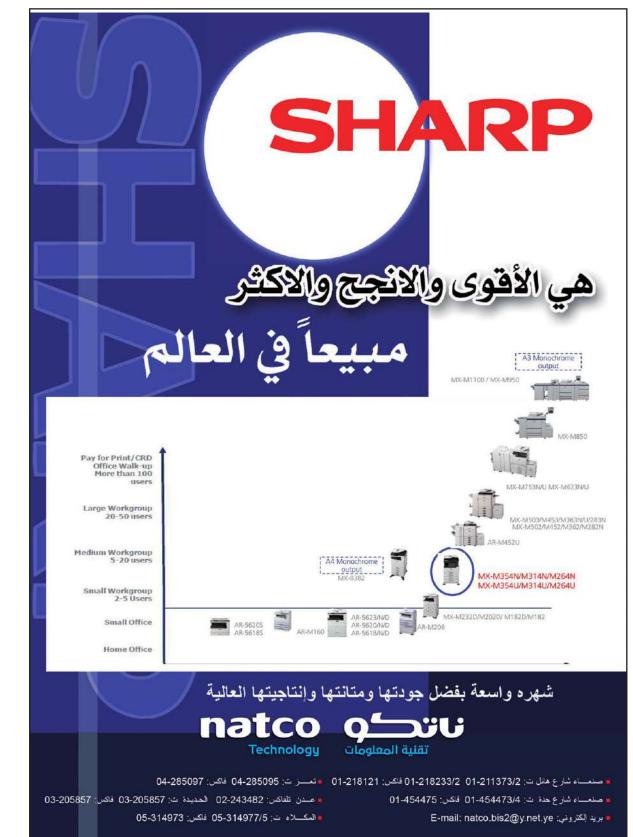
Nevertheless, Mettry lamented the poor state of Mogattam's streets, saving it should be the government's responsibility to pave roads.

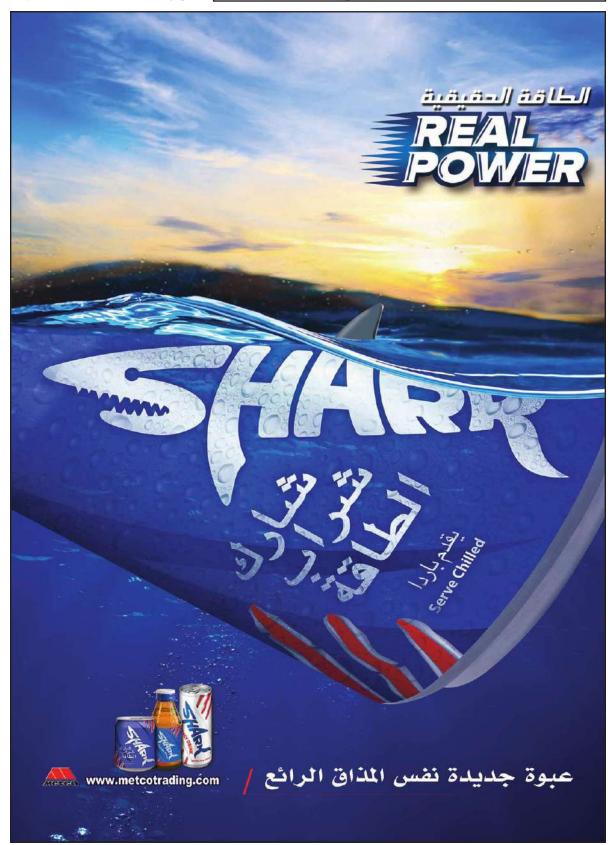
Slum dwellers want to believe the year ahead will be different, and that the next government will seriously engage on the ground. Until then, they will continue to fill in the gaps.



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