



**SAM**  
Rights & Liberties

A series of publications  
documenting human rights  
violations in Yemen 1

**Part One**



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**December 2024**

## **The Most Severe Torture**

From the depths of Yemeni prisons... Some of  
the stories and details narrated by the tortured





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of the stories and details narrated by the  
tortured

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violations in Yemen

The most severe torment, part one

A series of stories that recount some of the  
details told by torturers in prisons

# Contents:

Introduction.....	8
Chapter: Between Life and Death.....	12
Nashwan Moqbel Saeed Saif.....	13
What Life am I Living Now?.....	18
A Human Mass in Pain and Tears.....	23
Chapter: Stories and Details from the Largest and Harshest Prisons in Yemen.....	28
A Tear in the Presence of Blood and Memories.....	29
What is "Al-Saleh" Prison? Who are the Prisoners? Testimony of a Journalist and Two Young People.....	35
Stand for the Teacher and Torture Him.....	43
Blind as a Sniper.....	51
Taliban.....	54
Execution by Running Over.....	61
Voices from Al-Saleh for Exchanging Civilians with War Prisoners.....	63
Calling a Dead Person.....	69
Went to Collect the Salary, But They Took Him Instead.....	72
The Prison Visitor.....	74
Chapter: Stories and Details from Other Prisons Affiliated with the Houthi Group.....	84
Tremor of an Academic Without a Lab Coat.....	85

## The Most Severe Torture

Dry Eyes.. Blood on the Back.....	92
Consolation in the Majz Prison.....	96
The Target Above the Tree.....	103
How to Communicate with the Prince?.....	108
Scabies, the End of the Journey.....	114
The Weight of a Qat Seller.....	121
Mossad Stealing Rent from Internally Displaced People.....	126
The Tragedy of a Honey Seller.....	131
The Child Grows Through Torture.....	139
Political Security Cells.....	150
Escaping During Bombing.....	157
The Infidel Inside the Mosque.....	160
The Owner of the Apartment's Furniture.....	163
Chapter: Equality of Women in Torture Shares "Stories and Details of Yemeni Women in Prison Dungeons".....	167
Death Rather Than Prison Torture.....	168
The Price of Rejecting Temptation.....	172
Demanding a Body Leads a Woman to a Cell Like a Grave..	176
The Temptation of the Girl on Display.....	181
So Children Don't Get Lost.....	186
My Brother Died of Shock.....	190
Women in the Grip of Pressures.....	194

Chapter: Stories and Details from Prisons: "Southern Transitional Council, UAE Units, and Legitimate Intelligence" .....	199
Schemes of Harsh Revenge.....	200
Until Now, I Don't Know the Charges.....	209
Naked Inside the Cage.....	215
The Doctor Refuses to Liquidate the Sheikh.....	220
Who Are You?.....	229
Emirati Secret Behind Al-Qaeda's Villa.....	235
Between the Palace and the Airport.....	250
The Instigator.....	254
Pressure on the Wanted Person.....	256
A Prisoner in Ma'rib.....	258

## Introduction:

They were not fighters, and they were not on the battlefield. Between the pages of this report are painful stories and details of civilians who were arrested from the streets, workplaces, or their homes after terrifying raids. They were then subjected to the most severe torture in unknown dungeons and cells whose locations they did not know, while others knew them. There were masked executioners and others with their faces uncovered.

The prison guards left their marks on the bodies of the victims, it is difficult to erase any evidence of the severity of the torture: a body pierced with a solid tool, another paralyzed and unable to move, a detainee unable to lift a kilogram with his hand, another haunted by memories of sexual assaults, and a girl experiencing attempted rape during interrogation. These are just a few of the many details that took us a long time to uncover and listen to from the victims.

Some died after giving their testimonies, and many of those who were released were unable to recount everything that had happened to them to the observers who risked reaching out to them and sitting with them. The tears interrupted



many conversations, and the engraved signs of torture on their bodies spoke louder than the words of the tortured themselves. The executioner and the prison cell still reside within each detainee, and every victim searches for any means to distance themselves from the harsh memories.

In the realm of torture inside the detention facilities, there is no distinction between males and females despite the differences that exist outside. The details of the women who have been subjected to torture often remain hidden behind the walls of customs and traditions. Women are forced to suppress their suffering, fearing disdainful glances. However, we have documented, to the best of our ability, stories that no one could have imagined occurring in a land that once held a place of honor for women since the time of Queen Bilqis.

The accounts of the detainees resembled one another, just as the methods of torture used against them were similar. Each detainee spoke about their experiences as if narrating what had happened to another detainee in a different cell, in a city hundreds of kilometers away.

After presenting the details to our research tools, scrutinizing them, and finding the connections between them in terms of location, history, and shared experiences among different

## The Most Severe Torture

detainees, we were committed to crafting the stories in a way that captures the innermost depths of the victims—their emotions, questions, sighs, and cries—as a triumph for their humanity. We were careful not to deviate from the details and information provided by the victims, to maintain the integrity of our documentation methodology and uphold the truth.

These stories took place in cities far from the frontlines, but the detainees in these cities were threatened with death to force them to confess to crimes they had no connection to, charges they did not commit. Some of them were targeted for airstrikes, while others were deprived of food for days. Some had their chests slashed with a knife, and many of them were subjected to simulated executions, either by gunfire, running over, or setting them on fire.

Within the pages of this report lie numerous heartbreaking stories, and there are still realities that remain unseen and unrecorded. The detainee has changed the lives of thousands of people, just as the stories of the detainees have influenced everyone involved in this report, convincing us not to leave a detainee without hearing from them, listening to them, and informing you of what transpires behind the silent walls devoid of ventilation openings.

This is some of what we have been able to gather and publish as a first part in a series that aspires to serve as a window for historical documentation of the victims of unlawful detentions. We hope that this section will break down the barrier of fear among the victims, who have chosen silence over revealing the details of the atrocities they have endured.

Once again, we hope that this report will find its echo and serve as an incentive to document and reveal the secrets of prisons.

# Chapter:

## Between Life and Death

**Name: Nashwan Moqbel  
Saeed Saif**

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: March 2017*

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The monitoring team saw evidence of torture on the head of the marginalized Nashwan Saeed including wounds on his knees, as well as holes in his leg that caused a disability in his right limb. They also observed the marks of nail removal from his feet and flesh stripping from his thighs. Additionally, the team obtained a medical report from a government hospital indicating that Nashwan Saeed suffers from chronic liver fibrosis with ascites resulting from liver poisoning.

Speaking to the team before his death, Nashwan Saeed recounted the details of what happened to him after he was kidnapped by Houthi members at a checkpoint in the Al-Hawban area, east of Taiz, and taken to the residential city of Al-Saleh, which they turned into



*The marginalized refused to enlist with the Houthis, they removed his fingernails and toenails, beat him with a wood, put stones on his back, removed meat from his thighs, punctured his leg with a hard object, and he suffered liver poisoning*

*Bilal'S grandson before his death*

their largest prison in the country: "At midnight, Houthi investigators came to me. They blindfolded me, tied my hands behind my back, and chained my legs. They demanded that I join their fight, but I refused. They threatened to frame me with multiple charges. I told them that I would never enlist. Enlisting is a matter of conviction, not coercion. In response, the investigator sneered, 'It's clear that you're stubborn,' and they began to torture me.

On the first night, they brought pliers and violently ripped off the nails from my hands and feet. The pain was excruciating, and blood was flowing. It caused me intense agony, and I couldn't sleep because of it."

The Houthis refer to the marginalized individuals, including Nashwan, as "Bilal's grandsons," which is a reference to Bilal al-Habashi, one of the companions of Prophet Muhammad. Bilal was a dark-skinned companion who was tortured by the Quraysh in the hot sands of Makkah during the time of Ramadan. It appears that the Houthis use this designation to evoke the emotions of marginalized Yemenis and mobilize them to the frontlines of the conflict in support of the Houthi group's ideology. This ideology is based on a hierarchical system outlined in the document known as the "Divine

Selection," which portrays them as a unique and superior human group compared to others.

Nashwan Saeed's refusal to enlist with the Houthis was indeed shocking to the group.

"They came back to me the other day and offered me to enlist, but I refused too, so they beat me with a wooden stick and left."

The Houthis found it difficult to tame the marginalized individual through torture.

"When the Prophet Muhammad began his call, the Quraysh tortured the Prophet's companions. One of the most well-known methods of torture was inflicted upon Bilal al-Habashi during the scorching heat of midday. They placed rocks on his chest, aiming to break his spirit and force him to abandon the new religion preached by Muhammad. In defiance of their idol worship, as Bilal endured the torment, he would repeatedly recite the following words:

Ahad, Ahad .. Ahad, Ahad.

To some extent, the method of torturing Bilal Al-Habashi is similar to the method of torturing Nashwan Saeed, who

belongs to the category that the Houthis call Bilal's grandsons, on the third day in Al-Saleh detention center, they came with a 'silencer" of a very hot car: «They put him in the inside of the knee muscle while I was in a sitting position, then they bend my head and back on my thighs, and they put a number of stones on my back, and they ordered me to stand, and I couldn't, they increase the number of stones on my back, they remove meat from my thighs and legs, then they come with a hard and sharp instrument and beat it on my head."

There is nothing in historical accounts that indicates the torture of Bilal al-Habashi by piercing his leg with a sharp hard object, 14 centuries ago the methods of torture were not developed in the Arab valley, including the desert inhabited by Quraysh, unlike what the Houthis who tortured Nashwan: «I was tortured with electricity, by a sharp instrument they implant on my leg, and they bring a screwdriver and insert it into the hole that was drilled with drill so that they can enjoy my pain more».

The Houthis continued to torture Nashwan in this way for three weeks, after which they threw him in a solitary cell, in which he suffered liver poisoning "my body was swollen, and my testicles were swollen due to beatings, heat, dirty



clothes, lack of movement or exposure to sunlight, I was not rescued or given any medicines despite their knowledge of the complications of torture on my body and body systems."

A year and six months after his abduction, they took him out of the cell at six in the evening, put a blanket over his eyes and carried him over the trunk of a car belonging to them, they drove him to an area called "Shibam" that belongs to Ibb governorate: «They threw me there on the side of the road, one of the motorcyclists passed by me and carried me to Al-Thawra Hospital in Ibb city, and I underwent surgery for the testicles, I stayed for about a month until I was able to get out, so one of the bus drivers took me to my family in the city of Taiz».

\* Nashwan Saeed died on April 29, 2019, and in a statement, the Association of Mothers of Detainees, Taiz branch, held the Houthi group responsible for his death.



## What life am I living now?

*Name: Mohammed Khalid*

*Mohammed Alhaj*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: March 5, 2018*

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Mohammed alhaj cannot recount the details that paralyzed him, as whenever he enters the conversation he collapses and cries, and soon asks others to leave the place and twists in silence. The most difficult situation in which a person is subjected is to tell the insults he received, the torture that paralyzed his movement, how what happened to a construction worker who works for a daily wage and the basis of his life is based on movement.

Mohammed al-Haj supported and treated his sick mother and took care of his orphaned sisters, from his work as a bricklayer. That was before you saw him paralyzed: "I used to work in one of the buildings next to the ghee and soap



*Mohammed works in construction to support his sick mother and orphan sisters, the Houthis arrested him, tortured him and released him disabled and paralyzed*

factory in Taiz, in order to provide a living for me, my mother and my sisters, I was their only support, I sacrificed my happiness for them. Abu Ali al-Shami came to the building asking for my name, and I answered him: it is me. I was happy and thought he wanted me for work."

Mohammad stopped talking, asked for time to overcome his sorrows, as the joy he felt during the arrival of Abu Ali al-Shami was a joy resulting from his guarantee of a new job in which he guaranteed the continuity of his family's expenses: his sick mother and his orphaned sisters. That joy, however, was the beginning of events that would make him what he is now: a body stretched out on a mattress, paralyzed and unable to move.

Al Haj thought that Al-Shami was a customer of high status since he was accompanied by armed men, and he did not consider him a leader with the Houthi group in the areas they control in the Taiz Governorate. As soon as the name "Mohammed Khalid Mohammed Al-Hajj" was mentioned, Mohammed stood confidently and smiled, believing in the quality of his work, saying, "I am the one you're looking for." At that moment, Mohammed continues speaking, "The man began slapping me on the face without any reason or justification other than me telling him that I am the person he is searching for.

## The Most Severe Torture

There were eight armed men around him, pointing their weapons at me."

Mohammed starts to cry before resuming the narration of the events that followed his transfer to the Salih City Detention Center, which is a residential city that has not been completed yet. The Houthis have turned it into a large, multi-building and multi-purpose detention facility in the Al-Houban area, northeast of Taiz city.

They threw Mohammed into a small room, adding that, "I cannot sleep in it. The room had a foul smell. On the second day, they brought me a meal, and after that, they decided to give me two meals and 75 milliliters of water per day."

Mohammed remained for four days without any interrogation. He kept thinking about his mother and her treatment, saying, "I wanted to reassure her, but how could I?!"

He couldn't find a way to reassure his mother because no one questioned or interrogated him during the three days of his detention. Then, at 4:00 p.m. on the fourth day, they took him for interrogation. When he arrived in front of the investigator, the first thing they asked him was to confess that he was a member of ISIS (Daesh). The Houthis use this accusation against anyone who opposes them, although it

has no connection to the extremist organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Mohammed falls silent for a moment, pondering the meaning of the word "Daeshi." He says, "What does being a 'Daeshi' mean? I am a construction worker, I don't know anything." He lowers his head, then raises it again with tears glistening in his eyes. He continues, "They blindfolded me, handcuffed my hands, and suspended me. The torture began. I endured more than 30 punches and slaps to the face until I passed out. I was bleeding from the nose due to what I had been subjected to."

Mohammed tries to regain control over his tears by resorting to silence for a moment, but his tears continue to flow uncontrollably. Afterward, in a voice trembling with sorrow, he asks the monitoring team to give him a little time.

After half an hour, Mohammed continues narrating the details with his eyes closed. He says, "When I passed out, they hit me on the head with an icy water bottle to wake me up. I was asking them to stop the bleeding, but my pleas fell on deaf ears. I kept asking, 'Why is all of this happening to me? What is the sin I have committed to deserve all of this?'"

Mohammed weeps intensely and curses the Houthis who tortured him. Then he continues, "They repeated the same demand to me.

"Confess you're a member of Daesh?" I don't even know the meaning of that word. They returned to torturing me, but this time they employed a new method. They tied each of my toes separately and pulled them forcefully. The pain was excruciating, and I would scream in agony until I passed out. Every time I passed out, the interrogator would wake me up by hitting me on the head with an icy water bottle. This torture continued from 4:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. I didn't regain consciousness until the second day, finding myself among 30 detainees in an apartment. I kept asking them, "Where am I?"

"They tortured me to the point where I became disabled, unable to stand on my own feet. I entered the detention center in good health, and I became disabled," he says, attempting to move his extended body. He weeps intensely, and tears stream down his face like rain.

"What kind of life am I living now, after becoming disabled and seeing my mother begging people on the streets? What kind of life is this?" Mohammed exclaims. He falls silent, stops speaking, and weeps. He then, through sign language, requests that the monitors leave.



## **A human being in agony, suffering, and crying.**

*Name: Jamal Al Maamari*

*Arrestee: Houthi group and Saleh'S forces*

*Date of arrest: March 2015*

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She tried to meet her husband and locate him among the Houthis, but it was extremely difficult. After two months, she managed to reach him, only to find her husband, Jamal Al-Ma'mari, confined to a wheelchair. She didn't recognize him at first. When he was arrested, he was healthy, fit, and physically active. It is distressing to hear about the transformation of his physical condition from being active and healthy to becoming paralyzed. His wife was initially confused and unsure if it was indeed him. However, she confirmed his identity through the tone of his voice as he recounted the details of the tragedy that befell him. He informed her



*They took Al-Ma'mari from beside his wife and children, looted his car and his brother's house. They sat on his back and consumed khat, dragged him down the stairs, severed his nerve, and punctured his spinal cord.*

that he was subjected to electric torture, where they would stretch his body and place weights on him while they sat on his back and consumed khat. Additionally, they pierced his spinal cord using a drill designed for iron and walls.

Sheikh Jamal Al-Ma'mari has become paralyzed and is unable to go to the bathroom by himself. He relies on specialized diapers for wheelchair users. Did Sheikh Jamal Al-Ma'mari's wife know the reason why the Houthis and men affiliated with former President Ali Abdullah Saleh refused her request to visit her husband for two months?

They would break his back, and after they succeeded, they accepted the request. They brought him in a wheelchair, with both feet burned and the left one swollen. The doctor, Abdulqader Al-Junaid, who was also detained alongside Sheikh Jamal Al-Ma'mari and contributed to his treatment, explains that the burning of Jamal's feet was a result of electric torture.



The electric shocks that the Sheikh endured are related to the electrification that reached the Al-Rajil area. The name of Jamal Al-Ma'mari became associated with the spread of electrical lights in the isolated village of "Ayal Yazid" in the Imran Governorate. He was the one who sought to provide and monitor this service in government institutions before the war. Sheikh Al-Ma'mari's name shone brightly, and he was beloved by the people. However, there were those who were displeased with the social status that Al-Ma'mari achieved through his service to the people. They continued to plot against him, trying to extinguish the light.

When the war broke out, those who had engaged in disputes with Sheikh Al-Ma'mari joined the ranks of the Houthi group. By the time the Houthi group stormed Sana'a, these individuals had become leaders within their ranks. It was time to discipline the man who was staying in a hotel on Airport Street in Sana'a with his wife and three daughters. Six military vehicles filled with armed men stopped at the hotel entrance. The gunmen rushed towards the location, instilling fear in the woman, and the cries of the children grew louder. The armed men took Sheikh Jamal to two different locations.

## The Most Severe Torture

The armed men initially took Jamal Al-Ma'mari to a secret detention center known as the "hidden prison," which was located in the basement of a villa belonging to Ali Mohsen. They raided the homes of leaders whom they considered as adversaries, and one of those houses was the villa of the Vice President at that time and the commander of the northwestern military region, which had engaged in six wars against the Houthi group.

On the same day, they also looted Sheikh Al-Ma'mari's car, in addition to looting the house of his brother near the new airport.

Sheikh Al-Ma'mari remained in the villa detention center for 20 days before being transferred to the National Security Prison in the Sarf area. Throughout a month and a half, he was subjected to torture, resulting in the loss of his ability to move. His hands were bound behind his back, and they would lay him down as a mattress and sit on his back while chewing qat. They placed a "shala" between his armpits and arms, and one of the torturers would pull it from his head on the ground, while another person would pull it from his ankles at the same time.

The two armed individuals dragged Al-Ma'mari up and down the stairs, while a third person kicked him on the side of his buttocks. This violence led to the severing of the brachial plexus nerves in his left arm and damage to the femoral nerve in the iliac region, resulting in paralysis of the left side of his body.

According to the doctor, Al-Junaid, who was also detained in the same prison, Sheikh Al-Ma'mari was subjected to torture with a drill used for drilling solid objects. They brought it from another cell, and he was reduced to a mere human mass, in pain and crying, requiring at least two prisoners to assist him.



# Chapter:

**Stories and details of Yemen's  
biggest and most cruel  
detention centers**

## Tears flowed in the presence of blood and memories

*Name: Abdulhamid Jaafar*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: August 2015*

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"No one should approach him; he will detonate himself," the Houthi supervisor warned his armed men, cautioning them against stopping the bleeding of the wounded man who was only dressed in his own clothes.

The supervisor had attacked Abdulhamid Jafar with a blow to the head, followed by a gunshot from his pistol that struck Abdulhamid, causing him to fall to the ground. His wife thought they had killed him and screamed out in a voice filled with anguish, "They killed Abdulhamid... They killed Abdulhamid."

Their young child, not yet five years old, cried uncontrollably as blood and tears streamed down. Meanwhile, the Houthi



*The supervisor shot him in front of his wife and children, prevented others from stopping his bleeding, threw him in detention without medicines, tortured him, prevented him from entering the bathroom, falsely informed him of his daughter's death and prevented him from communicating with his family for two years.*

leader turned towards the wife and shot at her, hurling insults and aggressively snatching the touchscreen phone from her hand in front of the men who had meticulously planned Abdulhamid's arrest.

Abdulhamid was next to his house when a stranger approached him, stating that he wanted to rent his chicken farm. Abdulhamid extended his hospitality, offered him qat, and they initially agreed on the rental of the farm. At that moment, the man mentioned that he would contact his partners to come immediately and see the farm.

Indeed, two more individuals arrived, making the total number of partners three. Abdulhamid got up to walk with them towards the chicken farm when he was taken aback by the presence of ten armed men behind the house. Their leader pointed his pistol at Abdulhamid's head, while another gunman aimed his rifle at his abdomen. "What do you want?" he asked them.

"You are wanted at Al-Saleh Detention Center," the supervisor replied.

Abdulhamid complied willingly and accompanied them. The supervisor asked him for his small phone, and he handed it over without resistance. The supervisor searched it but found

nothing of interest. Then he requested the touchscreen phone, but Abdulhamid refused to hand it over, saying, "It contains all the pictures of my eldest daughter on her wedding day."

The supervisor insisted on taking the phone, and Abdulhamid threw it towards his wife, who received a blow to the head with the handle of the supervisor's pistol. Immediately after, a gunshot was fired, hitting Abdulhamid in the left thigh, causing him to fall to the ground. The supervisor turned towards Abdulhamid's wife, verbally abused her, fired shots in her direction, and forcefully confiscated the phone from her.

Abdulhamid remembers the scene vividly, and he closes his eyes, succumbing to intense crying.

They carried him, injured, to the Al-Saleh City Detention Center. No one helped him control the bleeding caused by the supervisor's bullet. He removed his shirt and tore it to make a makeshift bandage for the wound. Afterwards, they took him to a nearby rural hospital, where he received initial medical treatment. Abdulhamid felt the pain of his injuries and the anguish of his ordeal, wondering, "What crime have I committed to be treated with such cruelty?"

They returned him to a cell in the residential area of Al-Saleh without any medication or sedatives. He was placed in an extremely cramped room with no bathroom or ventilation. The place was infested with insects and filled with filth and rotting food remnants. Abdulhamid's phones were with the supervisor, and whenever someone called him, the armed men would immediately go and arrest the caller, regardless of who it was. At that time, both the Houthis and Saleh forces had sent more than 11 military vehicles to the street in front of Abdulhamid Jafar's house. They arrested anyone passing through, and the number of detainees reached 60 people. The Houthis would say, "These are Jafar's gang members."

On that same night, they also forced Abdulhamid's wife and children to flee their home. Then, they stormed the house and looted all the gold, money, property documents, and other belongings within it.



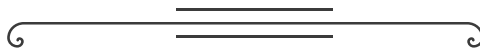
Abdulhamid pauses in his speech, crying intensely. He doesn't want to remember what happened in the detention center—the denial of access to the bathroom, the agony of crawling on his wounded leg, and the iron shackles on his knee. Whenever he needed to relieve himself, he had to do so inside empty containers. They either hit his elbows or tugged at his ears if he tried to move away even slightly from his designated spot. He was deprived of his basic human rights.

"Every day, I experienced various forms of psychological and emotional torture," he says.

On one fateful day, they informed Abdulhamid that a shell had hit the Revolution Hospital in Taiz, where his beloved eldest daughter, the cherished bride whose wedding pictures he had kept on his touchscreen phone, was working. They told him that the shell had killed his daughter. He collapsed in grief, remembering the moment as if it had already happened. He sobs uncontrollably, and his heart will not find solace regarding his daughter until two years later when the Houthis allowed him to make two brief phone calls per year, each lasting no more than two minutes.

Abdulhamid fell into a half-hour fit of crying, and when he regained his breath, he moved on to the period beyond the sixth month of his detention. They opened the door to the unventilated room where they were holding him, submerged in filth and insects. In the apartment where he was detained, he found more than 25 other detainees whom they labeled as "senior ISIS members." Some of the detainees were subjected to severe torture involving electric shocks, the grill method, and various other methods. Abdulhamid experienced torture on a monthly basis, but his suffering was compounded by the pain in his leg from the supervisor's bullet, in addition to the torture equal to that endured by some of the other detainees.

"After five years of detention, the Houthis released Abdulhamid Jafar on December 19, 2019, as part of a prisoner exchange deal between the National Army forces and the Houthi group."



*Testimonies from a journalist and two young men shed light on the largest detention centers used by the Houthis in Yemen.*

## **What is Al Salih Prison? Who are the prisoners?**

-1-

### **Tayseer Al Samai**

Many things attracted journalist Taysir Al-Samai in the detention center. He didn't enter it as a visitor but as a detained person, forcibly taken from his village. The Houthi group did not spare journalists and media workers, as they attacked Yemeni media institutions, raided their offices, closed them down, and confiscated their contents. Journalists were displaced, some were imprisoned, and dozens lost their jobs, including Al-Samai, who returned to the village to shepherd the sheep.

The Houthis spared journalist Taysir from the hardship of herding sheep and took him to the Salih City detention center, where he witnessed and lived the life of a journalist. This prison is extremely bad, and most of those who were detained

## The Most Severe Torture

in Taiz are transferred to this prison. It used to be a residential city before the buildings were converted into private prisons. Each building has a name: the General Prison, Student Prison, Adult Prison, Insane Prison, and some cells are named after the supervisors: Abu Kamil Building, Abu Laith Building, and so on. Each building has a team of torturers and tortured individuals who were abducted from the roads.

The Salih City detention center lacks the most basic humanitarian necessities. There are no beds or blankets, and most of the detainees sleep on the floor tiles. If they manage to get a blanket, it is small and extremely dirty. The Houthis have sealed the unfinished building windows, leaving only small openings to be used as cells. The sanitation conditions are extremely poor, leading to the spread of insects such as lice and fleas in a terrible manner. There is no cleanliness in the prison rooms, and the Houthis do not allow the prisoners to maintain hygiene or provide them with the necessary tools.

The food provided to the detainees in the Salih City detention center is very limited and of extremely poor quality. They are not allowed to bring food from outside, so they feel hungry inside the prison and struggle to find enough to eat. Healthcare is also completely absent, so if a prisoner experiences any medical emergency, there is no one to provide treatment.

There is a person claiming to be a medical assistant, but he has no understanding of medicine. If he visits a patient, he only provides basic sedatives after a great deal of suffering. There is deliberate humiliation and mistreatment of the prisoners, especially those from Taiz, as the majority of the detainees are from that province.

In the Salih City prison, detainees are subjected to various forms of torture and unethical practices, especially during interrogations. Journalist Taysir Al-Samai witnessed and heard the suffering of the prisoners. Some of them have been subjected to torture, humiliation, and sexual harassment. Others have endured mock executions and psychological torment. Furthermore, the prisoners are isolated from the outside world, prohibited from communicating with their families. Confessions extracted under torture are recorded and broadcasted through the media channels of the group.

-2-

## **Bassem Abadi**

People are unaware of what happens behind the camera. They watch a video clip broadcasted by the media outlets of the group that has detained the unfortunate individual, who reads confessions as they desire. This practice is in violation

of international humanitarian and human rights law. The Houthis extract confessions under pressure and coercion and broadcast them to the public, often with their adversaries, as a strategy to appease the angry public in response to their widespread arrests.

But Bassem Abadi is not a prominent leader or a person of significant influence to sway public opinion against the Houthis. So why did they do that? The Houthis transferred Abadi from a cell in the Salih City detention center to another cell in the same residential city, which they named the "Aden Cell." Then they took him out of there, blindfolded him, and led him to the interrogation room.

In the room, the investigators directed a number of questions and requests towards him, including the demand to confess to the fabricated charge of being affiliated with "Daesh" (ISIS).

Following the armed invasion of most Yemeni provinces in collaboration with the forces of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the accusation of being "Daesh" (ISIS) sympathizers became widespread. However, it was not meant to imply affiliation with the extremist organization itself, but rather the Houthis and Saleh's forces used this accusation against those who opposed them. Bassem Abadi, refusing to accept the

charge, was met with physical abuse by the investigator, who slapped and hit him on his face and head. After a brief pause, the investigator repeated the demand, to which Bassem defiantly responded, "Allah is sufficient for me, and He is the best Disposer of affairs."

Bassem Abadi did not know that his defiance would only increase the anger of the investigator, who proceeded to violently strike various parts of his body. Then, the electric shock device was brought in, and its terminals were connected to his hands. The investigator operated the switch, and Bassem lost consciousness, only to regain it through another shock. He pleaded with the investigator for mercy, his body trembling, and tears streaming down his face from the pain of torture.

Meanwhile, they brought in "the camera and the cameraman," and behind the camera, they held up a paper with what they wanted Bassem to read. There were armed individuals behind the camera as well, pointing their rifles at him. In order to protect himself from further torture, Bassem reluctantly read aloud the words written on the paper, confessing to the charge of providing coordinates for Arab coalition airstrikes against the Houthis.

-3-

### Mushtaq al-Faqih

Bassem Abadi was not the only innocent detainee in the Salih detention center. The others whom he encountered, including Mushtaq Al-Faqih, were also innocent. The Houthis claimed that they were war prisoners, although there were no actual prisoners among them.

When they took him, Mushtaq was more concerned about his family and his sick mother than himself. He spent the first week in the building the Houthis referred to as the "Reception Prison," which was designated for detainees with mental and psychological conditions.

After a week, they led Mushtaq to the interrogation, but they found nothing in his possession that warranted his detention. They then transferred him to another building in the residential city, which the Houthis claimed was designated for war prisoners. However, all of them were actually detainees picked up from the streets and security checkpoints based on flimsy suspicions or false reports.

Mushtaq confirms, "In prison, I encountered a diverse range of detainees, including the mosque preacher, the teacher, the



soldier, the sheikh, the intellectual, the builder, the carpenter, the blacksmith, the driver, the laborer, and individuals with mental health conditions."

In the prison, there were suppressed moans, oppressed sighs, and prayers of the unjust. There were stories that made one cry and others that elicited laughter to the point of tears. In the cell where I was initially placed, I got to know a group of young men. One of them was from Samah Taiz, arrested at the Rahida checkpoint under the false accusation of coming from Ma'rib. He was subjected to beatings and electric shocks to force him to confess that he was a "military personnel." Another young man from the Salo Directorate was arrested during a "Sofitel" raid simply because he was wearing a military jacket. When they searched his phone and found pictures of him holding a rifle, they beat him during the interrogation until he confessed.

One of the young men from Sharab was arrested at the "Ghee and Soap Factory" checkpoint when they searched an envelope that someone had sent with him in exchange for a delivery fee of 2,000 riyals. Inside the envelope, they found 25 recruitment forms for the resistance. They took him to the prison in their sedan car, accompanied by 20 armed individuals, as if they had apprehended a dangerous wanted person.

## The Most Severe Torture

I also witnessed the horrendous psychological torture endured by the captured soldier, Murad Al-Hadhrami, who was captured from the Wadi Al-Dahi region. The Houthis used him as a "scapegoat," firing their modified machine guns from his back towards the resistance positions. They blindfolded him and fired shots around him to threaten him with death. In prison, he faced intense pressure during the interrogation, as they would hang him by his legs and threaten to throw him from a height unless he confessed to being a member of ISIS.

Would you also like details about the Ethiopian individual "Hajus Barham Marouf" who was arrested twice from the Mawza district on charges of belonging to "Black Water"?

1. Journalist Taysir Al-Samai remained in Salih detention center for over five months in 2017.
2. The Houthis released Bassem Abadi in a prisoner exchange deal with government forces and the popular resistance in Taiz in December 2017. He had lost part of his memory due to torture.
3. The Houthis arrested Mushtaq Al-Faqih on April 3, 2016.

## Stand up for the teacher and torture him

*Name: Sadiq Al-Petra*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 5 June 2017*

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The cars carrying the gunmen surrounded the civilian car that was driving leisurely, the gunmen tightened their encirclement of the car and prevented it from passing, the owner of the car stopped to see what was happening, the gunmen jumped and pointed their weapons at him:

"Are you Mr. Sadeq Al-Petra?" someone asked him.

"Yes." The professor replied.

Come down with us.

The militants are led by a person named Abu Kamel, the National Security Director of the Houthi group in the areas under their control east of Taiz city. As for the person who was apprehended, his name



*Houthi gunmen took the teacher to the detention center on charges of recruiting students, he challenged them to come with evidence, they prevented him from eating for three days, tortured him, asked him to confess to leading a cell in exchange for relieving him, broadcast what they filmed in their media, he died after being released*

is Sadiq Al-Petra. He works as a teacher in one of the schools in Al-Houban, and he was returning home.

The teacher Sadiq stepped out of his car to inquire, but they didn't give him time to complete his question. The militants grabbed him, bound his hands behind his back, and tied him with iron handcuffs. They then escorted him to a white Prado car with black decals. They took off his scarf and blindfolded him, covering his eyes. He attempted to ask again, but they responded with vulgar language. They confiscated all his phones, belongings, car keys, ID cards, and other documents.

"The Houthis have destroyed the education sector in Yemen, as Yemenis accuse them. They have destroyed some schools, while others have been converted into barracks and prisons. Students have their minds indoctrinated in summer camps, and the curriculum is modified with sectarian policies. As for the teachers, they are left without salaries."

Indeed, Sadiq Al-Petra, the teacher, deserves at least a certificate of appreciation for his dedication to teaching students under difficult circumstances in the areas controlled by the Houthis. Following the poet's guidance, "Stand up in respect for the teacher... The teacher could have been a messenger."

However, the Houthis took Teacher Sadiq to the prison in the city of Al-Saleh and placed him in a building named "Kamil Building," named after the supervisor responsible for it, the Houthi's National Security Chief in Taiz, Abu Kamil.

Abu Kamil and his armed men took Sadiq Al-Petra to an upper floor and continued interrogating him until 2 a.m. The accusations were ready: the teacher was allegedly recruiting students from schools to join the National Army and the popular resistance fighting against the Houthis. Sadiq vehemently denied the charges and affirmed, "I am an educator teaching in Al-Houban. There are attendance records for teachers that can be checked, and I don't go anywhere else."

During the session, they did not abide by the poet's words, "Stand up in respect for the teacher." Instead, their motto seemed to be, "Stand up for the teacher and torture him." Throughout the session, Sadiq Al-Petra was subjected to severe beatings targeting his knees and joints, and he was also subjected to electric shocks.

On the same day of the arrest, the Houthis conducted an armed raid on Sadiq's home, causing fear and terror among the children and women present. They ransacked both houses, taking whatever they wanted, including phones, iPads belonging to the children, and computers.

They continued interrogating and torturing the teacher for days with the same accusation: recruiting child students and exploiting his presence in schools to recruit fifty fighters against the Houthis. Sadiq challenged them to bring forth the name of even one child they accused him of recruiting, but they failed to provide a single name as evidence.

The real reason for Sadiq's arrest and torture appears to be his refusal to comply with their request for active participation in field activities and organizing protests against what they refer to as the "aggression." He made it clear that he is an educational teacher who wants to fulfill his mission without taking sides. This went against their educational regulations, and he also refused to attend the indoctrination courses held for people, including young students.

Abu Kamil couldn't find any evidence against Teacher Sadiq, yet he transferred him to a solitary cell called "Al-Daghata" (The Squeeze). This cell is devoid of even a pinhole for air and light to enter. It serves as both a sleeping and bathroom area, with no other place for basic needs. They provided Sadiq with bags to relieve himself inside, and he was given only one and a half liters of water for ablution purposes for a duration of 24 hours. After 27 days, Abu Kamil ordered Sadiq to be transferred

to another "Daghata" in a different building, overseen by the Houthi leader Abu Laith, where other detainees were held.

Under Abu Laith's orders, Teacher Sadiq was completely deprived of food and water for three days. When he was on the brink of death, Sadiq summoned Abu Laith and informed him that he would confess to whatever they wanted in front of the camera in exchange for food and water. Abu Laith welcomed the offer and brought a cameraman from Al-Masirah channel, affiliated with the Houthi group, to record forced confessions from Sadiq about his alleged involvement in forming a monitoring cell in Houthi-controlled areas.

The Al-Masirah channel broadcasted the recording under the title "The Al-Petra Cell" in exchange for Abu Laith granting Sadiq two cups of water every 12 hours, the amount that would ensure his survival.

Abu Laith was pleased with achieving what Abu Kamil had failed to do. Since the purpose of arresting Teacher Sadiq had been fulfilled, he transferred him to another building within the prison complex known as the "Aden Apartment" or the Aden Cell.

## The Most Severe Torture

The "Aden Apartment" or Aden Cell is a tightly sealed, completely dark confinement space. Its walls are pitch black, and due to the intense heat, detainees feel suffocated due to the lack of fresh air. They are unable to wear clothes and remain in their underwear. The prisoners held there are often abducted from schools or homes. The Houthis provide them with one and a half liters of water every 24 hours. Sometimes, drinking water is cut off from the detainees, forcing them to drink contaminated water from the sole and filthy bathroom, which is open for only fifteen minutes a day for thirty people. At other times, detainees are forced to urinate in a container and sleep in the same place. Due to the extreme darkness, they have no idea where they are or where they have slept.

As a result of these harsh conditions, some detainees have developed skin diseases, while others suffer from respiratory problems and congestion. There were instances when detainees fainted, and their fellow prisoners would scream and pound on the door, but no one would respond. Whenever their demands became more insistent, the Houthis would arrive and brutally beat them, discouraging any further attempts to communicate, regardless of the circumstances.

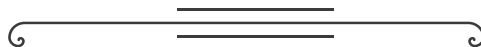
After a year and a half, I was taken out of the Aden Apartment



due to a severe medical episode. I had a severe blood clot that caused my blood level to drop to 4. The Houthis refused to provide me with medical assistance, telling the other detainees, "Let him die among you." The detainees went on a hunger strike for a day and a half, and only then did the Houthis decide to provide me with medical attention. They took me to Al-Rafai Hospital at the Ma'awiyah Junction, where I was given a single injection of Voltaren. Afterwards, they returned me to Saleh Prison, thinking that I was lying about my condition. Once they confirmed that I was indeed injured, they allowed me to contact my brother to bring me the necessary treatment. My brother had to pay them a sum of money in exchange for providing me with the treatment. They would take both the money and the medication and then use it to extort me further.

The Houthis compelled Teacher Sadiq to record a video in which he mentioned names, falsely implying their involvement in cells or confessing that he was a member of ISIS, in exchange for providing him with medication due to his deteriorating health condition. They allowed a doctor to enter the Aden Cell to examine him after his health worsened. He was transferred from the Aden Apartment to another cell based on the doctor's recommendation, where he could breathe more easily.

The Houthis released Al-Petra on December 19, 2019, in a prisoner exchange deal with the Yemeni National Army and the Popular Resistance in Taiz. He passed away on April 12, 2022.



## "The blind sniper."

*Name: Muqbil Mohammed  
Hassan Al-Habashi*

*Arresting Authority: Houthi group*

*Date of Arrest: July 15, 2016*

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"Are they in their right minds? How do they accuse a blind person of working as a sniper against them? They torture him, knowing he is visually impaired and unable to see them, yet he can feel their cruelty on his tortured body."

How many supervisors were involved in torturing Muqbil Al-Habashi in the residential city that they turned into a prison for the blind and the sighted? Muqbil Al-Habashi, who was blind, used to teach children in a mosque in the Al-Houban area. The Houthis came to him, but how many were they and what did they look like? The number and appearance are not important; they were Houthis, as indicated by their demands: 'They asked



*He used to teach children in the mosque. The Houthis approached him and demanded that he comply with their requests, which included teaching specific materials, chanting slogans, and reciting specific prayers. He refused their demands, which led to his arrest. They subjected him to torture and forcibly removed his clothes, falsely accusing him of hiding weapons underneath. Subsequently, they charged him with a peculiar accusation.*

me to teach Lieutenant of Hussein Al-Houthi, but I refused.

"They ordered me to chant their slogans, and I refused, saying 'No.' They told me to supplicate for them in prayer, and I replied, 'I do not supplicate for anyone.'"

They went away and came back again, flaunting their power over a blind person who couldn't see their numbers or recognize the weapons they were carrying when they arrived on a Ramadan night after Taraweeh prayers to take him away.

"We will take you to your uncle's house," they said to him, but they immediately took him to the Saleh prison, saying, "You are our guest because you are not with the leader.

They used to pour cold water on their blind guest at around 2:00 AM, and they would beat him with a stick. Sometimes, they would electrocute him and even shoot bullets. Were they aiming the bullets at him? The blind person cannot see the direction of the bullet, but he can feel the recoil of the guns. They would hit him on the joints, legs, chest, and face until blood flowed.

Once, they stripped him of his clothes for inspection, claiming that he was hiding a weapon under his garments.

And because everyone in the Saleh prison had charges fabricated by the Houthi authorities, they accused Muqbil, the blind, visually impaired person, of being a sniper.

Muqbel Al-Habashi was infected with dengue fever in Al-Saleh detention center before being transferred to the thirty prison in Aden junction. Afterward, they took him to the Mawza area and dumped him on the road.



## Taliban

### From the mental asylum to the college prison.

*Name: Shawqi Al Khulaidi*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: August 22, 2016*

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The summer vacation came to an end, and educational institutions started preparing for the new season. Shawqi Al-Khulaidi packed his belongings and left his village in Taiz, heading towards the capital city, Sana'a, to resume his university studies at one of the colleges. Armed individuals intercepted the car carrying Shawqi in the Al-Barh area, west of Taiz, and hindered his journey between him and the university in Sana'a. He found himself in a different province from where the university was located and in a college other than the one he was studying at. Eventually, they forcibly took Shawqi to the college, but it turned out to be the community college in the Dhamar province, which they had



*They took Al-Khalidi to a building they called "ISIS Prison." Shawqi was terrified by this name and this transfer, and when they threw him in this prison, he found that most of the detainees held university degrees in medicine, education, and engineering.*

turned into a prison.

Initially, when they took him from the Al-Barh checkpoint west of Taiz, they blindfolded his eyes and placed handcuffs on his hands. Then, at midnight, they transferred him to the tightly guarded prison for interrogation. They would fire bullets nearby, instilling fear in him. Death seemed imminent before him. At that moment, the Houthis heard the sound of the Arab Coalition's aircraft, and they thought they would be targeted by airstrikes. They stopped interrogating Al-Khulaidi, closed the prison room in the court, and left. It wouldn't matter if the airstrikes hit the court and the detainees inside, including Al-Khulaidi and others. This would open the door for them to exploit the humanitarian tragedy.

The next day, they took Al-Khulaidi to the Salih City prison, where the prison authorities greeted him with slaps, kicks, and punches. His body turned red from the beatings. Then, Darham Abu Mujahid, a Houthi leader, arrived. He took several pictures of the university student and told him, "We will humiliate your family with these photos." Abu Mujahid began torturing Al-Khalidi, grabbing his hair and slamming his head against the wall on an iron sheet. Afterwards, they returned him to the prison, only to summon him again for further interrogation after midnight.

## The Most Severe Torture

The interrogation with Shawqi Al-Khulaidi continued until dawn. They suspended him upside down by his feet, with his head hanging down. They beat him with rifle butts on his back, leaving traces of blood on the room's wall. "Either you confess, or we will kill you just like we killed your loved ones," they threatened. The sight of that blood and their psychological torture surpassed the physical torture, causing him to lose consciousness.

Al-Khulaidi regained consciousness after sunrise, inside a building designated for mentally ill detainees. He found himself surrounded by mentally disturbed individuals who were unclothed. He tried to comprehend the situation but couldn't. The scene was terrifying and inhumane, reflecting the extent of the Houthis' cruelty, even extending to the imprisonment of the mentally ill.

Later on, they transferred Al-Khulaidi to another building known as the "General Prison." He was taken to a spacious hall where prisoners from different categories were housed. The administrators of the detention facility distributed the detainees among various buildings based on their categories. Al-Khulaidi was led to a building referred to as the "ISIS Prison." He became frightened by this name and the transfer.



When he was thrown into this prison, he discovered that most of the detainees held university degrees in fields such as medicine, education, and engineering.

In the university campus, students mingle together. Al-Khulaidi wants to reach Sana'a to enter the college where he specializes. Indeed, the Houthis transferred him to a college, but it was in Dhamar, and they threw him into the community college prison.

The Houthis released him in an exchange deal.



## The chemist thought about suicide to find relief from the torture

*Name: Issa Abdo Qasim Al-Halif*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 6 September 2016*

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The armed person proceeded to search the phone of the young man, Issa Al-Halif. There was nothing suspicious found in the studio or the message box. There was no explicit content that would give the armed person a reason to confiscate the phone and take the young man to an unknown location. There was also no message or cartoon that hinted that the young man was against the Houthi group or mocking its revered leader, according to the armed person. The search then moved to inspecting social media applications. There was no post or share indicating that the ally, Al-Halif, opposed the former president Saleh, an ally of the Houthis, at that time.



*The marginalized refused to enlist with the Houthis. They removed his fingernails and toenails, beat him with a wooden stick, placed stones on his back, removed the flesh from his thighs, pierced his leg with a hard instrument, and he suffered liver poisoning.*

And as if he had found something important, the armed person exclaimed to his fellow colleagues when he discovered a conversation on WhatsApp between Al-Halif and his university colleague. The conversation revolved around lectures in the Chemistry department.

Issa Al-Halif's dream was to complete his university studies, start a family, and live in peace. However, they took him to the detention center in the city of Al-Saleh, where he was subjected to various forms of physical and psychological torture. He endured electric shocks during the torture, which lasted for nearly four hours. Despite his innocence, they continued to interrogate and torture him on a weekly basis, rather than daily.

They transferred him from the Al-Saleh detention center in Taiz to a prison in the city of Dhamar. There, they tied his hands and feet and then crucify him. It was the most difficult days of his life, and he wished he had never been born or entered this world. The months in the unnamed prison were harsh before they transferred him to a prison known as the Eastern Prison in the same province of Dhamar.

## The Most Severe Torture

When the chemist would feel hungry and thirsty and ask them for a "roti bread" and a little water, he would receive beatings, slaps, and be confined to the bathroom.

After more than two and a half years of detention, the Houthis returned Issa Al-Halif to the Al-Saleh detention center in the city of Taiz. He had reached a difficult psychological state, saying, "I was considering suicide to find relief from all of this."

On December 19, 2019, Issa was released as part of a prisoner exchange deal between the National Army in Taiz and the Houthis.



## Execution by running him over

*Name: Saddam Mohammed Saeed*

*Arrestee: Houthi group and Saleh'S forces*

*Date of arrest: November 15, 2015*

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Saddam Sa'id, like any gas distributor, transported gas cylinders on the back of his car. He, like any distributor, would receive his allocated share from the company and sell it to the citizens. This is how things usually proceed with any distributor. However, the Houthi militants would disrupt this normal process when they stop Saddam's car, confiscate it along with its cargo of gas cylinders, and seize the amount of 920,000 riyals. They would then take him and his car to the Al-Saleh detention center.

The Houthis placed Saddam Sa'id in a cell and began torturing him relentlessly. He endured beatings, slaps, and suspension during lengthy and exhausting



*They took him along with his car loaded with gas cylinders and looted the amount of money he had. He was accused of espionage and subjected to physical torture through suspension and psychological torture through mock execution.*

## The Most Severe Torture

interrogations. He was falsely accused of providing coordinates to the Arab Coalition airstrikes, in addition to espionage. These were baseless and fabricated charges against a mere car owner who carried gas cylinders in the trunk. They did not cease their torture. They would come at night, affirming, "A death sentence has been issued against you."

They would take him out of the cell and drive him through the narrow alleys between buildings, then they would shoot bullets next to him, causing terror. They would blindfold him and shoot near his eyes or throw him to the ground while he was blindfolded and bound. They would change the method of execution, saying, "You will be run over."

Saddam hears the sound of the car revving, increasing his terror. The sound of the car gets closer to his ears, speeding past him, not running him over physically, but crushing him psychologically.

The Houthis transferred Saddam Sa'id to the Community College Prison in Dhamar, and later to the Central Prison in Sana'a. He was eventually released in February 2017 without the return of his confiscated belongings.



## *From the sounds of deals to exchange civilians for prisoners of war*

### **Voice 1: I was bleeding and cursing me**

At ten o'clock in the evening on Wednesday of August 2016, I was with my family (meaning his wife and children) with my older brother at the Al-Dhakira intersection (Al-Hoban, east of the city of Taiz) where the Houthi group has control. Houthi militants stopped me and forced me out of the car, then transferred me to the Saleh prison without any charges. They placed me in a cell and put iron shackles on my hands and feet. They blindfolded me and then interrogated me. They asked me several questions about the war, the Houthi militia (my opinion of them from my perspective), the Arab coalition's aggression, and my relationships with individuals from the resistance. They beat me on my face and various parts of my body, and they choked me. They struck my head with electrical cables, causing me to bleed, all while hurling racist insults at me.

They would call me "Daeshi" (referring to ISIS) and instill despair in me, making me believe that I would never be released. They prevented me from making any contact throughout my detention in Al-Saleh prison. They denied us

blankets to protect us from the cold, so we had to sleep on the floor. They also prohibited visits, and anyone who attempted to visit us would face questioning and scrutiny.

Then they transferred me to their own prison in Dhamar. They interrogated me and beat me on my head. They ordered me to contact my family and have them intervene with the resistance to secure the release of a Houthi prisoner in exchange for my freedom. I contacted my family and explained the situation to them. They responded and began searching and mediating with the resistance to arrange a prisoner exchange involving me and a Houthi captive. The officials of the resistance in Taiz responded positively and included my name in the lists for the exchange between the two parties.

\*Here is the voice of "M.N." who was released in an exchange deal between the Houthi group and the popular resistance in Taiz after a year of captivity.



## **Voice 2: They treated me like an animal, degrading and dehumanizing me.**

The Houthis released me from prison in an exchange deal for detainees, but they did not return my personal belongings, which included my laptop, phone, notebooks, and ID card. They confiscated everything from me. They transferred me from Dhamar to Taiz in a car with the official responsible for the exchange of Houthi prisoners in Dhamar, known as "Abu Abdulrahman." I asked them where they would be taking me, and they said to the National Security Prison in Sana'a. I felt fear at the thought of that.

They returned me from the Community College Prison in Dhamar to the Saleh prison where I was previously held before being transferred to Dhamar. On the same day, I was exchanged with a Houthi captive, and they took me to "Hazran" west of the city of Taiz. From there, they made me walk on foot to Mount Han while blindfolded, treating me like an animal. It was there that the exchange took place with the Houthi prisoner. The resistance forces took custody of me, and I departed, returning to my family in the city of Taiz.

\*The owner of this voice, the university student, Sh.G., was released on January 6, 2017.

### **Voice 3: The screams of torture reach the fifth floor.**

When I reached the first checkpoint of the Houthis after leaving the city of Taiz, heading towards Al-Houban, the Houthi militants took my phone and ID card. They forced me off the vehicle and detained me in a small "Deyma" (temporary holding area) near the checkpoint for three days. Afterward, they transferred me to the "Saleh Prison." There, one of the interrogators named "Abu Hussein" ordered my confinement in a solitary cell for three months. They interrogated me three times during that period and subjected me to excessive torture. The interrogator, Abu Hussein, would beat my back and legs and use electric shocks, accusing me of being affiliated with ISIS. The interrogation and torture would continue from 8 p.m. until 2 a.m. During the days when they didn't interrogate me, I would hear terrifying screams from the first floor of prisoners being subjected to torture while I was on the fifth floor. Later on, I learned that those screams belonged to the detained individuals "Maamar Al-Sharabi, Abdullah Al-Sharabi, and Ahmed Al-Haidari."

During some interrogation sessions, they would take me down to the basement while my eyes were blindfolded and my hands and feet were bound with iron chains. The supervisors overseeing my monitoring and interrogation, in addition to the aforementioned Abu Hussein, were Abu Tarab, Abu Al-Laith, and Abu Haidar.

During my nine months of being hidden in the Saleh Prison, the Houthis did not allow me to communicate with my family, so I have no knowledge of their well-being, and they are unaware of my situation as well. They also did not permit any visits from anyone. After my transfer to the Community College Prison in Dhamar, they allowed me to communicate with my family. They stipulated that my release would be contingent upon the exchange of two of their fighters who had been captured by government forces. Despite being a civilian and having been arrested while traveling to the Al-Houban area, that was the condition they imposed. Thus, they released me in exchange for two Houthi fighters who had fallen into the hands of government forces.

\*The owner of this voice, "I.J.Q," was arrested in July 2017 and released on June 24, 2018.

## **Voice 4: I was unable to intervene to secure the release of my son**

*Ibrahim Fouad*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: February 10, 2016*

The Houthis arrested my son Ibrahim along with his friend Issa Al-Salmani and transferred them to the Saleh Prison, where they were hidden. We had no information about him for six months. After this period, a person contacted me speaking in the Dhamari dialect and requested an exchange of my son for a Houthi captive held by the Popular Resistance Forces in Taiz. Then my son was allowed to speak with me, and I asked him where he was. He replied, "In Dhamar, but I don't know the exact prison." I was unable to intervene with the resistance forces to secure the release of the Houthi captive, so the Houthis transferred my son to the Central Prison. There, we were able to communicate with him, and he informed us that he was initially held for two months in the Saleh Prison, where he was subjected to torture. Then he was transferred to the Community College Prison in Dhamar before being moved to the Central Prison in Sana'a.

\*The conversation here is with Fouad, the father of Ibrahim, who was still in prison at the time of his father's interview in February 2018.

## Contact from a deceased person

*Name: Munther Al-Mahya*

*Arrestee: Houthis group*

*Date of arrest: August 2016*

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The family of Munther Al-Muhaia did not believe that he was still alive, as the family had already entered a period of mourning for their son and received condolences like dozens of other families who hold such mourning ceremonies without receiving the bodies. Death in war spreads everywhere, and fortunate are those who receive the body of their loved one. Al-Muhaia family was not among the fortunate ones, which plunged the family into deep sorrow for their deceased son, as informed by the Houthis.



*They beat him until blood was splattered from his head. One of them put a noose around his neck, and he awaited the execution shot on his swollen neck. His family was informed of his death.*

## The Most Severe Torture

The Houthis had arrested Munther Al-Muhaia and taken him to the Saleh Detention Center. They then contacted his family and informed them of their son's death in the prison due to an airstrike. Based on this news, the family dealt with the common occurrence of news about death, killings, scattered remains, and missing bodies at the beginning of the war.

Munther was not dead. He was in the Saleh Detention Center, blindfolded with his hands and feet tied. They took him to the interrogation room, then suspended him from the ceiling with his head hanging down. A group of individuals took turns asking questions while punching him in the abdomen and beating him with electric cables on various parts of his body. Blood was flowing from his head and leg. One of them put a noose around Munther's neck until it swelled, and he was unable to swallow water thereafter.

After three days of physical torture, the psychological torture began. The prison authorities would take Munther outside the detention center, and the interrogator would order them to execute him and remove the body from the premises. He could hear them as they loaded their rifles and placed them against his swollen neck. He was in a state of panic, waiting for the moment the shot would be fired, but they wouldn't do it. Instead, they would place him on top of a car and drive

him to a distant location. He would tell himself that they were going to execute him elsewhere. He would ask them, "Where are you taking me?" and they would order him to remain silent.

The interrogation questions and requests directed at Munther were absurd, as if they were searching for justifications to torture him further. They would ask him to contact a deceased person or to provide a detailed account of the phone numbers of individuals involved in popular resistance in his area, and so on.

The Houthis transferred Munther Al-Muhaia from the Saleh Detention Center in Taiz to the Community College Prison in Dhamar. After several months, somehow Munther managed to contact his family, and as soon as his brother heard his voice, he screamed in terror.

Brother: "It's impossible for you to be alive!"

Munther: "Why?"

Brother: "Because they informed us of your death..."

In their eyes, he was considered dead. Amidst the family's horror and shock at the return of the deceased, his mother tearfully and emotionally spoke to him, and he cried as well, overwhelmed by the situation.



## He went to collect his salary, and they took him

*Name: Amir Mohammed Ibrahim  
Abdullah*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: February 24, 2016*

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While Amir Mohammed was in the salary distribution queue in the Al-Houban area, east of Taiz, a person named Idris Al-Jabari arrived in a military vehicle with armed men. They brandished their weapons at Amir and attacked him. They then forcibly took him to the Saleh Detention Center.

In one of the detention center buildings, Idris Al-Jabari and others viciously beat Amir Mohammed, using the common accusation that the Houthis and Saleh supporters used against their opponents at that time: "ISIS member." They beat Amir relentlessly until he lost consciousness.

Every three days, they would summon him



*\*The Houthis transferred Amir Mohammed from the Saleh Detention Center in Taiz to the Community College Prison in Dhamar, where he remained for two years. During that time, the Houthis continued to extort his family for large sums of money in exchange for his release.*



in the middle of the night, blindfolded, to receive his share of torture: being beaten with electric cables and threatened with death. He was anticipating his turn to collect his salary, but instead, the Houthis gave him his share of torment. They wanted him to confess what they wanted to hear. He felt a state of terror, fear, and anxiety. On one occasion, armed individuals entered the building where Amir and several other citizens were being held. The Houthis mercilessly attacked the detainees with iron chains for no apparent reason.

Amir will never forget what they went through: "All the detainees were unjustly treated, and their arrests were without any charges. I witnessed mentally ill individuals among us, and their condition was pitiable. One of the detainees was a sixty-year-old man suffering from a psychological condition, falsely accused of being a member of ISIS, despite having no understanding of the ongoing war. Another detainee had lost his mother, and he tried to secretly contact his family. When the Houthis discovered his attempt, they stormed the cell and attacked all of us mercilessly."



## The guest of the detention Center

*Name: Sami Noman*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: June 21, 2018*

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Journalist Sami Noman remembers the day when his family's house in the village of Al-Masa'id, Ma'awiah district in Taiz, was surrounded by armed fighters from the Houthi group. He recounts his arrest incident: "There were ten armed individuals riding in a Houthi vehicle, led by Colonel Ali Alwan, known as Al-Qadhafi. They besieged our house in Al-Masa'id village, Ma'awiah district. Another vehicle - as my friends informed me - was positioned far away from the village for support and reinforcement in case of any emergency when attacking a journalist who only had a kitchen knife for cutting vegetables in his house."



*The marginalized refused to enlist with the Houthis. They removed his fingernails and toenails, beat him with a wooden stick, placed stones on his back, removed the flesh from his thighs, pierced his leg with a hard instrument, and he suffered liver poisoning.*

My 9-year-old son, Muataz, came to wake me up. I had just gotten a chance to sleep after a long period of exhaustion, staying up late, and fasting. He told me that a Houthi vehicle was asking about me and that they had spread around the house, ready to open fire. He added:

"When they got out of the vehicle, they quickly unlocked the weapon safes."

Indeed, this is the behavior of the cowardly terrorist group: intimidating civilians through displays of force. It is a ridiculous and cowardly show to bring such a large number of individuals to confront a journalist who would have simply approached them for an interview because he has nothing to fear from them.

The armed men arrived during the preparations for Ismael, our neighbor's simple wedding. Perhaps that heightened the alertness of the brave individuals. My mother, may God bless her, went down to ask them what they wanted and informed them that I was not present, as she was unaware of my existence there. They exchanged signals of encouragement, thinking that she was trying to mislead them in an attempt to escape. They responded to her by saying, "We don't want anything, why are you afraid for your son? What's wrong with him?"

My mother came back and told me, "We told them you're not here, so don't come out." I chuckled at her attempt to reassure me and told her that I have nothing to hide from them, as I am not a criminal. So why should I be afraid? She shook her head and said, "Okay," meaning she understood my perspective.

I approached them without hesitation, with the lower half of my body wrapped in an "Izar" and wearing an unbuttoned shirt. Al-Qadhafi had positioned his rifle in a defensive stance at the front of the vehicle. When they saw me coming towards them in this manner, they perhaps momentarily felt a sense of embarrassment from the unnecessary show of force. They lowered their weapons and returned to the vicinity of the vehicle.

I asked Al-Qadhafi, "What's the matter?" He replied, "This is Abu Maher, the security supervisor for Taiz. He said you are coming as a guest for only two hours, and there is nothing to worry about." I said to him, "Well, please come in, let's have some breakfast and dinner before we go." He responded, "We are in a hurry." If he had been truthful, he would have also said they were afraid. I told them, "In the name of Allah, we trust, let's see what he has."

I attempted to ride in the back of the vehicle, but they refused and insisted that I sit next to the driver, with a young armed companion who appeared to be under 18, handsome and amiable, by my side. I didn't attempt to go back and fetch any belongings to avoid arousing suspicion, nor did I want them to ask for my phone, which contained ordinary content that militant groups could potentially use as sufficient evidence for hiding me for years and then executing me.

I had breakfast on the way, and we had lunch in As-Suwayda with the individuals. I had 3,000 riyals with me, and I tried to pay for the meal at the restaurant, telling them, "I only have this amount, please take care of the bill." However, Al-Qadhafi said, "You are our guest," and he paid the amount.

I arrived in the city of Al-Saleh around 8 PM, and they recorded my information before placing me in cell (apartment) number 33 in a building supervised by someone called "Abu Yahya." The person in charge of the cell is the cultural supervisor for the Houthi movement in Taiz, named "Abu Mustafa."

As I was climbing the stairs of the building, the young companion who had been listening to our conversation throughout the journey called out to me, "Sir, do you have qat (a stimulant plant) or not?" I replied, "By God, I don't

have any." However, he insisted and gave me some of what remained in the bag hanging from his side.

I entered cell 33 on the second or third floor, and it was dark except for dim lighting that was insufficient to discern the features of those beside or in front of me. The windows were closed with stones, and only a small opening or two, about the size of a hand, remained in each window. These are the cells they refer to as "ad-Daghata" or "the pressure cells."

As soon as I entered, a lawyer named Al-Jalal invited me to put my shoes inside a bag, claiming that I would need it as a pillow. This lawyer was detained because he had an application that automatically published legal materials on his Facebook page. Most of the detainees were held on absurd charges related to WhatsApp. Despite more than two months of imprisonment, they had not yet interrogated him.

There were around 43 individuals, including 8 who were mentally disturbed or unstable, and the rest, the majority, were unaware of the charges against them, similar to the lawyer. Among them, there were about 10 former military personnel, most of them under 45 years old. The majority of them hailed from Hajjah Governorate and were arrested on charges of attempting to join Tariq Saleh's forces.

In the adjacent cell, which I believe was number 35, the prisoners informed me that a few days ago, a person known as Al-Qabbati passed away after a hunger strike and experiencing severe mistreatment. They removed him from the cell unconscious, and they forcefully inserted needles into various parts of his body, thinking that he was pretending. However, he did not regain consciousness, and they took him away, dragging him down the stairs without his return. He died due to delayed medical treatment and complications from dehydration.

They informed me that due to his death, the conditions in the prison had slightly improved in terms of nutrition, water supply, and the installation of a dim light bulb that barely provides visibility to those nearby.

Upon entering the cell, the prisoners would gather around you, eager to know everything. They were waiting for anything new that would replace the old and worn-out information they already had. There was nothing new here except for a fresh snippet they could hear, which was their rare opportunity for knowledge. However, after a couple of days, the new captive would refrain from speaking, as doubts would arise about those around him. It is the very same prisoners who would advise him to do so.

Many of them didn't hide their familiar wit when encountering each new prisoner. They would ask questions like, "How much does a cup of tea cost outside? Are there still people and markets out there? Is the asphalt road still intact, or has it been taken by the 'Hamal' battalions? How did they bring you here, on a donkey?" This was their way of mocking the outside world and letting you know that they have spent a lifetime here, akin to the people of the cave in the story.

In those rooms, you would sleep on the floor tiles, and if you were lucky, you might have a piece of "shualat" (a type of mat) that they bring with the food rations. Blankets and mattresses, in the absence of proper ventilation, would be infested with dust and lice. They were generally scarce, only available to a few individuals whose relatives brought them.

I spent some time with them, and each time someone from a neighboring room would come and repeat the same question, I would give the same answer. The rest of them enjoyed the repetition and found amusement in it.

After about an hour and a half to two hours before half past ten, they called me for questioning, amidst the astonishment of the majority of the others who had spent weeks and months without being interrogated. Then, the sensible person in the



cell, a young and respectable military man from Hajjah, held me by the shoulder and said:

"Brother, be confident in yourself and don't worry. The most important thing is to remain calm. And if they ask you about your affiliation with any party, be cautious, especially regarding Al-Islah."

I jokingly replied, "I'll say I'm a socialist."

We shared a moment of laughter, and then I proceeded to the interrogation session, keeping his advice in mind.

He shouted at me, saying, "Neither you nor your grandmother have anything to do with any party. The rest of the questions are for you to answer."

The escort who takes the prisoners to the interrogator asked me to take the "blindfold." I informed him that I didn't have one, and he called out to give me one to blindfold my eyes halfway up the stairs before the fourth floor, where the interrogator was located.

They took me for five hours of interrogation, and I may not remember exactly how long it took. What matters is that I

returned to the cell, and within minutes, the first call to Fajr (dawn) prayer was announced.

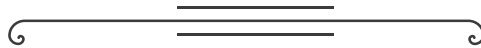
I returned to the cell at that time to explain once again what happened with the interrogator. Some of them winked at me, indicating to be cautious about what I say, as some of the weaker prisoners are coerced into spying and tempted with false promises of release. I always responded to them that whatever I say to the interrogator is the same as what I say among them because I have nothing to hide.

On that morning, which happened to be a Friday, they called out to dozens of detainees from various cells and buildings, asking them to come out and move to an undisclosed destination. Some of them were optimistic, thinking it might be a release, while others speculated that they were being transferred to the military prison, and a third group expected to be forcibly taken to the frontlines in Hodeidah. Later, I learned that they were transported by trucks to the Community College detention center in Dhamar, to be included in the list of individuals wanted for a prisoner exchange. These individuals had been gathered from checkpoints, streets, and localities, allowing them to communicate with their acquaintances.

Those who desired freedom had to seek an exchange with a Houthi prisoner held on the frontlines.

On the following day, I was transferred to the adjacent cell, known as the "pressure cell" or "Cell 44." It was then that I understood that they wanted to separate those who had been interrogated from those who hadn't into different cells or apartments. I was informed that those who hadn't been interrogated would be placed in another apartment. However, to my surprise, I found individuals in the other apartment who also hadn't been interrogated.

\*The journalist Sami Noman wrote an article about his arrest in June 2019, and he currently resides in the city of Taiz.



# Chapter:

**Stories and details  
from other Houthi  
detention centers**

## Academic shiver without an apron

*Name: Al-Hussein Ali (Alias)*

*Detaining Authority: Houthi Group*

*Date of Detention: 16/12/2015*

The sound of gunfire erupted near one of the markets in the Ka'idana district of Hajjah Governorate. Hundreds of shoppers rushed towards the source of the fire, where they witnessed Mohammed Ahmed, known as Abu Haydar, accompanied by twelve armed individuals attempting to snatch a father from among his four children inside a car. Some onlookers tried to approach to calm Abu Haydar and protect the children clinging to their father, but the gunmen aimed their weapons at the crowd and opened fire to prevent them from reaching their target.

The father tried to convince the armed men surrounding the car to take the children home, change their clothes, and accompany them, as requested, to meet



*Twelve armed individuals besieged Jubran and his four children, taking him along with his clinging child, he nearly died in an underground barrel, his apron fell from torture, and they bound him with another detainee inside a bathroom*

## The Most Severe Torture

"Abu Hashem," the Houthi security delegate in the directorate. Abu Haydar and his armed men refused and continued to pull the father away from his clinging children. The battle between the twelve armed men and the four children ensued, with the gunmen not hesitating to strike the young ones with the butts of their rifles in order to free their father. The gunmen prevailed and succeeded in separating three of the children, while the fourth child remained clinging to his father. They took both the child and his father.

Hundreds witnessed this incident that happened to a civilian named Al-Hasan Ali, who was on his way to the market with his four children.

Three out of the four children remained crying, while the Houthi gunmen departed with Hussein Ali and his fourth child towards the Abbs directorate. As the sun set and they were halfway on the road, Hussein began to ponder about his child, "What if they torture me while he is with me?"

The child continued to cry, placing his head on his father's chest, saying, "Father... I will die with you... I won't leave you." Hussein embraced his son and kissed him in that moment, shedding tears of sadness for him and his siblings. Taking advantage of their passage through a market called Thursday

Market, Hussein threatened them, saying, "If you don't release my son here, I will gather the market's people."

The plan succeeded. If there had to be suffering, let it be away from the child. They released him in a place far from his area, in an unfamiliar market, and during the night. It was better for him than facing punishment at the hands of the gunmen. Hussein had no idea what happened to his child, whether he reached his siblings, mother, and the rest of his family or not.

In Abbs, they began interrogating Hussein until close to dawn. There were provocations, threats, the risk of having his head blown off, gunshots fired in front and behind him. Then they blindfolded him, and he was thrown into the prison at "Abbs Airport" with no bed or bathroom.

The prison door was only opened three times a day. After breakfast, they would take out a group of detainees and lead them to underground cells.

The underground cells were approximately three meters deep and stretched for about twenty meters in length. These tanks, as indicated by their pungent smell, were originally designed for storing petroleum materials. However, the prison authorities would tie ropes around the bodies of the detainees

and lower them into the tanks through an opening that was no more than forty centimeters wide.

Abu Mohammed Wadah, one of the prisoners, arrived and found Hussein and a group of detainees inside the tanks. He asked from the ventilation opening, "Who is here? Who is here?" Abdul Samad and his companions responded with weakened voices. Abu Mohammed recognized from their tone that they were in danger, so he pulled them out and returned them to the prison. Then, the Houthi captors tied Hussein to another prisoner and sent them both to Hajjah.

In Hajjah, the Houthis placed Hussein and his companion in a cramped bathroom that could barely accommodate one person. His companion was from Shabwa Governorate and had come to collect his salary from the military finance department in Abbs. However, upon his arrival, the Houthis had already taken control of the area. Additionally, the financial representative delayed and refused to send the salary through money exchange companies. As a result, the man was forced to travel to Abbs in person.

The last name of the man is "Jawas," and the Houthis hate this name because it reminds them of the famous military commander who killed the founder of the Houthi group in a



previous war. That's why they arrested this unfortunate man who has no connection to the military commander and doesn't even belong to the same region.

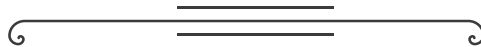
After 12 days in the cramped bathroom with Jawas, the Houthis moved Hussein to a narrow room where 25 prisoners slept on one side, barely fitting. One night, a person named Abu Hussein arrived. He blindfolded Hussein and led him to the room. Then, he brought iron shackles and bound Hussein's hands behind his back, making him sit on the floor with his back against the wall. Abu Hussein started questioning him about his name, his background, and specific individuals and his relationship with them. Hussein answered to the best of his knowledge and remained silent regarding what he didn't know. The interrogator, with an academic methodology, had no connection to logic or reason. Abu Hussein took a pair of pliers and gripped the lower lip of Hussein, pulling it tight. He then attempted to grab his tongue with the pliers but failed. He slapped him more than ten times on his left cheek until blood came out of his mouth.

Abu Hussein repeated the questions but couldn't obtain any answers. At that moment, he changed his torture method. He asked the guard for a cloth and placed it over Abdul Samad's mouth. Then, he stepped on his legs and started beating him with a thick cable repeatedly. Due to the intensity of the beating, Hussein's legs were pulled, prompting Abu Hussein to strangle him. He continued to slap him on his stomach and chest. Abu Hussein also took the electric cable and kept hitting him until blood flowed from Hussein's foot. He then put something cold, possibly water, on the wound to stop the bleeding. The cloth that Hussein was wearing had fallen off, and he pleaded with Abu Hussein to cover himself, but he refused. The academic's body was bleeding and trembling, without any clothing.

During that time, Abu Hussein received a phone call. He answered and spoke naturally as if he hadn't done anything. He said to the caller, "I have a stubborn person with me... From Ka'aydna, he refuses to confess." Hussein's entire body was trembling. The interrogator left him lying on the ground, unable to get up. The other detainees would later help him and lead him back to the bathroom.

\*After a year, Hussein was released after he sent a message through a fellow prisoner to one of the Houthi leaders in the directorate, informing them of what he was going through. After his release, he realized that his family, including his parents, had sold land and paid money to secure his release, but without any success.

The Houthis arrested Al-Bureihi near his residence, tortured him until blood flowed from his back. He did not cry, so they interpreted that as him receiving high-level training. They transferred him to another level of torture, more effectively.



## Dryness of the eye... Blood on the back

*Name: Mohammed Sa'id Ali Al-Bureihi*

*Arresting Party: Houthi Group*

*Date of Arrest: 1/8/2015*

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The resilience displayed by Mohammed Al-Bureihi angered the leaders Hatem and Abu Khaled, who tortured him. They stripped him of his clothes except for his underwear, bound his hands behind his back, and began to beat him. They targeted his chest, arms, lower legs, hands, kicked him in the abdomen and face, and lashed his back until blood flowed. They poured water and the black candle wax on Mohammed's back, causing the wounds inflicted by torture implements to ignite.

The man did not cry, so Hatem and Abu Khaled interpreted Mohammed Al-Bureihi's ability to endure such torture without shedding tears as a result of his high-level training within the ranks of



*From near his residence, the Houthis arrested Al-Burahi. They tortured him until blood ran from his back. He did not cry, so they explained this by saying that he had received advanced training. They transferred him to another level of torture that was more effective.*

the Popular Resistance fighting against the Houthis in Taiz. Because of this, they decided to transfer him to another prison among their private facilities located west of the city of Taiz, in order to employ more effective torture methods.

At that time, the Houthis and Saleh forces had arrested Mohammed Al-Bureihi near his residence in the Al-Noor neighborhood, west of the city of Taiz. They then took him to the "Al-Manar Al-Sufli" school and placed him in one of the classrooms for torture. When they found no secret in his possession and no tears in his eyes, Hatem and Abu Khaled became certain that he was a trained man. They blindfolded him and transported him on a motorcycle to another school.

On the way, one of them suggested to the other tying Mohammed's body to the back of the motorcycle to drag him on the ground. However, the other person assured him that there were other methods inside the "Al-Anwar" school. After converting the classrooms into cells, they practically applied torture lessons on the bodies of their enemies.

Hatem and Abu Khaled handed Mohammed Al-Bureihi over to "Sajjad," the supervisor appointed by the Houthi group in charge of the detention center at Al-Anwar school. Abu Hatem informed him that they had found evidence indicating

that Al-Bureihi had been monitoring the movements of a person named "Al-Arabji," who happened to be the brother of "Mufaddal Al-Arabji," one of the armed Houthis detained in the same school on charges of selling weapons to the resistance.

Mohammed has no connection to the matters Abu Khaled and Hatem are discussing. He did not train with anyone and did not monitor anyone's movements. Mufaddal Al-Arabji, on the other hand, had a peculiar sleep schedule, staying awake at night and sleeping during the day. When Mufaddal Al-Arabji woke up, Sajjad presented him with a precious gift, which turned out to be Mohammed Al-Bureihi himself. Sajjad said, "This is the one who has been monitoring your brother, who fights alongside us and has also posed a threat. Do whatever you wish with him."

There were around 10 people surrounding "Al-Arabji." Two of them approached and bound Mohammed's hands and legs. Then, two individuals lifted whips made of strong electrified wires with sharp edges and violently struck him until he fell into a coma. He regained consciousness in the presence of another Houthi leader named "Abu Rida Al-Haimi." Upon seeing the bloodstains covering his torn shirt from the consecutive whip strikes, Abu Rida Al-Haimi asked them to

stop beating Al-Bureihi. He then gave him another shirt and allowed him to rest and sleep until morning.

\*The signs of torture were evident on Al-Bureihi's body, according to observations made by the monitoring team, after 8 months of his detention.



## Consolation in Majaz prison

*Name: Bakr Saleh Ahmed  
Hussein*

*Detaining Authority: Houthi group*

*Date of Detention: November 2,  
2016*

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Bakr Saleh was filled with sadness, living in the aftermath of his tragedy. The ruins and debris stood before his eyes: seven of his relatives departed at once when the Arab coalition launched an airstrike on their house in Saada, the Yemeni province considered the main stronghold of the Houthis. The house crumbled, and seven of its occupants were lost to the airstrikes of the coalition forces fighting against the Houthis.

Bakr Saleh continued to grieve for weeks, sharing condolences with the remaining members of his devastated family. Until one day, he received a request to meet



*After an airstrike by the coalition aircraft destroyed his house and killed seven members of his family, the Houthis summoned him under the pretense of providing humanitarian assistance. However, they detained him and began torturing him, accusing him of collaborating with the coalition aircraft.*



with two Houthi leaders in the Raziq district: Abu Mohammed Al-Dahwani and Abdullah Al-Murqasi. Their request seemed humanitarian on the surface: providing shelter and food assistance to Bakr, as he was among those whose houses were targeted by airstrikes.

Bakr told the remaining members of his family that he is going to fetch the aid, but he did not return

Bakr arrived at the headquarters of the Houthi group as requested by leaders Al-Dahwani and Al-Murqasi. There, in addition to his grief, he felt fear due to their shocking behavior. They treated him as a criminal, and he couldn't believe what was happening. The Houthis, who summoned him for the aid, accused him of providing coordinates to the coalition aircraft. They interpreted the coalition's airstrike on Bakr's family home as a cover-up for his alleged activities in support of what they referred to as "the aggression."

It was beyond imagination: a man providing coordinates to annihilate his own family to cover up his alleged collaboration with the military aircraft. Bakr Saleh thought it was a pitiful joke. However, after two hours of interrogation, they repeated the accusation, a naïve ploy, perhaps, to remove the suspicions of treachery. It wasn't a joke. They proceeded to put shackles

on his feet and bind his hands, confirming their seriousness. They took him into a dark room for twenty-five days before transferring him to the prison in the city of Saada for one day, and then to another prison in the Majaz district within the same province.

The Majaz prison is run by a person named Abu Ahmed Al-Ajri. He has a specialized team for torturing those who arrive at the prison. The prison is known for its sadistic nature towards its inmates, subjecting them to severe confinement. Upon arrival, Bakr was taken to a dark room where he was tightly and firmly chained. They started the interrogation accompanied by beatings, insults, and suspension. They would beat him while he was suspended from above for an entire night, all under the same accusation: "providing coordinates to the enemy's aircraft, communicating with mercenaries," referring to the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni army allied with the internationally recognized government.

Bakr denied the charges, defending himself by presenting evidence that refuted them. He showed no alignment with the coalition's policies or any inclination towards supporting the army's victory. However, his immense tragedy did not grant him any immunity, and no amount of pleading or heartfelt

responses would help him. As they led him to an underground cell, he contemplated his situation.

The cell had a space of one and a half square meters, pitch darkness, and no bathroom facilities. Additionally, Bakr Saleh was restrained, and in this state, they would repeatedly lead him to interrogation: suspending his body, beating him, inserting a stick into his mouth and beating it until his teeth were broken, perhaps to ration his food intake. After being transferred to the vicinity of other victims, he would share a single loaf of bread with six individuals, and a liter of water with four people every twenty-four hours. The group of six inmates would divide themselves into five plus one during the bread consumption. The five would each take one bite, while the larger piece was given to the sixth person. The following day, the larger piece would go to another person, and so it continued, rotating the larger piece of bread among the six individuals.

This section, unlike the solitary confinement cell, is characterized by the proximity of the victims and some consolation when they see other fellow inmates. Bakr got to know several inmates from different regions, including Ali Hamoud Al-Humaysh from the Ghuraz area. In addition to this aspect, there is another feature, which is the availability of a

## The Most Severe Torture

bathroom. Since each pair of inmates is restrained together, the two would have to enter the bathroom together, while the executioner stands opposite them, ready to beat and insult them upon entry and exit.

The reason that person beats them every time they enter or exit the bathroom, and why six individuals from the Majaz prison's guards participate in this task with cruelty every night, is not explicitly clear. However, it seems to be part of a systematic pattern of torture and abuse. The six guards assigned to Majaz prison gather around Bakr when he is alone, subjecting him to beatings, slaps, insults, choking, and whipping. These torture sessions appear to be administered like doses of medicine, fulfilling the sadistic cravings of the executioners without alleviating the pain and suffering of the victims.

The six guards would beat the prisoners, either in pairs or individually. Bakr Saleh witnessed blood streaming from the nose and mouth of his fellow detainee, Ali Al-Humaysh, due to the severity of the beatings. The prisoners moved and called out to the authorities of the prison, requesting medical assistance for Ali. In response, they were threatened with a third round of torture if they called out again, with the guards saying, "Let him die."

After half an hour, Ali Al-Humaysh passed away. His lifeless body lay on the floor. The authorities of Majaz prison arrived and claimed, "He died of a stroke." They then threatened Bakr and his fellow inmates, saying, "Anyone who says otherwise will suffer the same fate."

In prison, people are driven away due to physical torture, some lose their minds due to psychological torture, and others live but are physically and mentally shattered.

Another inmate was summoned after midnight. He was informed that a death sentence had been issued against him. They took him to the courtyard and then lowered him into a pit for execution, saying, "Descend so that you don't defile us with your filthy blood. Do you want to make any last wishes before the execution?" Out of fear, his tongue was tied, and he couldn't utter a word. They returned him to the prison, saying, "We will execute you tomorrow." However, he returned as a completely different person, a victim who had lost his sanity entirely.

Bakr Saleh endured sixty days in Majaz prison. Sixty days of daily torture until he lost consciousness. Every time he regained consciousness, they resumed torturing him until he wished for death. After two months in the prison run by Abu Ahmed Al-Ajri, he found himself being transferred, shackled with chains, to the city of Dhihan prison, managed by Mohammed Al-Qattabri. The cells in this prison were completely closed, and due to the humidity, the locks were broken. Instead of repairing the locks, the prison authorities replaced them with iron clamps that they would forcefully close on the detainee's legs. The restraints remained on Bakr Saleh's legs for 23 months, never being removed even during meal times, bathroom breaks, or prayer. The effects of this are still visible on his legs.

\*The Houthis transferred Bakr Saleh to the Political Security Prison in Sana'a, where he remained for two months. He was released as part of an exchange deal between the Houthi group and the legitimate government.



## The goal is above the tree

*Name: Mohammed Mubkhot Qaid*

*Detaining Authority: Houthi Group*

*Date of Detention: November 30, 2015*

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Mohammed Mubkhot was at his workplace, the Yemeni Airlines building, when he showed leniency towards the order of the report he was threatened with by the director of Yemeni Aviation Security, Mohammed Al-Haddad, and the supervisor appointed by the Houthis to the affiliated institution of Yemeni Aviation, Abu Hussein Jhaf. Mubkhot will pay the price for his leniency with years of his life, the lives of two of his relatives, and the looting of his belongings, including the furniture of his children.

Two cars arrived at the Yemeni Airlines building, carrying armed individuals from the Houthi group and Saleh forces. Upon their arrival, they brandished their weapons towards the people present and abducted



*Do not publish as it is in an unsafe and monitored location*

*The Houthis arrested Mubkhot, suspended him on a tree in a military site, placed him in a villa targeted by airstrikes, killed his nephew who used to bring him lunch, assassinated his brother, and looted his children's bedding...*

Mohammed Mubkhot, blindfolded and isolated him from the outside world after confiscating his personal phones.

Mohammed Mubkhot belongs to the "Hashid" tribe, which is the largest tribe in Yemen. This tribe includes influential figures in the country, such as former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the late Sheikh of Yemen's tribes, Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar, and the Al-Ahmar family who stood against the Houthi group, mobilizing efforts to fight against them. Also belonging to this tribe is Vice President Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, the former commander of the Northwestern Military Region and the renowned First Armored Division, known for engaging in six wars against the Houthi group.

What is Mohammed Mubkhot's relationship with these individuals when he is not one of the influential figures in the country or the tribe?

Mohammed Mubkhot had his hands bound behind his back. The next day, he was brought in for interrogation. They demanded that he disclose the location of the Al-Ahmar family's money and Ali Mohsen's weapon depots. He confirmed to them that he didn't know. They suspended him by his feet and three individuals, sometimes four, would beat him from 9 p.m. until dawn. When they took him out to hang him



on a tree, he realized that he was in the former headquarters of the First Armored Division, which had been invaded by the Houthis and Saleh forces. They intentionally hung him on a tree in a military location that was being targeted by airstrikes, and they were well aware of that fact.

The Houthis and those affiliated with Saleh continued to torture Mubkhot for a month and sixteen days at the headquarters of the First Armored Division before transferring him, blindfolded and with bound hands, to an unknown location. He later came to know the place: Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar's villa, after it was invaded and turned into a prison.

In Ali Mohsen's villa, or the hidden prison in the basement of the villa, torture was inflicted through beatings with wires, gas hoses, and cold water, even during the winter, and the use of salt during the hanging. One night, they took him out of the villa and placed him in a container in a crater in Atan, which is one of the clearly targeted locations by coalition airstrikes. They explicitly threatened him: "Reveal the location of the depots and the money, or the aggression will kill you." They intended to make him a target for coalition airstrikes.

## The Most Severe Torture

After twenty-nine days, the coalition aircraft bombed Mohsen's house. The supervisors of the detention then transferred Mubkhot to the Presidential Palace and later to a solitary cell in the Criminal Investigation Department in Sana'a.

In the cell at the Criminal Investigation Department, the prison guard, Shawish, sympathized with Mubkhot due to the torture he was enduring. He granted him a few minutes to use his phone for a clandestine phone call with the supervisors unaware. Mubkhot contacted his brother and informed him of his place of detention.

As a result of that phone call, pressure was exerted by prominent figures from the well-known Hashid tribe. This pressure led to Mubkhot being moved from the solitary cell to a detention facility where he would meet government officials who were also held in the prison, including the former Minister of Education.

His tribal affiliation and the leaked information about his detention to his brother played a role in alleviating the torture inflicted upon him. Additionally, another advantage was granted to him: allowing food to be brought to him through his nephew, and granting his brother the freedom to follow up on his arrest case. However, his nephew would be assassinated,

and the Houthis would demand one million riyals and a pistol from his brother in exchange for his release, but they would not release him. Afterward, Houthi leaders went to the tribe in Amran and took Mohammed Mubkhot's brother, promising to release him. They were three individuals, one from Sa'dah and two from Harf Sufyan. On their way, they betrayed his brother and killed him.

After two years and two months of detention, the Houthis secretly released Mohammed Mubkhot. He left prison to support his six children and his brother's seven children. However, the Houthis continued their looting, taking away everything he owned. He said, "They even expelled my children from the house and looted everything I had. I couldn't find a bed for my children or any food supplies, and I had no one to help me continue my children's education."

Mubkhot mentioned two leaders who were involved in torturing him: Abu Saleh Al-Jaradi from Sa'dah and Abu Raid, the supervisor of the Criminal Investigation Department.



## How do you communicate with the prince?

*Name: Mohamed Ahsan Fathallah*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 2016*

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Mohammed was exhausted by thirst for four consecutive days. He was hanging in the cell, tightly bound by chains attached to his hands, which were suspended from the ceiling. The method of his hanging was precise, down to the centimeter. While suspended, he could touch the bottom of the cell with the tips of his toes. In this position, one of them took an electrical cable and began to strike Mohammed, starting from the first night of his arrest at the entrance of the village, after he had returned carrying water on his medium-sized car.



*Mohammed, who used to transport water on his car, was taken from the road and suspended from the ceiling of the cell for days. He was tortured by waterboarding.*

The car's exterior may not be affected by the water load, but its owner's back would be bent from the pain accompanied by body dehydration. After three days of being suspended and subjected to flogging, Mohammed is unaware of the fate of the water tank on his car. He feels a genuine thirst that leads him towards destruction, and a metaphorical thirst for an answer to the question: What is the reason behind what is happening now?

On the fourth night, Mohammed began to collapse, yet he still didn't know the reason for his torture in that manner. However, the guards arrived at that moment and released him from the chains that had restrained him. He didn't want to know the exact reason at that moment; all he wanted was a little water to moisten his parched throat and relieve the dryness in his mouth. One of them brought a water bottle, but don't be deceived by the apparent humanity of the guard. He threw the bottle away from Mohammed and ordered him, "Take it."

Being suspended for four days restricts the body's movement due to nerve tension, but the intensity of thirst compelled Mohammed to exert great effort to reach the water bottle. He struggled, finally grasping it in his trembling hand, attempting to bring it to his mouth. However, before the water could enter

his mouth, the guard snatched the bottle away, depriving Mohammed of relief, and cruelly laughed at his despair.

The prison guard continued to tease Mohammed by bringing the water bottle close to his mouth repeatedly, only to pull it away whenever he attempted to drink. When Mohammed grew desperate for a sip of water, the guard poured a small amount onto his face and demanded that he drink the rest. However, Mohammed stopped making any further attempts, which angered the guard. He took the cable and began to strike Mohammed, saying, "Take it... as long as you refuse to drink the water." Eventually, Mohammed lost consciousness.

\*\*

Mohammed Al-Ahsan was returning home to his house in the Arhab Directorate, driving a medium-sized car with a water tank on its back. As he approached the entrance of the village, he was stopped by a group of armed members of the Houthi group. Among them was a man appointed by the Houthis to oversee the village to which Mohammed Al-Ahsan belonged. The militants demanded that Mohammed get out of the car and immediately obey their orders. They took him to a detention center in the heart of Sana'a. There, he found himself in darkness within a solitary cell. He began to hear

the voices of the detainees and the screams of the torture they were subjected to. They would torture one person for about two hours, then move on to the next, and so the torture continued non-stop. Each person had to wait for their turn, and now it was Mohammed's turn.

Mohammed initially believed that his turn would be similar to the duration of torture he heard from the screams of others, which was about two hours. However, his own torture extended far beyond that, to the point where he forgot about the experiences he had heard. It lasted for four days until he eventually lost consciousness.

Was the fifth day the day Mohammed woke up? Not sure, but when he regained consciousness, his head was drooping on his shoulders and his hands were tied upwards. He had been suspended again. The man who had tortured him with water and beat him until he lost consciousness on the fourth day was standing in front of him, accompanied by several assistants. The man asked him, "What are the locations you have identified for the airstrikes?"

This is the accusation for which people are being tortured during the war. Mohammed shook his head in denial and replied, "No."

## The Most Severe Torture

The guard grew enraged by the answer and requested one of his assistants to bring the electric shock device. They placed the wires on Mohammed's knees and started shocking him three times before pausing briefly and then resuming the cycle. This time, they placed the electrical sockets in a different part of Mohammed's body: his ear.

It is unclear whether the power was cut off or if the guard had another task in the adjacent cell, or if he grew tired of torturing Mohammed. The man stopped and left the cell, leaving his assistants behind. Moments later, another man wearing glasses entered and began shouting at the assistants, saying, "Why are you doing this to him? This is not right." He ordered the chains to be removed. Then, he approached Mohammed in a friendly manner and asked him, "How do you communicate with the coalition's aviation and with Prince Mohammed bin Salman?"

Is it plausible that the coalition's aviation communicates with a person in the village who transports water in his car? Is it plausible that Prince Mohammed bin Salman communicates with Mohammed Al-Ahsan Fath Allah?



The man with the glasses was serious in his questioning, and Mohammed was unable to utter a word. He felt a profound physical and mental collapse, and his health condition was extremely poor. There was no use in ridiculing questions of this illogical nature.

The man with the glasses did not react or treat Mohammed harshly. He left the cell, and after a short while, another person entered carrying a whip and resumed beating and insulting Mohammed.

Mohammed was able to confirm that the two men were actually the same person - the kind one with glasses and the harsh one with the whip. Their words were the same, their voices were the same, their physical build was the same, but they wore glasses and a mask as a disguise. Once again, Mohammed lost consciousness, but after discovering the true identity of the guard, who would come on the sixth day and make Mohammed sit on a chair, he would ask, "How do you communicate with Mohammed bin Salman?"

After two years of detention, Mohammed Al-Ahsan was released as part of a prisoner exchange between the legitimate government and the Houthi forces



## Scabies is the end of the march

*Name: Amin Al Shafaq*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: October 22, 2015*

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The marks of the handcuff holes remain on Amin Al Shafaq's hand, and his right hand is disabled, deprived of the strength it once had before October 2015. The man is unable to carry heavy objects due to the beatings he endured in the political security prison in the city of Ibb. He did not commit any political crime to find himself in this prison.

It is a tragic irony that Al Shafaq was arrested for his involvement in an unfinished humanitarian activity. A group of prominent journalists, human rights activists, and two members of the Houthi-affiliated Revolutionary Committee in Ibb Governorate had planned to organize a water march, where they would transport



*Al-Shafaq joined a group that was intending to carry out a humanitarian activity: running water tankers from Ibb governorate to the city of Taiz, which is besieged by the Houthis, the Houthis arrested the organizers of the march, and the marks of the handcuffs still remain on Amin's wrist.*

water tanks to the besieged city of Taiz, controlled by the Houthis.

The water march was supposed to start from Ibb Governorate, which is adjacent to Taiz Governorate. However, armed members of the Houthi group attacked the organizers of the march while they were having a meeting inside the Ibb Garden Hotel. They arrested 24 individuals involved in organizing the march, including journalists, human rights activists, and humanitarian volunteers. Among those arrested were also two members of the Houthi-affiliated Revolutionary Committee in Ibb Governorate.

Is it possible that two members of the Houthi committee became affiliated with the organizers of the humanitarian march due to a similarity in names? There might be a resemblance between the widely known "Water March" among Yemenis during the preparations, and the "Quranic March" which the Houthis themselves use to describe their armed spread across the country as an ongoing Quranic march that will not cease.

The events provided Amin with suspicions, including the fact that members of the Revolutionary Committee targeted him specifically in the political security facility. During the interrogation, the investigators began beating him with a thick

stick on various parts of his body, including his face and head. The beatings had an impact, and his right hand continues to suffer from limited mobility, making it difficult for him to carry heavy objects. Furthermore, during the interrogation, one of them cocked a rifle and placed it against Amin's neck, assuming that he was inevitably going to be killed, even though his eyes were covered.

During the interrogation, Al Shafaq received numerous questions about the relationship between the organizers of the march and the Popular Resistance in the city of Taiz, the faction that fights against the Houthis. They also asked him about the purpose of the water march and whether they intended to carry weapons for resistance. Despite having no knowledge of the answers except for the purpose of the water march, the investigators affiliated with the so-called Quranic March took it upon themselves to provide him with the answers, including the answer to the question regarding the purpose of the water march. Subsequently, they forced him to sign the interrogation report.

The person responsible for the interrogation was named "Abu Yasar," and he hailed from the Asayimat area in Amran Governorate. The Houthis appointed him as a security

supervisor for criminal investigations in Ibb Governorate, and he also carried out challenging tasks in other agencies. One of these tasks included interrogating Al Shafaq in the political security facility, where Amin was subjected to beatings along with most of the detainees who were involved in organizing the water march, as he believes. Only four individuals were released the following day: two journalists from Sana'a and two members of the Houthi-affiliated Revolutionary Committee in Ibb Governorate. Al Shafaq doubts the true intentions of these individuals and whether they were coordinating with the Houthis, especially considering their release on the following day, while he remained detained in the political security prison for 27 days.

After this period, they did not release him, but they transported him and his colleague Antar Al-Mubarazi in a non-descript bus. Both of them were handcuffed with iron shackles behind their backs, their eyes covered. They were taken to an unknown destination, which became apparent to them after the coverings were removed in Najil Samara, that they were being taken to Sana'a. Al Shafaq protested against the iron shackles that bound their hands behind their backs. The armed individuals then removed the shackles from their hands and opted to restrain one hand of each person to the

bus seat. This resulted in nerve atrophy in Amin's right hand.

Amin and his colleague arrived at a hidden prison nestled between two mountains, with a restaurant facade to disguise its true nature. The prisoners inside came to know that the building belonged to the National Security and was located in the Sarif area of Sana'a. It was managed by a person named Abu Bashir, a security leader from Dhamar Governorate, who was loyal to the former president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Abu Bashir would later flee to Saudi Arabia, and the prison would be managed by a person named Abu Mohammed, also known as Adel Antar, from Saada Governorate, who belonged to the Houthi group.

In prison: severe psychological torture and mistreatment in terms of food and drink, deprivation of communication and contact, and visits except for one time when Al Shafaq was allowed to communicate with his family.

While in prison, Al Shafaq was subjected to threats of kidnapping his children, raiding his home, and being dismissed from his job. There is no proper ventilation in the prison, except for a small opening of approximately 5 centimeters in diameter. The prisoners are not allowed to go out in the sunlight except for a brief period every three weeks. They are

handcuffed, their eyes covered, and they are accompanied by guards who prevent them from speaking to each other during their limited time in the courtyard.

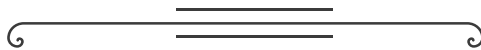
Inside the National Security prison, there were approximately 200 detainees, the majority of whom were held on high-profile charges. These charges were often leveled by the Houthi alliance and the former president Saleh against those who opposed or obstructed their agenda, labeling them as "ISIS affiliates."

Al Shafaq became acquainted with Dr. Abdulqadir Al-Janid, who was also detained on the same charges. He also got to know Sheikh Jamal Al-Maamari and witnessed the tragedy that unfolded for him in the same prison. The prison authorities subjected him to torture using a "drill," an electrical device used to pierce solid objects. With this device, they drilled into Sheikh Al-Maamari's spinal column from the neck, causing him to become paralyzed. Afterward, fellow prisoners volunteered to assist the Sheikh in going to the bathroom.

## The Most Severe Torture

During that period, scabies spread among the detainees. "Scabies is the end of the journey," Shafaq would think as he looked at the water, recalling the reason for his arrest. He wouldn't attribute it to any particular movement or cause, whether it be water or any other affiliation the Houthis claimed.

Amin Al-Shafaq was released from Houthi detention on February 10, 2017, after one year and three months of imprisonment, as part of a prisoner exchange deal between the Houthi group and the Popular Resistance in the city of Taiz. He currently resides in Taiz and is unable to return to his home province of Ibb.





## Gathoum the Qat seller

*Name: Zaid Hassel Al-Qadi*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 5 April 2016*

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He thought that his release time had come, after a long delay from his worried family. The guard called his name, "Zaid Al-Qadi." He thought they would set him free and restore his dignity, as he had been falsely accused without evidence. He had endured a great deal of torture, insults, and humiliation for a continuous week. Now, it was time to return to his seat in the market, where he sold qat in the city of Saada. They had arrested him from within the market. When he saw the armed men that day, he thought they were coming to buy qat. However, the armed members of the Houthi group seized him and his merchandise, threw him into a vehicle, and drove away.



*A Qat seller, he thought that Houthi people would buy from him, but they took him and tortured him for two years*

## The Most Severe Torture

Abu Khalil, Ibrahim Shaif, was leading the Houthi militants who arrested Zaid Al-Qadi, and throughout the journey, they took turns slapping, kicking, insulting, and humiliating him.

At first, the man was unaware of the reason behind this treatment. When they threw him into a prison in Saada, they interrogated him twice with torture and insults. It became clear to the qat seller that the accusation against him was related to sharing military coordinates of the Saudi-led Arab Coalition that supports the legitimacy. The Houthis accuse individuals of espionage or collaboration with the coalition, referring to it as "aggression." They apply this accusation to anyone who questions their actions and subject them to trial under laws that carry the death penalty.

The accusation against Zaid Al-Qadi weighed heavily on him, like a suffocating burden, woven under the influence of the potent qat he had consumed. The qat seller pondered his predicament, unaware of his family's place and unknown to them. He was just a qat seller preoccupied with profit and loss calculations, the cost and capital, and what he would spend on his family, not calculations of latitude and longitude to determine locations. Abu Khalil would reevaluate his calculations, or perhaps a rational Houthi intervention would

lead to Zaid's release. These were the thoughts running through his mind.

Despite what he had endured, he found some solace in the fact that they had confined their torture to a week. As they took him out of the cell and into a car, he felt a glimmer of hope that they had realized the gravity of their mistake and would return him to the market to restore his dignity. The guards surrounded Zaid Al-Qadi inside the car that left Saada prison. However, they did not take him where he had imagined. The car changed its direction to another location.

They transferred him to a prison where death seemed preferable to anyone entering it: the prison of Dhihan City. There, a new phase of Zaid's torture began, involving kicking, slapping, and electric shock sessions. The torture sessions were relentless, never ceasing. His eyes were blindfolded, and his hands were bound. He would faint from the pain, only to awaken and endure the torture once again.

Under torture, Zaid was coerced into signing documents whose contents he was unaware of. In between torture sessions, the prison authorities presented him with a strange offer: confessing to charges he heard for the first time in exchange for his release. The offer was a trap used by the

## The Most Severe Torture

Houthi to entangle victims and deceive the tortured, framing them with false accusations to mitigate the severity of the torture. There was no evidence of any prior goodwill in the offer, not even improving the dismal conditions inside the cramped cell or providing a full loaf of bread to each prisoner.

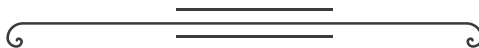
In the cramped cell, Zaid would receive a single "kudma" every two days—a type of bread. The cell door would open every two days, allowing a small amount of light to seep in, enabling the prisoners to catch the falling "kudma" before it landed on the dirty floor of the cell, filled with filth. "If you don't take it, you will starve to death."

Zaid remained in this state for four months, receiving the "kudma" every two days to sustain his life. Then, he was hit with a new charge: "incitement against the Houthi group within the detention facility," inciting fellow inmates against the group that controlled everything. It was a fabricated accusation. The qat seller never encouraged anyone to rebel against anyone else. He simply wanted to be released from prison and return to his family. However, this charge landed him in a dark cell where he couldn't even see his own hand. "I stayed there for five months, unable to distinguish between night and day." After this period, he was returned to the prison where other

detainees awaited him. New faces, new companions, all bearing the harsh burden of captivity. There were no details about his family or any means to communicate with them. In which prison would Zaid Al-Qadi find news about his family or find someone who could deliver a message to them?

Zaid didn't have much time left after his recent return. He found himself trapped in a car that departed from Dhihan prison in Saada to the central prison in Sanaa. It was there that he saw his family for the first time after over a year of enforced disappearance, searching, and continuous pursuit by the Houthis, who had denied any knowledge of his detention location.

\* The Houthis released Zaid Al-Qadi on March 5, 2018, as part of a prisoner exchange deal between the legitimate government and the Houthis. He was forcibly relocated to live in Marib, far away from his family and hometown.



## Mossad confiscates the rents of the displaced

*Name: Saleh Mohammed Mousa Alhumaiqani*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 22 February 2017*

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Saleh Al-Humayqani remembers the details that preceded his abduction into a black car. He was on his way to pay overdue rents for seven displaced families in the city of Al-Bayda. However, the man working on the displacement housing project was surprised by three armed individuals: Abu Shihab, Abu Ahmed, and another person. They intercepted him in front of the headquarters of the Social Reform Charitable Association, which was implementing the housing project provided by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).



*Al-Humayqani was on his way to pay the rents of displaced families, but the Houthis kidnapped him, looted his possessions, and hung him in the grill position*

Saleh was walking along Security Street, carrying the remaining cash for the displaced people's rents. The black car intercepted him, and the three armed men demanded him to accompany them. He refused, as there were seven displaced families waiting for him, and he didn't want to keep them waiting. They disregarded his excuse and pointed their weapons at him. They first took his phone, cutting off his communication with others. Then they snatched the bag containing the cash, questioning its source: "It's not about where it's going, but where did you get it from?" They also took the organization's computer, accusing him of working with the Mossad. They ordered him to get into the car, stating that they had orders to arrest him.

Saleh Al-Humayqani requested a copy of the arrest warrant from them, but they said it was located at the Political Security. They threw him into one of the rooms of the Political Security. Al-Humayqani wanted to inform his family about the arbitrary detention, but he was not allowed to make any calls as his phone was confiscated from him at the moment of the abduction.

The man's delay in fulfilling his promise to pay the rents caused the hours to pass slowly. From the moment of his arrest at 10:00 AM, time dragged on until 6:30 PM, the designated time for the tragedy to unfold in the interrogation room, where he

was blindfolded.

The first session lasted for about two hours, with most of it focusing on an Irish organization called "Goal." They told him that the organization was Israeli, but Saleh denied the accusation. The organization is recognized and based in Sana'a, under the control of the Houthis who were interrogating Al-Humayqani in Al-Bayda province. The investigators accused those affiliated with the Irish organization of working for the Mossad. In addition to denying the accusation, Saleh Al-Humayqani asserted that he had never worked with the organization and had no connection to it whatsoever. At the end of the session, they took his phone's passcode and returned him to the room.

He remained alone in the room for a whole month without any lighting. They only allowed him to use the bathroom twice every 24 hours. Between each day, they would take Saleh for interrogation. Saleh, who worked in the project of housing displaced people who were affected by the war waged by the Houthis themselves, was concerned about delivering the rents to the displaced individuals. The displaced people were victims and were suffering, in need of someone to pay the overdue rents to prevent their suffering from worsening. However, the funds were in the possession of one of the parties responsible for causing the tragedy of displacement.



It was truly a tragic situation.

During the interrogations, the investigators forcefully dipped Saleh's thumb into an inkwell and then pressed it onto unknown documents. Despite complying with these harsh procedures, Saleh was fully aware of their brutality. In the final interrogation session, the investigators bent his fingers backward until they met the back of his hand. Afterward, they placed him in a position known as "the grill," where the tortured individual becomes numb to the insults and accusations hurled at them.

Insults continued to accompany Saleh into his cell. Abu Shihab personally took charge of humiliating Saleh, and Abu Shihab had a terrifying reputation among the prisoners. Due to his relentless torture of detainees and his expertise in this work, one of the inmates committed suicide, while others suffered disabilities, illnesses, and fractures.

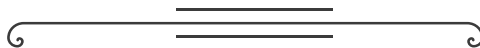
After a month, Saleh Al-Humayqani found himself in the internal prison. This prison was divided into two sections: the first consisted of eight cells, each measuring two meters by two meters, followed by a yard covered with iron fences, approximately thirty meters long and four meters wide, with two bathrooms. The number of prisoners in this section ranged from fifteen to twenty-five, and Saleh remained there for six months.

## The Most Severe Torture

As for the second section of the internal prison, it is almost the same size but divided into three large rooms. A similar number of detainees rotate in this section, and Saleh stayed there for about four months.

The psychological pressure in the internal prison was horrific. There were no investigations, no healthy food or drinkable water, and they deliberately tortured the emotions of the detainees' families. In this section, the prison authorities allowed families to visit their imprisoned relatives, but the visits were limited to five minutes every two weeks. More than one Houthi member was present between the detainee and their family during the visit. The Houthi members would falsely accuse the detainee in front of their family, causing many families, especially women, to collapse emotionally. This is just one of the many distressing aspects, but the most haunting one for Al-Humayqani.

\*Saleh Al-Humayqani was released after a year of his detention, but his stolen belongings were not returned: the computers, the phone, the identification cards, the orphans' cards, and the financial amount allocated for paying the rent of the displaced individuals.



## The tragedy of the honey seller

*Name: Fathi Al-Ghulaisi*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 21/2/2017*

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During the war, there were few customers for honey on Thursdays at the exhibition where Fathi Al-Ghulaisi sold honey and perfume, located next to the Maternity and Childhood Clinic in the coastal city of Al-Khawka. On the last Thursday morning for Fathi at Al-Fadil's shop, armed members of the Houthi group arrived and took the worker to a small room resembling a dragonfly box.

The armed militants unbuttoned Fathi's shirt and covered his eyes. They dragged him like an animal, pulling him up the stairs to the second floor of a building in Zabid. They took him into a room where several investigators were present. They accused him of espionage for Arab coalition



*His sister died and the Houthis refused a hostage to take him out to the burial ceremony, they dressed him in a burial shroud and falsely executed him, tortured him and released him in a disabled state, unable to work*

countries, questioned him about spying, and voices called him a member of ISIS and a mercenary.

Fathi vehemently denied everything the investigators accused him of, but they responded by raining punches on his stomach and beating him with rods on his back and all parts of his body.

"Please, God, save me! This is unjust!" Fathi pleaded and begged for mercy, while they continued chanting, "You're an ISIS member, you're an ISIS member, you're with the aggression."

Meanwhile, the aircraft of the Arab coalition was flying overhead. The Houthi militants closed the door on Fathi Al-Ghulaisi, saying, "We will leave you for the aircraft to bomb you."

The aircraft did not bomb, so they resumed beating Fathi Al-Ghulaisi with iron rods on his joints, neck, and back, delivering powerful punches to his stomach. He collapsed to the ground, feeling nothing. He lost consciousness. After a few minutes, he felt the cold water on his body. They took him and threw him into a dark room filled with debris and rats, where he remained for three days.

The interrogations continued relentlessly. They would summon him at any time, whether during the day or at two o'clock after midnight. They would startle him while he was asleep, showing no concern for his well-being or state. They would lead him around like an animal. One day, they wrapped a white cloth resembling a shroud around Fathi's body and blindfolded him with a bandage over his eyes. They then led him into a courtyard.

"Give us information, you ISIS member, you're with the aggression," they demanded.

He could hear the interrogation of another man nearby:

"Confess!" they would demand, and the man would scream, "No! Nooo! Please don't kill me!" After that, Fathi Al-Ghulaisi would hear the sounds of gunshots, as if they had killed the man. His mouth would go dry under the scorching sun, and he would call out to them, "I need water," but there was no response.

The person in charge of the Zabid detention facility was a Houthi leader named "Abu Ahmed," hailing from the Hajjah Governorate. He said to Fathi Al-Ghulaisi:

## The Most Severe Torture

"You are Yemeni... You are a traitor... We are in a merciless war. You will die from torture, and you will beg for death."

Fathi Al-Ghulaisi remained under the scorching sun and reached the peak of thirst until one o'clock in the afternoon. Then they returned him to the prisoners' room. He managed to see his surroundings.

The prison area established by the Houthis in Zabid was approximately 100 meters in size. It housed a two-story building and a single-story structure. Above the second floor, there were two windowless rooms. Adjacent to the buildings was the mosque, known as Sheikh Mohammed bin Salem Al-Zubaidi Mosque, which provided shelter for the Houthis. Their fighters would sleep there before being deployed to the front lines in the Hodeidah Governorate. Within that area, there was also a traditional well, approximately 60 meters deep, but its water was unfit for drinking. The Houthis would force the detainees to drink from it.

Fathi Al-Ghulaisi endured repeated torture under the scorching sun, this time under the command of another leader named Abu Shahab, after Abu Ahmed was replaced. One night, they took him to the cemetery, which was separated from the detention facility by a side road connecting the city to the general government hospital and the main road.

They seated him next to a pit, and he watched in agony as they whipped his feet and head with a plastic-covered whip containing iron wires. His feet were cut, and blood flowed. The torture continued for at least three hours while they insulted and cursed his parents.

One day, they dragged Fathi Al-Ghulaisi out for torture at three in the morning. His eyes were closed shut. They held onto his feet and lowered him into a pit.

"My face was downwards, and my legs were raised upwards to the point where soil entered my mouth. I was on the verge of death. I told them I would die, so they pulled me out and resumed relentlessly and mercilessly whipping me with whips. Afterward, I spent a month in the prison room, unable to move due to the injuries inflicted upon me."

After two months had passed, the officials in charge of the Zabid detention facility resorted to electrocuting Fathi Al-Ghulaisi's toes. They would shock him, causing him to scream in agony. Meanwhile, they would chant their slogan of hatred:

"Death to America!

Death to Israel..."

## The Most Severe Torture

They subjected him to six more rounds of electric shocks, and they placed a plastic bag in his mouth. Whenever they paused the electrocution, they would beat him with sticks on his back and joints before returning him to the prison.

Fathi Al-Ghulaisi witnessed the torture of two elderly men. The first man, around 100 years old and from the outskirts of Al-Khawkhah, worked as an ice cream vendor. The Houthis accused him of monitoring their positions. The second man, around 80 years old, was in the same room as Fathi. He suffered from heart problems and told Fathi that the Houthis left him standing blindfolded. He fell to the ground and regained consciousness without knowing when he had regained it. He said to them, "Shame on you... I am like your fathers. You leave me lying on the ground." They responded by accusing him, "You are a member of ISIS."

As a result of the torture, Fathi Al-Ghulaisi gradually lost his mobility. His family would send him money and clothes through Houthi intermediaries, but they only delivered scraps to him. His family sold their gold possessions and gave money to Houthi leaders and intermediaries who were supposed to secure his release. They took everything and did nothing. What was even more distressing was that when his



sister passed away, some influential figures approached the Houthis to ensure his presence at her funeral. In exchange, they refused and claimed that he was not present. One of the influential figures said to them, "Leave me in his place in the prison room and let him come out under your guard to see his sister." However, they denied my existence in Zabid prison.

Fathi Al-Ghulaisi witnessed various forms of torture, including cases where individuals suffered paralysis in their hands or feet. Most of the detainees would emerge from their ordeal with illnesses and health issues. Fathi Al-Ghulaisi himself was in a deteriorating condition when he was released. CT scans and MRI examinations confirmed that he had spinal column injuries and a severe herniated disc between the fourth and fifth vertebrae.

The honey seller is crippled, in a semi-clinical condition, unable to work to support his family.

\* Fathi Al-Ghalisi was released from the Criminal Investigation Prison in Hodeidah, on 16/4/2018.



## The little one grows up with torture

*Name: Bader Sultan*

*Arrestee: Houthis group*

*Date of arrest: July 13, 2016*

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Horror engulfed Bader Sultan when he was taken to the Criminal Investigation Department in Sana'a. He saw a prisoner being carried to the bathroom with a stretcher, while another went to relieve himself supported by two inmates. "He was in the workshop last night," the prisoners whispered, referring to the man. They began recounting some details about the horrors of the workshop where prisoners were taken in the Criminal Investigation Department.

Badr was eighteen years old when he was arrested and taken to the Habra Police Station before being transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department after thirty-five days. When he arrived at



*He was arrested by the Houthis at the age of 18. They took him to specialized workshops for torture, punctured his hand, fractured his head, and cut his chest with a scalpel. They lied to his mother that he had committed suicide. And after 5 years of imprisonment, his mother died before his release*

the investigative prison and saw what he saw, he felt fear overwhelming him. He cried all night, imagining what would happen to him. The anticipation of his turn worsened his mental state. The investigators would summon a prisoner and they would return in a miserable condition. Fear intensified for Badr every time he heard the door being opened. They would come for interrogation around 11 or 12 at night when everyone else was asleep.

Two weeks passed without it being Bader's turn, and after two more weeks, his turn finally came.

Bader walked trembling with fear. They left him standing for several hours without uttering a word. They would return him to his cell, summon him the next day, and leave him standing for hours again. This continued for four days. It was a process of conditioning or exercise to prepare him for entering the workshop he had heard about or seen the marks of on the bodies of his fellow prisoners.

They led him blindfolded to the workshop. As he entered, he could hear the screams of the detainees. He described the scene as resembling the Day of Judgment, with terrifying cries echoing all around.

## The Most Severe Torture

The workshop consisted of different stages and various rooms. They brought Bader Sultan into a place where he felt like he was inside a freezer, and he could hear terrifying sounds once again. After being taken to another location with his eyes covered, they made him sit on an iron chair. They removed the restraints from his hands and tied them to the torture chair, securing wires on his thumbs. The interrogation began, and any delayed response to a question caused his entire body to convulse from the electric shocks.

They asked him about his knowledge of prominent journalists he didn't know inside Sana'a, and about the offices of Yemeni channels in the city of Taiz. They also asked him questions about his siblings and the place of his family.

"At the age of 18, when I was arrested, I found myself in detention, subjected to torture and late-night interrogations. They asked me about things that had no relevance to me. I was shocked, especially since they arrested me under the false belief that I was a journalist working for local and international channels."

They interrogated him about his Facebook posts. They tied his hands behind his back. One of the personnel from the Criminal Investigation Department's torture workshop came

and stomped on Bader's hand joints with his feet. On one occasion, he stomped on the right hand until it was wounded and bleeding. They continued torturing him in the Criminal Investigation Department for forty-five days before transferring him to the secret prison, located in the basement of a villa owned by Ali Mohsen. The villa had been transformed into a prison.

The harshness of the place and the cruelty of the people inflicted severe psychological torment. The treatment he endured was brutal. The prisoners relieved themselves at the opposite end of the room where Badr was placed. They took him for interrogation while his hand was swollen from the torture in the criminal investigation workshop. They asked him about his journalist brother who appeared on channels opposing the Houthis. Each question was accompanied by insults and humiliations. The investigator, in his final question, asked about the place of Badr's brother's family. He responded to them, saying, "That is a family matter and a disgrace."

Due to the intensity of anger, the investigator kicked the chair on which the bound Badr was sitting. He fell to the ground, and his head collided with the tiles, causing him to lose consciousness. He regained consciousness only to find five

individuals participating in beating and kicking him. Afterward, they released him from the chair and hung him from a fan. "I screamed at the top of my lungs, and with each scream, the beating with plastic sticks intensified. I would cry out, saying, 'My hands!' After three hours, one of them brought me down, untied the rope, and stepped on my hand with his foot, wearing military boots. With every question, he would press his foot on my hand, causing immense pain," Bader recounted.

Bader's hand became swollen in the criminal investigation workshop, and the wounds worsened in the hidden prison workshop in the basement of the villa. They became severe and included a wound that extended from the back of his palm to the base of his hand. The injuries were indeed grievous.

On the second day, Bader requested a painkiller to alleviate his suffering. One of the Houthi captors responded as he led him back to the interrogation room:

"Maybe I can give you something that will temporarily ease your pain."

The investigator remained silent for two hours before threatening Bader Sultan with cutting off his hand and giving it to his mother. The severity of the threat was even more

powerful than the torture itself. The investigator then ordered for Bader to be taken back to the workshop.

The workshop is present in every prison, and it grew in the mind of the young detainee. After being taken into the hidden prison workshop, he was thrown onto a bed and his hands and feet were restrained. They asked him, "Where are the journalists working in Sana'a? And which channels are they working for?" Due to the intensity of the torture, he agreed to their demand, falsely claiming that he worked for the Yemen Shabab channel. They wanted him to confess that he was collaborating with Hamdi Al-Bokari (a correspondent for Al Jazeera) and that Al Jazeera channels were acting as intelligence agents for the coalition, as they found some correspondence between him and Al-Bokari.

After that, the investigator took a knife and cut open Bader's chest, saying, "By Allah, I will remove your heart and play with it in my hands."

As the investigator began running the knife across Bader's chest, he released the blindfold from his eyes so that he could see the blood and experience increased psychological pain. "You are wicked... despicable... an ISIS member," the workshop butcher said to Bader. Bader screamed in agony until he eventually lost consciousness.

\*\*

Bader regained consciousness with fractured ribs, a clear wound on his chest, and intense pain that made it difficult for him to breathe normally. They returned him to the criminal investigation department before transferring him to the Revolutionary Precautionary Prison. There, alongside thieves, killers, and criminals, Bader Sultan and the other detainees who opposed the Houthis were subjected to treatment even harsher than that given to the criminals themselves.

"In one instance, after my head was fractured, I didn't dare ask them to provide me with medical assistance, even though blood was covering my back. After two days, one of the detainees noticed that the wound had become infected, not to mention the pain in my hand. I simply asked for a painkiller, but they refused. My fellow inmate shouted on my behalf regarding my head, so the prison authorities opened the door and took him out, humiliating him," Bader recounted.

The detainees were subjected to contempt even in matters of food, drink, restroom access, and communication. Bader Sultan was not allowed to contact his family until one year and seven months had passed. After that period, his family was finally allowed to visit him.



\*\*

Bader Sultan's mother used to travel from her village in Taiz to the capital, Sana'a, periodically to visit her son in prison. They allowed the families of the detainees to visit for a limited time, not exceeding five minutes, every Thursday. During these visits, both the visitor and the detainee were subjected to humiliation and insults.

"Every time, I would hide the signs of torture from my mother, which were often on my back. But one Thursday night, I was subjected to severe torture, with blows to my face. On that day, they prevented my mother from visiting. When she couldn't find me, they told her, 'Your son attempted suicide, and we have placed him in solitary confinement. He cannot be visited.' However, Bader's mother was determined not to leave until she saw him. She cried for three hours. The prison authorities eventually gave in and forced Bader Sultan to cover his face and hands so that his mother wouldn't discover the torture he had endured. Then they allowed her to visit but prevented her son from speaking."

\*\*

Bader Sultan remained in the precautionary prison for four years, and at the end of 2019, he was transferred to the residential city of Al-Saleh in Taiz. He had a feeling that he had entered a large forest inhabited by predatory animals, as he witnessed how anyone entering the prison would be devoured in some way.

Upon entering one of the buildings, Bader Sultan found sick detainees, including one who was marginalized and in a tragic condition. The detainees pleaded with the authorities of Al-Saleh Prison to provide medical treatment for the marginalized individual.

"Let him die," the supervisors responded callously to the detainees' plea.

The marginalized individual died right before Bader Sultan's eyes. Former detainees informed Bader Sultan that several prisoners in that building had died. "They reached a state of utter despair after enduring bitter cries and immense suffering," they told Bader Sultan, their voices filled with sorrow.

The city of Al-Saleh was like a ghost town, where torture, psychological warfare, food, and drink were even worse than in Sana'a.

"In the precautionary prison in Sana'a, they used to provide us with around 25 water bottles for three days. In Al-Saleh, it was reduced to only two bottles for three days, which you had to drink from, perform ablution with, wash your body if needed, and even wash your clothes. The water was not clean, as they filled it from dirty tanks. If you thought of buying clean water, they would sell you a bottle at twice its actual price. Everything was exploited to the fullest. The Houthi authorities imposed payment for medicines on sick detainees, doubling the cost. The prison guards would receive a fee to bring the medication, which would first reach the prison director, who would then pass it on to the absent supervisor. There were detainees suffering from chronic diseases such as liver and heart conditions, and the medication would arrive after seven days. The patient would be on the verge of death, and the treatment wouldn't arrive," Bader Sultan recounted.

The Houthis interrogated Bader in Al-Saleh Detention Center in Taiz, using the same methods and questions as in the prisons in Sana'a. Bader objected, insisting that they had already interrogated him in Sana'a and they could refer to that file. However, they dismissed his objections, reminding him that he was now in Taiz, in an independent prison from Sana'a.

The interrogation took a brutal turn as they subjected Bader to a position resembling that of a barbecue grill, with his hands and legs tied together and an iron rod inserted in the middle. Then, six individuals would proceed to beat him in various parts of his body, while three others laughed and poured water over him in a mocking manner.

Bader fell into despair, saying, "I thought I would spend the rest of my life in prison without any hope." His despair multiplied when he received the news of his mother's death while he was in Al-Saleh Detention Center. "She was the anchor to my soul. She never left my side. She would travel from Taiz to Sana'a just to see me for five minutes and then return the next day. Sometimes I feel like my mother will walk in on me at any moment. Her aspiration was to see me outside of prison. The day of my release was not joyful without my mother," Bader expressed, overwhelmed by grief and longing for his mother's presence.

Bader Sultan was released on September 29, 2021, as part of a prisoner exchange deal. However, he continues to face numerous challenges. As he explains, "First and foremost, I have no future. I cannot pursue higher education at the university. I try to work, but I am unable to do so due to the injuries my hands sustained in the Houthi prisons. I have not been able to undergo a surgical operation for my hands. I am unable to carry a bag weighing one kilogram with my hands. I cannot work to support myself and my family."

### Political Security cells

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Abdou was the seventh person led by the armed Houthi group and forces loyal to President Saleh to Cell "Number 4" in the first southern prison of the Political Security in Sana'a. Abdou stayed with the other seven detainees in this cell for 11 days before they were transferred to the basement. Five of them were then moved to the northern section, also known as "Al-Daghat" under the authority of the Political Security apparatus.

The "Daghat" of the Political Security is a room measuring four meters by three and a half, without a single outlet for light. Inside, there were 14 detainees. Initially, they were allowed to go to the restroom four times within a 24-hour period. However, this number was reduced to three times, and then further reduced to two times. One day, two of Abdou's colleagues suffered



*The political security detainees had to relieve themselves near their own cells due to the closure of the restroom. Their families were subjected to verbal abuse. The Houthis beat the detainees' shackles with hammers on their feet, and the supervisor of the prison was accused. His name is written on the cell wall*

from severe constipation and had to relieve themselves near their own cells after dawn.

"We placed a blanket in the middle of a water bucket for them to relieve themselves, and this distress continued until noon because the cell door was closed."

After twenty-five days in the "Daghat," Abdou was returned to the first southern prison, but this time he was placed in Cell "Number 3."

Cell "Number 3" was relatively spacious compared to the other cells, with dimensions of eight meters by three meters. It had a two-meter bathroom area, leaving the remaining space for the cell where 23 detainees lived. Each detainee had an allocation of approximately fifty centimeters of space.

On the walls of the cell, there were memories of the names of former detainees, and the most prominent name on the wall was "Yahya Saree." Yahya Saree was previously accused in sensitive cases before the Houthi group stormed the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, and took control of state institutions there.

After two months of Abdou's detention, his family was allowed to visit him. The visit served as a punishment for both the prisoner and his family, occurring once a week before being

reduced to every two weeks. There was a distance of two meters and two mesh barriers between the prisoner and his family, along with several members of the Houthi group deliberately humiliating and psychologically impacting the detainees by bringing them out while they were still shackled. They would insult and verbally abuse them during the brief visits, which lasted no more than five minutes and sometimes only one minute.

"My wife has suffered from severe weight loss, and she occasionally experiences nervous breakdowns because of this. One of my children has nightmares as well."

The person in charge of the prison was indeed Yahya Saree himself, but he is a different person from Yahya Saree, the spokesman of what is known as the Houthi-affiliated army. The Yahya Saree mentioned on the cell wall is the convicted individual whose name was written there. The Houthis had released him and appointed him as the prison administrator, along with another leader named Hashem, who hails from the Saada Governorate. There was also another person named Abu Aqeel and Mansour Al-Gharbi. These individuals were the authorities in charge of the Political Security cells.



During the years 2016 and 2017, armed individuals would raid Cell Number 3 intermittently. On one occasion, they struck the detainees' leg restraints with hammers, causing injuries to some of them. Everyone remained shackled for varying periods, ranging from two months to three months, and some were even shackled for six months. In one particular week, Abdou was shackled with two restraints, which caused him to develop varicose veins.

"We would go to the restroom like children, and the experience was doubly agonizing. The varicose veins, hernias, and other ailments continued to afflict Abdou even after his release."

The detainees in Cell Number 3 were subjected to more than 12 humiliating raids and searches. Around 30 armed individuals would storm the cell, searching through the detainees' belongings and looting their clothes and blankets. Once, they completely stripped the detainees of their clothing, exposing their private parts, and then led them to the prison yard at night in freezing temperatures. They subjected them to the torment of cold weather on multiple occasions. One day, they tortured Abdou:

## The Most Severe Torture

"They placed a collar around my neck and whipped me with lashes from my feet and legs to my head. As a result, my feet became swollen."

The Houthis began reducing the already poor food rations for the detainees, as well as limiting access to water. In fact, the drinking water was reduced to the amount that could fit in a bottle cap for each prisoner. Water was cut off from the cell's restroom. The detainees stopped eating to avoid using the restroom and were forced to demand water. After their repeated demands, approximately twenty armed individuals attacked the cell and confiscated the detainees' belongings. Leading this group of armed individuals was Yahya Saree, the person who was once a prisoner in the same cell and whose name is still written on its wall. A young man from Al-Hodeidah Governorate objected to Saree's actions and his armed group. They removed him from the cell, shackled him, and subjected him to severe beatings. One of the armed individuals kicked him in the chest, nearly causing him to lose consciousness. They then took him to a basement for twenty-three days. When he returned, the wounds on his body were deep:



"He told us about the torture he endured after being taken to the courtyard."

Abdou suffered from muscle strain and inflammation of the salivary glands due to the cold weather. His body was unable to withstand any exertion after being exposed to the cold during those days. His health deteriorated significantly. Along with his fellow detainees, he embarked on a hunger strike due to the refusal of the authorities of the Political Security to allow him medical treatment after 11 months of illness. As a result of the hunger strike, the prison authorities responded to the detainees' demands. They shackled Abdou, blindfolded him, and placed him in a vehicle without seats. The driver would recklessly accelerate and suddenly stop, causing discomfort and preventing the sick detainee from requesting medical assistance once again.

The overseer of Cell Number 3 stopped the ventilation fans in the cell, prompting the detainees to protest and demand their restoration. However, the overseer threatened to close the small ventilation window and ignite a fire under the door if they did not stop their demands. Despite the threat, the detainees did not comply, so the overseer punished them by

delaying the opening of the restroom door and transferring some of them, including Abdou, to a confined space as a result of their protest.

\*Abdou was transferred to Sarf Prison, which is under the control of the National Security, and later moved to the Central Security Prison in Sana'a. He was released as part of a prisoner exchange deal in 2020, after more than four years of detention.

## Escape during the bombing

*Name: Yahya Ahmed Mahrous*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 30/5/2015*

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Yahya Mahrous took advantage of the airstrikes targeting his place of detention and managed to escape from the Houthis.

On that day, the sound of aircraft belonging to the Arab coalition echoed in the skies of Al-Hodeidah Governorate, which was under the control of the Houthi group with the participation of forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yahya was detained in the Officers Club and could hear the sound clearly. There were other civilians beside him who had been arrested by the Houthi group and forces loyal to the former president. The first airstrike occurred near the Officers Club in the heart of Al-Hodeidah city. The detainees rushed out of the cells into the courtyard to save themselves from the



*Yahya witnessed his fellow detainees being brutally tortured, and he feared that he would face the same fate. Seizing the opportunity during the intense explosions near the detention facility in the heart of the city of Al-Hodeidah*

obvious target of the airstrikes. However, the Houthi militants opened fire on anyone attempting to escape. During that time, around 15 detainees were injured. The second airstrike hit the same location, causing the Houthi militants to flee. Yahya managed to escape as well.

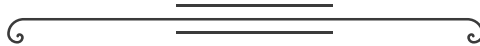
Yahya decided to leave Al-Hodeidah Governorate without any intention of returning, fearing that he would once again fall into the hands of the Houthis and Saleh's forces. He didn't want to encounter the many detainees who had witnessed their torture or heard the details of what they had endured in the "Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari" camp. This camp was where the Houthis took him after arresting him on the road while he was returning from visiting a friend in the Khawkhah area before being transferred to the Officers Club.

Yahya vividly remembers the torture inflicted upon detainee Sultan Hassan. His hands were tied to his feet with a wooden board placed between them, forcing him into a prone position. Chains were then wrapped around him from above, lifting his legs and leaving him suspended with his body weight supported by his hands. This torture continued from 7 p.m. until 1 a.m. Others whom Yahya witnessed undergoing the same torture included Sami Shioui, Ibrahim Hussein, Mohammad Naji Al-

Hattami, Hani Afifi, Abdulmajid Mohammed, and Amin Saif. Sultan Hassan remained unable to eat solid food for nearly five days, only managing to consume some beverages.

The scenes of torture and the detailed accounts of the tortured detainees deeply unsettled Yahya, causing him to live in constant anxiety, fearing that he might suffer the same fate. His anxiety only subsided when he reached the city of Taiz, which is under the control of the internationally recognized government forces. The shift in control provided him with a sense of relief and relative safety.

Yahya Mahrous met with the monitoring team affiliated with Sam in the city of Taiz.



## The unbeliever inside the mosque

*Name: Hadi Ali Hadi Ali Al-Razhi*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 23/8/ 2010*

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The leaders of the Houthi group, Abu Mohammed Abdullah Al-Hasani and Abu Khaled Ahmed Al-Sharqi, requested the presence of Hadi Al-Razhi in the Izd area of Saada. Hadi responded to the request and headed to the location where they were present. They invited him into a council in one of the houses. The militants left the council, and after fifteen minutes, they returned to Hadi, apologizing that Abu Khaled Ahmed Al-Sharqi was unable to meet him and that the subject they needed to discuss with Hadi was lengthy and required a significant amount of time.

They requested him to stay until after dinner, but he apologized and left after promising them that he would return after



*He accepted their invitation and was led by six individuals carrying batons and three individuals carrying rifles into a mosque, where he was tortured.*



breaking his Ramadan fast. He left their presence and went to a colleague in the area who had invited him for dinner. However, the Houthis followed Hadi to the house where he was a guest. The three Houthis who caught up with Hadi at his friend's house were Hussein Jaber Ali, Hussein Jihad Hussein, and Hussein Mohsen Abdullah.

"Why have you come when I promised to return?" Hadi asked them, feeling embarrassed in front of his friend.

Hadi attempted to contact some of the Houthi leaders he knew in Saada Governorate, but their phones were switched off. The three individuals informed him that their leadership wanted to speak with him about sensitive and important matters.

Hadi went with them, and on the way, near their headquarters inside the "Al-Kutaybah" Mosque, they asked him to enter.

"The leaders will come to the mosque and talk to you about certain matters, and then we will go to the headquarters for storage," they said.

They gave him a notebook and a pen, and thoroughly searched him, taking his wallet and all his belongings under the pretext of security precautions.

## The Most Severe Torture

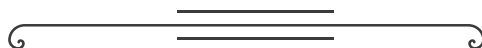
Hadi entered the mosque, stripped of everything, accompanied by the Houthis: Hussein Jaber, Hussein Jihad, and Hussein Mohsen, who carried their rifles.

They began asking him strange questions, to which he responded that he knew nothing about what they were talking about. One of them pointed towards the mosque door.

Hadi thought that the individuals they were referring to had arrived, but he soon realized that the six Houthis who entered were young men from the area whom he knew: Mohammed Salem Hussein Ma'shiyah, Kamal Jaber Ali Abu Khayrah, Saddam Mohsen, Abdullah Sadiq Harb, Nasser Mansour Saeed, and Yahya or Jameel Mansour Saeed.

They quickly closed the mosque. The six individuals, armed with batons, began questioning Hadi. Without waiting for any answers, they mercilessly beat him with the batons and the butts of their rifles. He couldn't resist, but he tried to defend his head as much as possible, which resulted in injuries to his hands and elbows. He suffered a fracture in his left elbow, which would cause him constant pain.

During the torture, one of them said to him, "You are an infidel, and your killing is a means for us to draw closer to Allah."



## Apartment furniture owner

*Name: Hassan Saif Malataf  
Abdullah Mohsen Al-Jamal*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 2015*

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All Hassan Saif hoped for was to leave his apartment with the furniture. He could no longer afford the rent after hearing rumors that someone was eavesdropping on him, so he was forced to sleep in the kitchen with his wife and children for several days. He evacuated the apartment coinciding with the airstrikes of the Arab coalition that was fighting the Houthis in Sana'a. The bombing only strengthened his determination to leave the place out of fear for his children. He continued moving among relatives for approximately two months, then decided to return to his apartment to retrieve the furniture.

As Hassan was leaving the neighborhood, an old Hilux vehicle with four armed individuals stopped him. Among them was Jumail Ali Al-Jabri, a leader in the Houthi



*He removed the furniture from his apartment without notifying the armed individuals. They took him to obtain a pledge. His wife and mother searched for him in police stations and morgues. They stripped him of his clothes and took pictures of him from all angles.*

group, Haziz Prison supervisor in Sana'a, Azaddin Al-Mahagri Abu Hashem. They took Hassan's furniture and confiscated kitchen utensils as well as the motorcycle he had with him. They informed him that they would detain him for ten minutes to ensure everything was in order and took a pledge from him stating that he was the owner of the furniture. However, they forcefully led him towards the Haziz area, covered his face, searched him, and took his wallet, phone, and everything he had, including documents and money in his pocket. They left him with nothing and abandoned him in the Zain Al-Abidin Mosque, which they had turned into a prison during that period.

Hassan's mother and wife continued searching for him in hospitals, departments, and morgues for several weeks. Due to the rapidly evolving situation and the airstrikes conducted by the Arab coalition against the Houthis at that time, the Houthi militants and Saleh's forces did not allow his sisters to enter Sana'a. Eventually, his family was informed about his place through one of the detainees who was released before him.

In prison, Hassan and his colleagues were subjected to psychological warfare and threats of being transferred to unrecoverable locations. They also faced a barrage of

obscenities and accusations, including betrayal, collaboration, and espionage. Additionally, they endured humiliating acts such as forced nudity and repeated photography from all angles.

The prison authorities would come every night, selecting one or two detainees whom they would torture by beating and suspending them from the wrists to the ceiling of the cell using thin ropes. This torture would last between six to eight hours, and sometimes even longer. There was one detainee, an Ethiopian migrant named "Abdu Kadma," who was beaten and had 12 sticks broken over his back in a single night.

The detainees would hear the moans, screams, and cries of the tortured individuals in the interrogation room. These agonizing sounds would mix with the insults, curses, and threats from the executioners. In response, the detainees would pray and supplicate, seeking relief from Allah. The tortured individuals would then return to their fellow detainees, unable to stand and with their bodies completely burned. And so, each detainee would spend their time waiting for their turn, which would come in the next night.

Hassan couldn't accurately determine the identity of the investigator who handled his case. He was called Abu Ja'far,

and it was said that he was a security officer in the Special Forces. Some claimed he was a military officer in the Third Brigade. Hassan overheard him making a phone call one day, mentioning someone named Abu Ali Al-Mahagri. Some of the detainees told him that his name was Abdulhamid Maqla.

Hassan's primary charge was removing furniture from the apartment without notifying the authorities. However, the erratic mood swings of the investigator caused him to stumble through a series of questions over the course of twenty months of abduction and torture. There was a whole session dedicated to the furniture: "What furniture do you have?" even though all the furniture was legally owned by them. Another session focused on the distribution of SIM cards, where they falsely claimed that Hassan was involved in planting SIM cards to assist the coalition forces in identifying target locations. There was yet another session accusing him of inciting people in the neighborhood mosque to perform Taraweeh prayers and join Quran memorization circles. Additionally, they demanded detailed accounts of his life story from childhood to that moment: "Where did you study? Who was the school principal and the teachers? Where did you work? Which company? Who was the manager? Who worked with you?"

\*Malataf was released on 8/ 12/2016.

# **Chapter:**

## **Equality of women with torture quotas**

## Death over the torment of prison

*Name: Nidal*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 18/8/2019*

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Eight men and a group of armed women stormed Nidal's house while she was sleeping with her mother, children, and sister. The raid was sudden on that night, with armed men accompanied by armed women from the Zainabiyat group searching the house and rummaging through everything. They then seized Nidal, who was pregnant with a child and a mother to her children, taking her away with them.

Outside the house in the Nagma neighborhood in Sana'a, the house was surrounded by three military vehicles carrying Houthi armed individuals, along with a car carrying Zainabiyat members, including Hanadi Al-Wadai and others.



*The pregnant woman was spitting blood; they tortured her in front of her daughter. She attempted suicide. They released her after her husband was killed among their ranks.*



The armed women grabbed Nidal forcefully, and the procession of armed individuals took her to an unknown location where she would be subjected to unethical methods of torture and brutality during the interrogation. This included being beaten on the face, beaten with cables, and subjected to electric shocks on her protruding belly due to her pregnancy.

Nidal learned that the name the Houthis give to the place where other women are held is "Dar Prison."

Nidal also became acquainted with some individuals who are involved in torturing women, such as Ahmed Matar Hasan Batran, also known as "Abu Hossam." Additionally, there is a well-known Houthi officer named "Sultan Zaben" who specializes in tracking down and torturing women.

Nidal also became acquainted with several female detainees who were arrested from their homes at night and subjected to torture and solitary confinement, such as "Hanaa Shamsan, Samira Al-Houri, Bardis, Amal, Lamia, and Rahma..."

After ten days, Nidal was summoned for interrogation. She was spitting blood from the beatings and electric shocks she endured. Her daughter, Mira, was present on that harsh day. They verbally abused her with all kinds of insults and

subjected her to physical assault in front of her daughter. Mira burst into tears, and the cries of the child echoed, causing the other female prisoners to break down in tears as well.

Following that, Nidal attempted suicide, saying, "I'd rather die than be tortured." However, they intervened and took her to the hospital, placing a gun to her head to prevent her from speaking at the hospital. Despite their efforts, she managed to speak out to fulfill her ultimate wish to depart. However, the medical staff deceived people at the hospital by claiming that she was suffering from a "mental condition."

As a result, Mira's mother no longer saw anyone. She learned that the Houthis had deceived her husband for two and a half months. He would go to the Criminal Investigation Department to inquire about her, and they would tell him she was in the central prison. When he went to the central prison, they would redirect him to the Criminal Investigation Department. One day, she asked about him, and they informed her that he was attending a "cultural course," one of the programs through which the Houthis attract or forcibly lead Yemenis into their ideology.

Nidal, Mira's mother, will be released from prison after several months, only to discover the truth about her husband's absence: he has been killed.

The Houthis informed her that her husband had been martyred alongside them. They released her, leaving her and her children homeless. When Nidal arrived home, Mira was haunted by fear. They would live through difficult times, constantly afraid of any Houthi soldier or armed individual. Mira would recount to anyone who would listen how they had beaten her mother.

\*The Houthis referred "Nidal" to the judiciary, but her case found no grounds for a lawsuit, and her rights were not considered either.



## The refusal to be lured carries a significant cost

*Name: Samira Abdullah Hamoud Al-Houri*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest:*

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Samira Al-Houri, the executive director of the White Hands team, received a covert summons accompanied by threats from the Sana'a Passports Office. She did not fully understand the purpose of the summons, and as she worked in the humanitarian field, she believed there might be a misunderstanding that could be resolved. However, when she went to the Passports Office, she was surprised to find herself subjected to a secret investigation conducted by the National Security and Political Security apparatuses affiliated with the Houthi group. They confiscated her phones and copied all the data. The interrogation took place in the presence of



*Samira did not comply with the demands of the Houthi intelligence to lure politicians through seduction. As a result, they took her and tortured her. They shaved her hair and hung her on a ladder. They also forced her, along with her colleagues, to cook for the Zainabiyat and security personnel in the prison. Her father passed away, and she was not informed.*

employees from the Passports Office, including Abdullah Al-Sarem and Mohammed Al-Ghashm.

After eight consecutive hours of interrogation, she was forced to comply and cooperate with the intelligence of the Houthi group. They compelled her to lure activists and politicians through unethical means such as seduction and enticement.

After two weeks of strict surveillance and continuous monitoring to ensure the unethical compliance demanded from Samira, she did not succumb to the pressures. As a result, the leadership figures working with the Houthi group shifted their strategy towards her. They began to blackmail her, attempting to entice her into engaging in prohibited and unethical practices that went against the law. Samira documented all their conversations.

The woman's refusal to comply with the unethical plan of luring, as well as her resistance to the ongoing blackmail attempts involving sexual matters, angered the intelligence of the Houthi group. They raided Samira's house with forces from their affiliated agencies, including the National Security, Counterterrorism, and Zainabiyat. The armed individuals were masked, and they looted her belongings, destroyed her furniture, and forcefully restrained Samira, her daughter, and her friend.

## The Most Severe Torture

Outside, there were four teams consisting of two cars each, including well-known Houthi leader Sultan Zaben, who is notorious for targeting women, and the director of criminal investigation in the capital city, known as "Abu Salah."

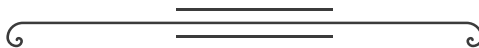
The armed individuals released Samira's daughter and her friend, but they forcibly took Samira to the Criminal Investigation Department. There, a group of officers claiming to be from the Counterterrorism unit awaited her. They continued to interrogate her for a continuous period of 12 hours, employing various forms of psychological pressure, including intimidation, harassment, threats, and coercion. Subsequently, they took her to an unknown location along with a group of shackled girls, blindfolded them, and placed them in a filthy cell.

I'm really sorry to hear about the extreme torture that Samira is enduring. It is distressing to hear that she has been beaten, subjected to electric shocks, had her hair cut and hung from a ladder for long hours. They have also exerted pressure on her to film confession videos, falsely accusing her of espionage. She was deprived of sitting, denied food, and periodically transferred to a solitary cell. These actions are a grave violation of human rights and are deeply troubling.

Samira, among the detained women, has been subjected to the most severe torture, prompting other inmates to go on a hunger strike in solidarity with her. Instead of addressing their concerns, those in charge of the prison have chosen to punish all the women. They have forced them to clean toilets and cook for the Zainabiyat and the security personnel who were torturing them. Additionally, they have subjected prisoners to torture in front of their young children, some of whom are as young as six years old. Pregnant women have also been subjected to electric shocks, demonstrating a complete disregard for basic human decency. These acts are deeply disturbing and highlight the urgent need for intervention and justice.

Three months, which were harsh on Samira, who didn't know that her father, Abdullah Al-Houri, had passed away two months after her arrest. She learned the painful news upon her release from prison.

\*The Houthis released Samira after she made a commitment not to leave Sana'a. However, she managed to escape from areas under the control of the Houthi group.



### The demand for a body can lead a woman to a prison cell resembling a grave

*Name: Bardis Al-Siaaghi*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest:*

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Bardis Al-Siaghi did not accept the news of her husband's death. She went to the leaders of the Houthi group to demand his body. They failed to convince her of his departure, and she persisted in demanding the body, questioning their sincerity. She became entangled with the Houthis, which eventually led to a dispute escalating to the point of them raiding her apartment in the Al-Sunaynah neighborhood in Sana'a, claiming she had an arms cache.

The woman, who works as a representative with relief teams and is skilled in handling problems that arise, did not remain silent. Bardis filed a case against the armed individuals and the local police station led



*She demanded the body of her husband, but they stormed her house under the pretext of searching for weapons. They beat her, and she did not receive justice from the judiciary. She then went to Ma'rib after being lured with promises of fair treatment. However, upon her return to Sana'a, she was arrested during the night and subjected to torture, resulting in partial loss of her eye.*



by Mohammed Al-Kabsi and Ahmed Al-Saqaf. In addition to her demand for her husband's body, she now has another request: the punishment of those who raided her house.

The court in Sana'a froze Bardis' case regarding the home invasion three months after she filed it. After one month of being frozen, she was abducted by armed individuals from Amman Street and brutally assaulted. Bardis turned to the judiciary once again, this time with a medical report detailing her ordeal, but she received no response or cooperation from the Houthi leadership or the judiciary they oversee.

After reviewing what had happened, Bardis realized that there was no prospect of retrieving her husband's body, holding those who invaded her home accountable, or punishing those who abducted and brutally assaulted her. She recognized that she was in a situation where her life was not safe. Therefore, she decided to leave Sana'a, which is under the control of the Houthi group, and head to Ma'rib, where the internationally recognized government forces are in control.

While staying in Ma'rib, Bardis was contacted by two Houthi leaders. The first was Al-Khalil Al-Qurashi, appointed as the Deputy Minister of Local Administration in Houthi-controlled areas. This ministry is responsible for overseeing relief

organizations, which is the field in which Bardis works. The second leader was "Abu Hussein," a cultural supervisor appointed by the Houthis in the Al-Hatarish area. Both Al-Qurashi and Abu Hussein assured Bardis that there were high-level directives to seek justice for her and to bring the attackers to court. They also claimed that her husband was still alive and detained in one of the prisons in Sana'a.

Bardis was delighted by the assurances given by the Houthi leaders, so she decided to return from Ma'rib, where the internationally recognized government held control, to Sana'a, where the Houthi group was in control. However, before reaching Sana'a, she was stopped by Houthi militants at a checkpoint for three hours. After some contacts with what is referred to as the central operations of the group, they eventually allowed her to pass.

After midnight on the first night of her return, Bardis received a phone call ordering her to appear at the Criminal Investigation Department to determine "who allowed her to go to Ma'rib." In that moment, she realized that she had fallen victim to a deception by the Houthis and that they would raid her house at any moment. She took her children and fled to another neighborhood, unaware that she was being watched. They

raided the house she had moved to at 4 a.m., brandishing their weapons, and took her away in the presence of her children. Outside, Bardis was shocked to see the area surrounded by armed individuals: five cars belonging to the militants and two buses carrying armed women known as "the Zainabiyat."

Blindfolded, Bardis was taken to an unknown location, a solitary cell resembling a grave, from where she was escorted to interrogation. She was shocked by the charges brought against her: "treason against the homeland and terrorism against the state." She reminded them of her demands: "the retrieval of her husband's body, holding the invaders of her home accountable, and the punishment of those who abducted and assaulted her." However, all pleas fell on deaf ears in the face of the hands that struck her. She was subjected to electric shocks after being sprayed with water. One of them grabbed her head and slammed it on the table, causing her to lose part of her right eye. In one of the torture sessions, they tied her hands to an iron ladder, and she remained bound to the ladder for hours.

Bardis' physical and mental health deteriorated significantly due to the torture she endured. After two months and seven days, she was taken out of the solitary cell and placed in a room with 14 other female prisoners. Among them were prisoners with their children, as well as young detainees. Bardis learned from them that there were girls as young as 14 and 21 years old who had been raped inside the detention facility, as they confirmed to her.

Bardis discovered that the "grave" she was living in expanded as more Yemeni women were subjected to torture. Initially, she was alone in a cell resembling a grave, but then 14 women were cramped into a room. Eventually, the rooms multiplied, and there were 120 women from all walks of life. Among them were those who were raped and violated, and some whose families disowned them. This made it easier for the Houthis to exploit them for nefarious activities, including luring individuals into traps.

\*The Houthis released Bardis after she signed a pledge not to talk about what happened to her.



## The model sedition

*Name: Yusra Ahmed Yahya Al-Nashiri*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 20/2/2021*

Yusra Al-Nasheri lives in fear and feels threatened. She is afraid that a member of the Houthi group will follow her to Aden and kill her to prevent her from revealing what she and her colleague, Intisar Al-Hammadi, experienced in the prisons of the Houthi group in Sana'a before their escape. Yusra believes that what she went through was due to issues related to her hijab. She lost her job as a model and her reputation as well. Several reasons make Yusra Al-Nasheri, who is not yet twenty years old, seek assistance from organizations to live outside the country with her family. These reasons include the fear of being killed and the need to find a source of income after the Houthis closed the door for the young virgin girl



*Yusra works as a model to support her family. She was kidnapped by the Houthis along with her colleague. They accused her of prostitution and drug use. The Attorney General ordered her release, but she left with a tarnished reputation that prevented her from finding any employment opportunities. She became afraid for her life even after escaping to Aden.*

and circulated her name in both the public and private sectors in their controlled areas with the message:

"The blatant girl is prohibited from working."

Yusra has faced difficulties in finding employment after her imprisonment. Even private language institutes in Sana'a did not accept her for qualification courses. Yusra and her family are experiencing numerous challenges. They have no source of income, and her reputation has been crushed by the Houthi group. After her release, she was living as a homeless person in Sana'a. The latest threat she received was from Houthi leader Yasser Al-Zindani, who threatened to strip her of her freedom if she did not complete her treatment. He also threatened to kidnap her sister and imprison her, just as they did with Yusra and others.

The threat occurred after Yusra attended the court session in August 2022, following her court request to review her case.

The Houthis tarnished Yusra Al-Nasheri's reputation and spread rumors that she was a dishonorable woman. She continued to walk amidst the disdainful gazes of society in Sana'a, unable to live a normal life. She couldn't even obtain her high school certificate or get a copy of it from the Ministry of

Education, which is controlled by the Houthi group. They had confiscated all her documents from the education authority.

She wanted a document in order to work, but she discovered that the reason institutions did not accept her for employment was not due to a lack of documents, but because she had been imprisoned.

Yusra Al-Nasheri was searching for work to support her family and continue her treatment after the tumor spread to her breast while she was in the central prison in Sana'a. She was suffering from problems with the lymph node, thyroid gland, and a breast tumor. She had previously undergone surgery on one of her breasts. The Attorney General in the Houthi-controlled areas ordered her temporary conditional release upon payment of bail and the submission of medical reports proving her illness. Yusra informed the Attorney General about her condition during his visit to the prison one day, following legal and human rights activists' efforts. This came after a statement from the deputy prosecutor that a ruling had been issued, based on higher directives, against Yusra Al-Nasheri and Intisar Al-Hammadi, aiming to prove their guilt.

## The Most Severe Torture

The Public Prosecution in the western part of Amran under Houthi control had sentenced the two girls to five years in prison. The Houthi media launched a malicious campaign against them and fabricated several charges, including drug trafficking, cannabis use, and engaging in prostitution.

During the Houthi investigation with Yusra Al-Nasheri, blood flowed from her mouth due to torture. She was subjected to electric shocks, and the girls were sexually harassed during the interrogation. One of the investigators attempted to rape Yusra, who worked as a model showcasing beauty in attractive photos to increase the demand for women's clothing and accessories in stores.

This work was the sole reason for her arrest and the imposition of various hidden charges attributed to the Houthi approach: spreading discord by showcasing the beauty of girls in a manner that contradicts the religious identity upheld by the Houthis.

However, they will fabricate additional charges against them, such as prostitution, drug trafficking, and engaging in illicit activities. They will demand that they lure their opponents through seduction and enticement. If they refuse to comply



with their demands, they will continue to torture and detain them, and even subject them to harassment and attempted rape, as was the case with Yusra Al-Nasheri.

Before that, they did not allow Yusra to communicate with her mother. After ten days of their abduction along with their friend Intisar Al-Hammadi by armed members of the Houthi group while they were going to finalize a modeling job advertisement for a clothing store.

The two girls, Yusra and Intisar, work as models in the evenings to support their families. In the mornings, Yusra studies English at the Yali Institute. This was before the Houthis abducted her on her mother's birthday, precisely on February 20th, and tarnished her reputation in the conservative community.

Intisar Abdulrahman Al-Hammadi is still in Houthi prisons as of the writing of this report. She has been subjected to a Houthi campaign that undermines her honor.



## To prevent children from getting lost

*Name: Salwa*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: September 2016*

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The sound of continuous kicking on the door echoed through the apartment. Salwa and her children inside were unaware of what was happening. A woman's voice made Salwa open the door. Salwa didn't have time to put on her hijab. The armed individuals entered the rooms, preventing her from calling any of the neighbors. One of them forcefully took away her mobile phone while she was attempting to contact a relative. They ransacked and looted the apartment, taking away cash, gold belongings, and valuable items. They destroyed the furniture, including kitchen utensils. They were searching for something specific and left after taking everything, including the laptop.



*They broke into Salwa's apartment, confiscated her phone, tampered with the contents of the apartment, looted belongings, and money, and then took her and her two children for interrogation.*

Salwa and her children lived through a terrifying time. The armed Houthis group did not allow her to recover from the tragedy. Her apartment in the neighborhood of Naqm in Sana'a was under surveillance, making it impossible for her to go to her family's place. She dared not venture out to buy food for herself and her grieving children after the armed individuals had looted everything.

On the following day, the armed individuals resumed kicking the door. Salwa refused to open it unless the neighborhood elder was present. The elder arrived, and the armed individuals entered the apartment. Their faces were different from the previous day, but they belonged to the same group. They demanded Salwa's laptop. She informed them that they had taken it the day before. One of the armed individuals became angry and threatened her with a firearm.

Meanwhile, two women affiliated with the same group that sent the armed individuals arrived. They began to tamper with the contents of the apartment once again. Finding nothing, they decided to take Salwa without her children. She vehemently refused, but they attempted to threaten her with their weapons. Despite their efforts, she continued to resist. Inside the apartment, she was subjected to physical assault by the two women with the assistance of an armed man.

## The Most Severe Torture

Afterward, they convinced her to accompany them to retrieve the stolen belongings from the previous day and to bring her children along. She wanted to lock the door to prevent further looting of the remaining furniture, but they pushed her off the stairs. She fell onto the railing, injuring her hand and fracturing her lower jaw.

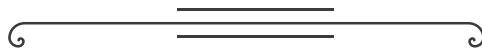
The two women and the remaining armed individuals took Salwa and her children to a building. They brought them into a room they claimed was an interrogation room. Inside were two men. The women entered with Salwa, intending to separate her from her children. However, Salwa informed them that she would not speak or surrender her children even if they killed her. Two armed individuals intervened to calm the situation, allowing her to remain with her children. They then began questioning her, asking for her name, address, and family details.

One of them was writing on the floor, but Salwa did not read what was written. She complained to them about what she had been subjected to: the unauthorized intrusion, the looting of valuable items, confiscation of her phone and laptop, physical assault and pushing, as well as verbal abuse and humiliation.

After midnight, the interrogation came to an end. Her children were overcome with hunger, fear, and exhaustion, yet they couldn't stop crying. They, along with Salwa, had not eaten since the previous day, following the tragedy they experienced when the armed individuals invaded their apartment, ransacked its contents, and looted their money.

Meanwhile, there were individuals who were actively seeking information about Salwa based on the details she had disclosed during the interrogation. They confirmed that there were no charges against her. They instructed her to return to her apartment late at night. She requested the return of her stolen belongings, but the investigator advised her not to demand them at all. One of the armed individuals warned her that if she persisted in her demands, she would never leave the place, and neither would her children. "You will disappear," he said. So, she remained silent, not wanting to jeopardize the safety of her children.

The armed individuals returned Salwa to her apartment after midnight using the same vehicle they had transported her in to the detention site.



### My brother died from the shock

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They had arrested her brother and forcibly disappeared him for six months, he came out tormented and sick in search of wellness, everything will change when his sister Fatima is arrested, who will be shocked when she comes out of detention and discovers that he has died shocked by the news of her enforced disappearance.

Fatima, who worked as a social and humanitarian activist, was in front of the Red Crescent Center in the Al-Mina Directorate in Hodeidah Governorate. At half-past five in the evening, she met a woman who claimed to represent a community of war-affected displaced people. The woman asked Fatima to accompany her to one of the city's neighborhoods where the displaced people resided. As soon as they arrived at the intended neighborhood, Fatima found



*The Houthis threatened Fatima with things she cannot disclose, they held her in a solitary cell and in a prison that was subjected to bombardment. When she was released, the shocking surprise awaited her.*

herself confronted by a vehicle carrying five armed men and two women. They forcefully dragged Fatima off the street at gunpoint and threw her into the car:

"I had no idea where they were taking me."

They took her to a police station, and at that station, they confiscated her phone, notebooks, and pens after her dignity was violated in one of the crowded streets filled with chaos. She was subjected to humiliation, verbal abuse, threats of physical violence, and gestures indicating things she cannot disclose.

Fatima's detention in the police station did not last long, they took her to the central prison, and there: "They put me in solitary confinement for 3 days I did not know my fate, all my thinking was with my mother and siblings, and how will society look at me? I was worried and scared. The room was one meter by two meters, there was a small bathroom inside, for three days I couldn't even change my clothes. Tears were the only constant, and she prayed to God to release her from there and reunite her with her family.

## The Most Severe Torture

Houthi interrogators questioned Fatima three days later, asking her to sign papers that she did not know what was inside, they clearly found nothing to make her in the circle of accusation or even suspicion, so they disclosed their intentions to her:

"We will hold you hostage or exchange you for a prisoner." They then transferred her from solitary confinement to the prison ward.

There were 17 female prisoners in the ward with their children, who were forced to watch the Houthi-affiliated Al-Masirah channel and listen to the speeches of Abdul Malik al-Houthi, the group's leader. There was also a woman named Fairouz al-Baidani who gave lectures to female prisoners every two days about the importance of fighting, defending religion and parade against "mercenaries", the inflammatory rhetoric carried out by the group targets even female prisoners, no one knows how you will fight an innocent woman who was arrested from the street and insulted by the group's men.

The central prison in Hodeidah was shelled by an artillery shell that hit the external visiting room: "The mercenaries bombed the prison" The Houthis told the female prisoners, they blamed the government army and the popular resistance, but did not work to get the women out of prison.



In the prison ward, Fatima lived for 75 days apart from the three days in solitary confinement:

"I was counting the days and hours (78) days I spent and I couldn't even hear the voice of any of my family members throughout my imprisonment, I wanted an answer to one question: Why am I here?! "Many women like me have spent months or even years in those prisons without anyone knowing about them."

After 78 days of detention, Fatima came out, shocked, she recalls in tears: "I was shocked, by the news of the death of my brother, who could not bear the news of my arrest, he was transferred as a result of the shock of my arrest, to the hospital, he suffered a stroke and ... He died."



## Women inside the pressures (Dhghata)

*Name: Sonia Saleh Al-Ghabbash*

*Arrestee: Houthi group*

*Date of arrest: 6 March 2019*

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"I could hear the voices, screams, and cries of the female prisoners being tortured, and it intensified my suffering," says Sonia Al-Ghabash, a human rights activist and the president of the organization "Despite the Difficulties," as she recalls the sounds emanating from the solitary cells. She discovered that she was not the only one in that place and that the solitary cell they called "Dhghata" (pressure) was not a singular one.

Sonia was not a human rights visitor to learn about the situation of women in detention, by virtue of her work, nor would she have provided them with assistance from the organization she heads or from philanthropists. Sonia was detained,



*Sonia was on her way to deliver help to a patient, the Houthis accused her of helping simple people to overthrow their rule, they threw her into pressure for women, she met a woman working in the hairdresser who was paraplegic as a result of torture*

kidnapped by members of the Houthi group in front of a petrol station in the Hadda area of Sana'a while she was waiting for her turn in line to fill her car with fuel, on that day Sonia was carrying a secretariat:

"A small amount for a patient donated by a philanthropist, and the Houthis arrested me after they surrounded the gas station with military crews and armored vehicles."

The gunmen took Sonia to the National Security Agency in Sana'a, her detention lasted a whole week in the office of the Houthi-appointed agent, after dawn on the seventh day, they took her to an unknown location, she found herself in a narrow room in an underground basement: two meters by a meter, which they call "pressure" "Dhghata".

From the midst of the pressure they took Sonia for questioning: "They asked me questions accusing me of being affiliated with political figures abroad and of being an agent."

Not surprisingly, this charge is faced by most male and female prisoners during the war. But Sonia received an additional funny accusation that through her human rights and humanitarian work she is planning a coup against the Houthis: "They accused me of appealing to the poor through my charitable aid in order to overthrow their rule."

The accusation that the interrogators brought against Sonia late at night caused her to be mercilessly tortured, and death seemed a million times more merciful than a life with that torment: "They pulled out the nail of my right foot, skinned me with sharp objects, cold water, electric shocks, and tied my hands and legs for a long time."

For four months, the torture did not stop, if Sonia did not suffer, she hears the screams of women being tortured, there was not a single "pressure" for Sonia, but dozens of solitary cells, dozens of pressures rising from the groans of women prisoners, Sonia continued to hear them even after she was transferred to the Central Prison.

In the central prison in Sana'a, Sonia Al-Ghabash will be shocked a month later when she meets a young Yemeni woman who used to work in a hairdresser's shop, beautifying brides and decorating their bridesmaids, but she needed someone to support her to go to the prison bathroom: "They brought a woman named Nadia who works as a hairdresser in the city of Hodeidah." Nothing has in common between a Yemeni woman who overcomes the hardships of life and works in a hairdresser shop in the impoverished coastal province of western Yemen and a military alliance made up

of several wealthy countries. The most Nadia can do abroad is what any Yemeni does: communicate with an expatriate relative in Saudi Arabia.

There were female detainees in the central prison, who were brought in complete secrecy and no one knew who they were or what their charges were, and they were placed in cells that the prison administration equipped and isolated outside the women's section, and other detainees were attached to the internal section, such as Nadia, whom Sonia identified, and the Houthis transferred her to the specialized criminal court and obstructed the progress of her case, and did not release her despite the absence of any evidence to convict her, other than the statements extracted by those in charge of the prison supervised by Muhammad Abu Talib under Torture in Hodeidah, when human rights activist Sonia Al-Ghabash met the hairdresser's club, Nadia was "paraplegic as a result of torture."





*After midnight, the interrogation ended. Her children became hungry, afraid, and sleepy, and they did not stop crying. They had been without food since the previous day, after the tragedy they had been exposed to and the armed men storming the apartment, tampering with all its contents, and stealing the money.*

# Chapter:

**Stories and details from prisons:**

**«STC, UAE, and Sharia  
Intelligence»**

## Saad Zaid

*Arrestee: Aden Security (STC),  
coalition (UAE forces)*

*Date of arrest: 26/7/2016*

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"After delivering hundreds of sermons from its pulpits, Saif leaves Aden broken, heading towards Somalia, the country he had left before when he was eight years old, to arrive with his family at the beautiful entrance of Yemen, Aden, where he would grow up and eventually become its preacher. However, he is then kidnapped by separatist groups who torture and humiliate him, targeting every part of his body, including his genitals and anus."

At the age of over 45, Saif couldn't believe that this was Aden, the city he loved and studied in, and where he served with the religious knowledge he acquired from a group of prominent Yemeni scholars, such as the esteemed Judge Mohammed Al-



*He came from Somalia at the age of eight, grew up in Aden and became her fiancé, he disagreed with the Salafists and the Harakis, they arrested him and tortured him on his genitals, assaulted his ass, and threatened him with his wife and two children*

*The machinations of  
cruel revenge*



Imrani and Qasim Bahar. With their authorization, he received this license, along with his eloquence and the people's love for him, which granted him priority to become the imam and preacher of the Ma'adh bin Jabal Mosque in the center of Aden, through an administrative decision by the Ministry of Endowments and Guidance in 2002.

Approximately fourteen years have passed since that decision, and Saif continues to deliver sermons and his popularity grows. He advocates for unity under the banner of Allah and rejects division. However, his speeches are interpreted as a stance against calls for southern Yemen's separation from the north. As a result, he entered into conflicts with some figures in the southern movement. He also engaged in ideological and religious disputes with some representatives of the Salafi movement, specifically Sheikh Hani bin Brik, one of the prominent figures of the Salafi-Jihadi current. In a later stage, Sheikh Hani bin Brik would become one of the symbols of the separatist movements after being influenced by the Emiratis.

The opportunity will come for those with whom Saif disagrees, to plot for him the machinations of cruel revenge and get rid of his influential voice in Aden in a way that differs from the ways of getting rid of dozens of preachers in the mosques of the temporary capital: assassinations.

## The Most Severe Torture

In July 2016, the electricity was cut off late at night in the Al-Saylah area where Saif Abdo resides. Startled by the sound of gunshots, he woke up to find armed individuals attempting to break down his door but failing to do so. Mohammed, another resident, went to inquire about their intentions and opened the door. The mosque where Saif used to deliver sermons and lead prayers was surrounded by armored vehicles and armed men. They bound Mohammed's hands with iron shackles, blindfolded his eyes, and placed a cloth bag over his head. They then took him to a house where he discovered it was the residence of Shalal Sha'e, the former security director of Aden province and a leader in the separatist faction supported by Abu Dhabi.

After arriving at Shalal's house, the interrogations began. The investigators threatened Saif, stating that they would bring his children and wife if he refused to confess that he was one of the extremist clerics involved in targeting the nursing home for the elderly. However, Saif vehemently denied the accusation and condemned it in its entirety. Nevertheless, the investigators, who were under Shalal's command, informed him that five Salafi sheikhs testified that he was a religious authority affiliated with the extremist organization "Al-Qaeda." They further explained that one of the five sheikhs was the

Salafi cleric Hani bin Brik.

Saif understood the matter, rejected the charge against him, and racistly replied to him:

"You are a Dehbashi against the Southern cause."

It is difficult to comprehend how a man who was born in Somalia and grew up in Aden could align himself with one faction in Yemen and support it against another. Saif rejected all their accusations, so they resorted to torture, suspending him in the air with his hands tied in a position they call "al-Hindoul" for approximately three and a half hours. This torture was accompanied by electric shocks, including targeting his bladder and genitals.

The investigators and their assistants did not stop at that session of torturing Saif; they moved on to a new method called "al-Gharghara," which involves simulating drowning by applying pressure on the victim's head underwater for a prolonged period and lifting them just before the last breath.

Mohammed Abdo could not endure the cruelty for four days. Afterward, he said, "I was forced to make a false confession that they demanded from me and dictated to me. They recorded this confession on a mobile phone and then handed me over to the Arab Coalition on the fourth day."

## The Most Severe Torture

According to Saif's observations, the prison run by the Emiratis within the coalition consisted of a tent, a container, and four cells. On the following day of his arrival, they took him for interrogation with his hands and feet bound and blindfolded. He denied his coerced confessions in front of Shalal's associates, hoping for justice within the coalition. However, they refused to accept his denial and proceeded to beat him. They stripped him of his pants and threatened him with sexual assault, subjecting him to various sexual abuses, including inserting a stick into his rectum.

The humiliation for Saif was profound, even though it was not worse than the beatings and electric shocks. What hurt him the most was when they threatened to dishonor his family if he did not confirm the previous coerced confession that he was the one who issued the extremist fatwa. They threatened to bring his wife and his two children, aged 14 and 13, and he felt compelled to repeat the false confession, knowing that they were fully aware of its falsehood.

Saif's hand was broken from torture, urine was retained from shocking the bladder and penis, and a week later they transferred him to the hospital to bandage his hand with a cast and kindly use diuretic drugs.

Saif remained in coalition prison for four months before being transferred to the old Emirati-run prison inside the Bir Ahmed camp led by Ghassan al-Aqrabi.

He arrived at the old Bir Ahmed prison, where there were investigators who were hired on a daily basis by the Criminal Investigation Department in Aden. The Emiratis brought them to create Yemeni case files for the detainees, in an attempt to absolve the UAE from any responsibility and deny the arrest, torture, or interrogation of any Yemeni. These investigators began beating the blindfolded detainees. The detainees united and refused to go for interrogations unless the investigators committed to not hitting them again.

In October, the detainees in the old Bir Ahmed prison announced an open hunger strike to demand immediate release or referral to the prosecution and judiciary. The Emiratis attempted to break the strike and threatened the detainees while intensifying their efforts in the new Bir Ahmed prison, preparing it within days. In November, as Saif narrates, "The Emiratis stripped all the prisoners and dressed us in blue suits. Ghassan Al-Aqrabi took me and a group to individual cells, accusing us of leading the strike. He was very aggressive towards me, even giving me the nickname 'Dynamo.' On the

second day, the prosecutor, Emiratis, and media arrived, announcing the opening of the Bir Ahmed prison and reform institution, stating that it was under the Ministry of Interior and Security Administration. Shalal, the security director, also arrived, and on the surface, the prison appeared to be under the security administration, but in reality, it was under the control of the Emiratis."

The prosecution began slowly trying the detainees in the new prison. The prosecution's working hours were limited to a few hours per week. It was Mohammed Abdo's turn to stand trial in February 2018, which was more than a year and a half after his arrest. The prosecution dismissed the charges against him and ordered his release on bail.

A group of detainees were released, but Ghassan Al-Aqrabi refused to release Saif, stating, "The approval did not come from the coalition." Al-Aqrabi disappeared for about a month and then returned. He told me, "The security administration has requested your presence," and he angrily took me to the coalition, where they imprisoned me in a solitary room. I requested to meet with the Emirati investigator, and I was interrogated by an Emirati who called himself "Abu Sara." I told him that I was unjustly treated, and he responded by

saying, "We know, and Shalal will be held accountable and punished, and we have nothing to do with it."

After that, they transferred Saif and a group of detainees to the Wadih Prison, which was managed by "Yasran Al-Muqtari," the commander of the Counter-Terrorism Forces at that time and a leader backed by the UAE.

Al-Maqtari came to Saif, singled him out in one of the corners of the prison hall, and told him:

"Saif, I will release you conditionally."

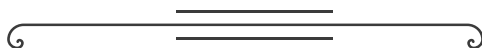
The preacher, who came to Aden as an eight-year-old child, seven years before the outbreak of the Somali war, agreed. Among the conditions posed by Yasran Al-Muqtari was: "Do not talk about your case and live your life normally. No media appearances. Even if someone asks you which prison you were released from, say 'From Bir Ahmed,' and that you haven't seen me or been in contact with me."

## The Most Severe Torture

One night, at ten o'clock in the evening, members of the Waddah hall carried Saif blindfolded on top of a car and drove him somewhere, and before throwing him on the side of the road, they gave him 1000 Yemeni riyals for transportation, when he untied the tie on his eyes, Saif was in Mualla next to the Jewish cemetery.

"I returned to my home and remained hidden, afraid of being targeted. Many people from the mosque and the neighborhood visited me, urging me to return to the mosque for leading prayers and giving sermons, but I apologized to them."

\*Mohammed Saif left Aden and traveled to Berbera in Somalia, and he is currently living in Hargeisa.





## I still don't know the charges

*Name: Ali Hassan Baqatayan*

*Arrestee: Hadramawt Intelligence  
and UAE Forces*

*Date of arrest: June 29, 2016*

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Ali Baqatayan was among the contributors to the National Initiative for Promoting and Advocating Security in Hadramawt. As part of the initiative called "Azza Watan" (Pride of the Nation), they distributed meals to police officers at certain security checkpoints. Ali was part of a group that distributed meals on different days, excluding the day when two explosions occurred at two security checkpoints.

The man working as the executive director of the Human Development Foundation was unaware that his contribution to promoting and advocating security, as well as distributing meals to security checkpoints, would become the basis from which suspicions would arise after the two explosions occurred.



*He was arrested by the intelligence agency in Hadramawt and handed over to the Emiratis to interrogate him about the role of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other countries, as well as about political leaders. He was also imprisoned in a container with temperatures exceeding 52 degrees Celsius, stripped of his clothes, and threatened with sexual assault.*

## The Most Severe Torture

Baqatayan was taken by surprise when a civilian-dressed officer arrived at the office of the humanitarian organization he managed. The officer did not present any legal warrant for his arrest or summons. Instead, he raised an identification card indicating his affiliation with the intelligence agency. Baqatayan recounted, "Upon my arrival at the intelligence building, they confiscated all the keys, cash, and my mobile phone. One of the security personnel blindfolded me with a piece of cloth and took me to a waiting room. After about fifteen minutes, I was taken to an investigator, and I sat on the floor while the investigator questioned me from behind."

The overall questions in the intelligence interrogation revolved around the humanitarian organization, its founders, its scope of work, the projects it had implemented, the supporting entities, and the political affiliations of the organization's founders and employees, as well as their orientations. Two employees of the organization, who worked under Baqatayan's management, were also detained. After the interrogation, Baqatayan was transferred to a room where he was not allowed to contact his relatives or inform them of his place. After six days, the investigator informed Baqatayan that he was being detained for questioning and to record his testimony regarding the two security checkpoint explosions.

Rumors began to spread, perhaps as a joke, that "I was the one who planned those explosions through the breakfast meals we distribute, and that I belong to the Islah Party and Al-Qaeda." However, Baqatayan was actually performing I'tikaf (seclusion for worship) at the mosque during the days when the explosions occurred. Following that, the investigator assured him of his innocence, but Baqatayan was surprised when the investigator mentioned that the Emiratis at Al-Rayyan detention center wanted him. He wondered how he could be declared innocent and that our detention was merely for questioning and taking testimonies, only to be handed over to foreign authorities without a clear reason.

The Emiratis who transferred Baqatayan and other detainees to the converted Al-Rayyan International Airport treated them with verbal abuse, violent behavior, beatings, and threats. After their hands and feet were bound, they were taken to an iron container that housed approximately 40 prisoners. The container had sealed doors, and the temperature inside could reach up to 53 degrees Celsius (127 degrees Fahrenheit) during the afternoon, despite the presence of two air conditioners. Baqatayan remained in the container for 40 days with his eyes blindfolded, wearing the same clothes he entered with and without bathing. He stated, "We were allowed to go to

## The Most Severe Torture

the bathroom only once a day. We performed dry ablution (tayammum) for prayers and were subjected to beatings and verbal abuse, with or without reason."

During this period, Baqatayan was interrogated eleven times in eleven different sessions. The investigators were Emiratis affiliated with the Arab Coalition forces. In the first interrogation, Baqatayan found himself facing a bundle of conflicting and contradictory charges, such as being associated with ISIS, Al-Qaeda, a previous regime, the Houthis, the Islah Party, or being an atheist. He didn't understand the charges or their significance. The questions directed at him in the intelligence building about the humanitarian organization he managed, its founders, and the political affiliations of its employees were repeated along with insults and verbal abuse. At the end of the first interrogation, he was threatened that if he didn't cooperate, he would be detained until after the Eid al-Adha holiday. Baqatayan doesn't know specifically how to cooperate with them.

In the second session, the Emiratis asked Baqatayan about the courses he had attended and the skills he possessed. They inquired about his relationship with local and international organizations, their locations, and the role of Saudi Arabia

in supporting local organizations. They also asked about the role of Qatar, some charitable institutions within it, as well as Turkey and Egypt.

The director of the local humanitarian organization found himself in the midst of a whirlwind of questions regarding international relations before the Emirati investigators returned to the local context. They then asked him about Hadhrami leaders within the Islah Party and any connections he had with them.

During his detention, Baqatayan was subjected to physical abuse outside of the interrogation room. He described being stripped of his clothes and left standing naked in front of the air conditioner for half an hour. He also reported being threatened with sexual assault if he did not confess.

Other detainees were subjected to physical and psychological torture, even for simply attempting to lift their blindfolds spontaneously. Some detainees were also tortured by being left in the courtyard of Al-Rayyan International Airport detention facility for several consecutive days under scorching sunlight during the day and freezing cold at night, while being given contaminated water.

Baqatayan encountered detainees who had been subjected to sexual harassment using various methods. He also heard about cases of suicide resulting from mistreatment, including two deaths due to torture, one in the intelligence prison and another in the Al-Rayyan detention facility.

Baqatayan was released by the Emiratis after three and a half months of detention. However, years later, he still doesn't know what they wanted from him. He stated, "Until now, I don't know what charges were brought against me. And until now, there has been no official apology or compensation for the harm and injustice I endured."

\*The Emiratis released Baqatayan three and a half months after his arrest



## Naked inside the cage

*Name: Hazam Sinan*

*Arrestee: Southern Transitional Council and Arab Coalition*

*Date of arrest:*

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"No matter how much I try to express and speak, I cannot describe what I have endured," says Hazam, recalling what happened to him after his house was surrounded by large forces affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council, which supports the project of secession and returning the country to its pre-unity state before May 22, 1990.

Armed militants stormed the house in the city of Aden. Hazem and his children were fearful as they watched the gunmen create chaos and search for something unknown to the father, his wife, and their young children.



*They left him inside the cage between the scorching daytime heat and the cold of the night. They tied him up and left his food outside. They stripped him of his clothes, pretended to threaten him with rape, sprinkled salt on his wounds, brought in the dog Shakira to attack him, and then asked him to work with them!*

## The Most Severe Torture

The militants didn't find anything, so they forcefully took the father to an unknown location, which Hazam later discovered to be the Al-Jalaa Camp prison in Aden. This camp was under the command of the Southern Transitional Council leader Abu Al-Yamama at that time.

Hazam received harsh treatment in the Al-Jalaa Camp, including beatings, whipping, and humiliation. He soon realized that this treatment was considered relatively compassionate compared to what awaited him in the prison run by the Arab coalition, specifically by Emirati officers and others from the Southern Transitional Council. He described, "They put me in an iron cage and locked me in it, tied from the back, legs, and hands. They kept me in the cage for a long time, exposed to the scorching sun and chilling winds, with intense heat during the day and freezing cold at night."

They took turns whipping and brutally beating Hazam, and during three days in the cage, they deprived him of food. The man collapsed from torture and hunger. When he lost the ability to speak and opened his eyes, they gave him a little water and a few dates to revive him, only to resume the torture later, sometimes targeting his legs, sometimes his hands, and sometimes using crucifixion methods.



The days of torture in the cage continued, and wounds formed on Hazam's body. The supervisors overseeing his torture would bring water and salt and sprinkle it on his wounds. He described, "I feel pain as if it's fire on my body, then they would bring lighters and burn my body. Sometimes they would electrocute me."

These interrogators would accuse Hazam of things he had no knowledge of. Then a new investigator arrived, marking the beginning of a new phase of even more horrifying torture, which involved sexual harassment. Hazam recounted, "They stripped me of my clothes and began insinuating rape, along with beatings, whipping, and other forms of torture. I would plead with them to cover me, but they ignored my pleas. They even put me in the cage for an entire day, completely naked, in front of all the prison officials." This was in contrast to the other days when he was covered and restrained inside the cage, unable to reach the food they brought and left outside the cage, which was then consumed by crows and cats.

## The Most Severe Torture

The interrogators would change, and the methods of torture would vary. Each interrogator had their own style. One would beat with iron rods, another would use electric wires, another would kick, and yet another would hang him. Sometimes they would simulate drowning, and other times they would put him in a pit outside the cage and pretend they were going to bury him alive. Hazam also mentioned, "Sometimes they would bring a large dog named Shakira, and it would attack me while I was inside the cage."

During moments of respite, Hazam would find some relief when they would put him in the crucifix position in the cage and let cold water drip on his head, drop by drop, preventing him from sleeping throughout the night. In the morning, the interrogator would come to question him, and Hazam would be exhausted, yet he would still endure further torture. He expressed, "After all this torture, I couldn't imagine that I would survive."

The torture continued inside the cage for 21 days. Afterward, Hazam was thrown into a solitary cell with a size of approximately one and a half meters by one and a half meters. It served as his sleeping area, bathroom, and the floor where he would eat whatever they provided to ensure his survival.

It was the place where he relieved himself. Hazam remained forcibly kept alive in the solitary cell for three months. Then, an interrogator came and confirmed to him, "You are innocent, you have done nothing wrong." Hazam responded, "If I'm innocent, then let me go." The interrogator replied, "No, stay here and work with us as a spy."

\* The coalition released Hazam after a court ruling acquitted him of what was attributed to him



## The doctor refuses to assassinate the sheikh

*Name: Ali Al-Akhali*

*Destination of arrest: Security Belt + UAE*

*Date of arrest: February 2018*

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After completing the process of validating his academic credentials in the temporary capital of Aden, where the Ministry of Higher Education is located, " Al-Akhali " wanted to return to Taiz, where he studied at the Faculty of Medicine. The next day, he was stopped at a checkpoint in Aden Mall, and the armed men asked for the identification papers of "X" and his friend "Y." The gunmen looked at "X's" ID card and said, "Wait for five minutes."

Five minutes were plenty for the purpose of verifying the data and allowing al-Akhali and his companion to resume travel. The gunmen pressed these waiting minutes when two military vehicles arrived, from



*He went to Aden to have his academic credentials validated. However, he was arrested and asked to assassinate the leader of the popular resistance. He refused to relocate his family to the UAE, so he was transferred to a prison in Eritrea where he was tortured to confess to his alleged connection with Qatar and other crimes.*

which several armed men got out and pointed their firearms at the face of X and his friend Y, who were inside the car waiting for their personal papers to be returned.

The gunmen handcuffed al-Akhali and his friend, threw them to the ground, blindfolded them and took them to another point.

The new security check point was called the "lovers" point, although its name had no connection to the romantic connotation commonly associated with it. It would become etched in the young doctor's mind and that of his friend as the beginning of their torture ordeal. "Lovers" was manned by individuals led by a person named Ahmed Mohammed Al-Raba'i, a leader within the Security Belt forces, which is a separatist group backed by the United Arab Emirates.

Al-Rubaie asked Al-Akhali:

Why did you go to Aden?

I have university-specific papers.

The procedures for higher education, such as the equivalency of medical college degrees, for example, require going to Aden. Academic transactions in government-controlled areas are

conducted at the Ministry of Higher Education headquarters, which is affiliated with the internationally recognized legitimate government.

The answer was not convincing to the armed men at the checkpoint of the Lovers. They separated " Al-Akhali " from his friend and continued to torture them for five days. Their eyes were covered the entire time to prevent them from seeing the faces of their tormentors during those days. However, they were allowed to see the faces of the investigators, such as a person named Ali Al-Marfadi, and also the commander of the famous Al-'Alam checkpoint at the entrance of Aden, Nasser Al-Juhari. Nasser Al-Juhari asked " Al-Akhali " to narrate his life story from birth to the moments of his presence among them, while he was bound, recounting his tale.

It seemed that the investigators didn't know exactly what they wanted from " Al-Akhali." The situation changed after the fifth day when one of the investigators asked for information about Sheikh Hamoud Al-Mekhlafi. He was the man who formed the core of the popular resistance in Taiz and led it against the Houthi group. "X" confirmed to them that he didn't know the sheikh personally but mentioned a person from Taiz named Muath Al-Yasari who seemed to be working with the UAE. He sent a video addressing " Al-Akhali " to the investigators:

"Doctor... confess that Sheikh Hamoud is your uncle, and what are the missions that he assigned you to execute?" Al-Yasari said in the video. However, " Al-Akhali " continued to deny any knowledge of the sheikh, which led the Security Belt forces to transfer him along with four armored vehicles.

On the way, one of the checkpoints requested an identification card for the man leading "Al-Akhoul" to a particular location. The man responded, "I am Commander Yassaran Al-Muqtari."

Yassaran Al-Muqtari handed over " Al-Akhoul " and his friend to a camp belonging to the Emiratis, as they learned when an officer began interrogating him in a Gulf dialect. "X" tried to peek from under the loosely secured cover. When the officer asked one of his assistants to take "X's" iris scan, he saw the UAE flag on the officer's shoulder. After the iris scan was taken, the officer asked him about his political affiliation and his relationship with Sheikh Al-Mekhlafi.

"Al-Akhoul" insisted that he had no relationship with Sheikh Al-Mekhlafi. After that, the Emiratis became more explicit with him and asked him to work for them.

"We will provide you with residency for you and your family in the UAE," they offered him.

"And in return?"

"In short, the elimination of Hamoud Al-Mekhlafi."

They gave him a deadline to think about the mission. The young doctor found himself in a dilemma. The difference between performing surgeries on patients and eliminating the sheikh was the difference between life and death. He came up with an idea to gain their approval, promising to carry out the mission, but with the intention of not actually doing it. After a few days, he informed them of his agreement. However, they were more cunning than he anticipated.

"Send your family to the UAE first," they demanded.

"Al-Akhali" fell into the trap of the plan. He refused the offer, and they restrained him, initiating their actions. They began by waterboarding him, then covering his face with a wet cloth to suffocate his breath. He was beaten and kicked all over his body, especially his abdomen, back, and head. Afterward, they took him inside a helicopter that flew for hours until it landed in an unknown area. They threw him into a solitary cell measuring two meters by two meters. It was pitch dark inside, with a musty smell emanating from the worn-out bedding. The air only entered through a small opening beneath the door.



Later, he was transferred to a cell where four individuals were held. It was evident that they had been imprisoned for a long time. Their hair was long and their frightening faces emitted a foul odor.

"Where are we?" "X" asked them.

"In Asab in Eritrea" they replied.

In Asab's cell in Eritrea, interrogators would first open the door asking X to turn to the wall so that they would not be seen even though they were wearing masks.

"Which party do you belong to? What do you know about Sheikh Hamoud al-Mikhlaifi?"

"Al-Akhali" heard something new during the interrogations in Eritrea. The questions revolved around Turkey, Qatar, and their alleged involvement in certain activities. They inquired about labor and who was working with them and how. The interrogations would start at midnight, accompanied by brutal torture, including beatings, nail extraction, and electric shocks.

## The Most Severe Torture

The ordeal continued for approximately a month. After that, " Al-Akhali " found himself inside a helicopter that would take him back to Aden, specifically to a prison called Qa'at Wadhah. The prison authorities welcomed him with electric wires and informed him:

"The one who enters the hall is lost, and the one who comes out of it is born anew."

In Qa'at Wadhah prison in Aden, "Al-Akhouli" encountered his "former" friend again, and the interrogators and torturers resumed their work. The questions were repetitive, but the torture became more brutal: beatings, electric shocks, sleep deprivation, complete nail extraction, and burning of the feet. This torture continued for seven months on a daily basis, except for one day when the medical school graduate and his travel companion were not tortured.

During the period of torture, they were forced to record videos confessing to crimes they did not commit and had no knowledge of. They were coerced into falsely stating that they had committed various acts and crimes with the support of Sheikh Al-Mekhlafi, Qatar, the Muslim Brotherhood, and some terrorist groups.

"Why did you carry out these missions?" they asked "X" in front of the camera, urging him to read the answer written on the paper:

"Sheikh Hamoud kidnapped my children in Turkey and exerted pressure on me until I agreed."

After a few days, they asked him to record a video in which he stated that the UAE had bombed terrorists at the entrance of the city of Aden, and that he was aware of these terrorist forces. "X" didn't specifically know what they were referring to at the time. Later on, he learned that the Emirati aircraft had indeed bombed units of the National Army at the Al-Alam checkpoint. These forces were on the verge of entering Aden and wresting control from the armed groups affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council, which was supported by the UAE. They asked him to confirm that the hundreds killed in the bombing were terrorists affiliated with Al-Qaeda and Vice President Ali Mohsen.

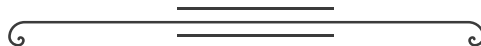
Despite recording what they wanted, they did not release "Al-Akhali" and his friend. He went on a hunger strike for over four weeks, and his body began to deteriorate. His kidneys swelled, and he was on the verge of death. The authorities

in Qa'at Wadhah were eventually compelled to transfer "Al-Akhoul" to the hospital.

In the hospital, the medical school graduate was screaming like a detained patient in need of help, rather than as a graduate seeking employment. He shouted at the top of his lungs, which alerted the guards from Qa'at Wadhah to return him to the prison. However, his condition forced them to bring in a doctor.

"This man will die here if he is not transferred outside," the doctor told them one day.

\*The militants forcibly took "Al-Akhali" from Qa'at Wadhah and dumped him in one of the streets of Aden. They did not return his car to him.



## Who are you?

*Name: Nasser Awad Salem Al-Awlaki*

*Arrestee: Shabwani Elite UAE Units*

*Date of arrest: 2018*

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Nasser Al-Awlaki entered the Wadi'a border crossing between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen with ease. He was on his way to his family in the Shabwah region. He got into a taxi as the only passenger. Another passenger arrived, but the driver refused to depart until the car was fully occupied. Nasser was filled with longing and couldn't afford any further delay, so he agreed with the driver to pay for the empty seats in the car.

On the way, two individuals boarded the taxi with them, who turned out to be soldiers belonging to the Shabwah Elite Forces. All the passengers engaged in friendly conversation as travel companions. Upon reaching the Shabikah checkpoint,



*Soldiers of the elite forces handed Nasser Al-Awlaki over to the Emiratis in Balhaf. The situation was shocking when the Emiratis interrogated him and subjected him to beatings inside his own country until they eventually carried him out, incapacitated.*

which is about 25 kilometers away from Ataq, the capital of Shabwah, the soldiers in the car were asked to disembark as they did not have identification cards indicating their status as soldiers. Afterward, the checkpoint soldier examined the faces of the remaining passengers using a flashlight and began asking Nasser Al-Awlaki questions such as, "Where are you from? Where are you coming from? Who are you with? Where is your ID?"

Nasser cooperated and responded to the soldier's questions. The soldier requested the driver not to move and went to confer with his colleagues. Upon returning, he spoke to the checkpoint leader or supervisor and said, "There is a volunteer named Mutawa Aawlaki in the car."

The officer and the soldier stood in front of the car doors and requested that everyone inside hand over their mobile phones and belongings as part of security procedures. Then, seven or eight soldiers approached and removed Nasser from the car. They pointed their weapons at his back, head, and neck, and blindfolded him. The militants took Nasser into what appeared to be a camp, walking him through the corridors of a building. He heard screams, chains, and the sound of high and intimidating iron doors. They led him into a room and left

him alone, saying, "Stay as you are until we return to you."

After an hour or so, a person arrived whose accent indicated that he was not Yemeni. He began asking questions such as, "Who are you? Where do you want to go? Who are you with? Which Islamic group do you belong to?"

Nasser asked him, "Who are you?" and received a strong blow to his face in response. The person said, "We are the alliance. Cooperate with us, or we know how to deal with you."

Beside the officer, there were Yemeni soldiers, as indicated by their accents. They untied the blindfold covering Nasser's eyes. All of them were wearing masks except for the non-Yemeni officer, who had his face uncovered. It became clear from his military uniform that he was Emirati.

On the second day, an Emirati soldier arrived along with a Yemeni soldier, both of whom had their faces uncovered. They said to Nasser, "You will be taken to Ataq. Where do you want the vehicle to drop you off?" They then took him out, bound in chains, while laughing.

The soldiers responsible for transporting Nasser took him to a new facility. The accents of the individuals in charge of the facility indicated that they were Gulf nationals. Nasser

was able to discern that they were Emiratis, and from their conversations, he realized that he was inside a facility belonging to the Balhaf Company.

The Emiratis took custody of Nasser Al-Awlaki from the Shabwah Elite Forces. They walked him to a small gate where one of the Emirati soldiers untied the blindfold covering Nasser's eyes and removed the chains from his hands. They then threw Nasser into a room where there were eight other detainees.

After three days, they brought Nasser in for interrogation. It was nighttime during Ramadan, specifically after the Taraweeh prayer. The interrogator would ask questions, hit, kick, shout, and threaten to extract information from Nasser, even if it meant using violence. The interrogation continued until the time of suhoor (pre-dawn meal). Nasser was carried out of the room by the guards, crying.

During that week, Nasser remained in a state of psychological and nervous breakdown. The brave Yemeni tribesman was subjected to torture within his own land by strangers. Some Yemeni soldiers cautiously and fearfully cooperated with the detainees, as they were wary of the Emirati men and their assistants. One of the soldiers helped Nasser by sending a text message to his family in Saudi Arabia, informing them of



his detention by the Emiratis in Balhaf.

The number of detainees in the same room as Nasser increased to 14 individuals. After a few days, Yemeni soldiers arrived. They blindfolded Nasser, tied his hands with chains behind his back, following the instructions of Emirati soldiers.

They lifted him onto a military vehicle and said, "You will return to Shabwah, and you will be released. Everything will be fine." They informed him of this.

Nasser rejoiced and kissed their hands on this good news, but was surprised to hear them asking one of the points to inform the entrance point of Mukalla Hadramawt of their arrival.

"Where are you taking me?" he shouted in alarm.

They brought him to a government building or one of the camps. Nasser couldn't accurately determine the exact location as his eyes were still blindfolded. The presence of multiple gates indicated that the place had several entrances. The car carrying Nasser stopped, and the individuals responsible for his transportation requested the opening of the gates. They untied the blindfold from his eyes in a corridor between high walls that led to a building.

In the building, Nasser met a medical team and Emirati soldiers who took samples for examination and thoroughly examined his body. They also collected his fingerprints and took photographs of him from all angles.

"This is the final procedure before your release," they told him. Nasser replied loudly,

"I am in Mukalla, and my province is Shabwah." They responded angrily,

"If you want to be released, then remain silent."

\* Nasser al-Awlaki's detention lasted forty days.



## *An Emirati secret behind the "Villa" of al-Qaeda*

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Masoud Sufyan was not a target for the armed members of the separatist group supported by the United Arab Emirates in Aden. The militants arrived at the internet café managed by Masoud and asked him, "Where is Saleh Mohammed?"

The militants were searching for a relative of Masoud, but he informed them that he didn't know his place. As a result, Masoud became a target and needed to be interrogated. They covered his head with a black piece of cloth, bound his hands, and placed him inside a car. He was then transported to the house of the former security director in Aden, Shalal Sha'ay.

Masoud's head remained covered and his hands were still bound. Two men escorted him upstairs, where a man named Yassran Al-Muqtari removed the covering from



*After being tortured in Shalal Sha'ay's house, he was handed over to the Emiratis who tortured him and promised to release him. After the media circulated information about the detainees' situation, they released him. However, he was later kidnapped by Al-Qaeda, and an Al-Qaeda investigator was in communication with a known Emirati officer.*

## The Most Severe Torture

Masoud's eyes, took his picture, and then covered his head again. He remained in this state for approximately thirty minutes without being interrogated or beaten. Afterward, two other men arrived and carried Masoud Sufyan to hang him from the ceiling by his wrist for about an hour. Before two other men came to interrogate him, they asked him about his relative again: "Where is Saleh Mohammed?"

Masoud did not actually know where Saleh is. He assured them that he didn't know, but they didn't believe him and called him a liar. They proceeded to beat him with a cable and a wooden stick for 30 minutes, and then they began electrocuting him. Masoud's wrist slipped out of the rope, causing him to fall from the ceiling to the ground, losing consciousness. When he regained consciousness, they continued to beat him, thinking he was pretending. They ordered him to stand, and then they opened a bottle of alcohol, ignited it, and brought it close to his body to threaten him with setting him on fire.

They hung him again from the ceiling for another 30 minutes. Masoud heard the sound of a man walking nearby and pleaded with him to release him. The man went to seek permission from someone else, and he returned to actually lower him down. Masoud was left in one of the corridors until the following day.

Yassran Al-Muqtari arrived once again, and Masoud recognized him by his voice. Masoud's eyes were still blindfolded. Yassran interrogated him, and afterwards, they transferred him to the neighboring detention facility near Shalal's house, the former security director of Aden. They imprisoned him in a small room measuring 3 by 3 meters with 16 other prisoners. In this prison, the young Adeni man, Mohammed Al-Ghafari, 23 years old, died, as well as Qasim Al-Yafei, who was 19 years old. The veteran prisoners conveyed horrifying news to the new detainees about what was happening to them in the cramped prison, which could not accommodate everyone lying down at once. They had to take turns sleeping. Moreover, the prisoners were only allowed to use the bathroom for two minutes during a 24-hour period. However, they were given an empty bottle each day to fulfill their needs at other times.

There was no ventilation in the room, and one of the prisoners died due to a lack of air. He experienced difficulty breathing and was unable to access sufficient air. In this prison, there was a leader named Awad Al-Wahsh, who practiced his skills in torturing others. He whipped Masoud twice on his back with an electric wire without any reason.

## The Most Severe Torture

This nearby cell, close to Shalal Sha'ea's house, was specifically used for torture. They did not interrogate Masoud for two weeks. Afterward, they bound him with all the other prisoners and placed hoods over their heads. They were then transported by truck to the Wadih Hall prison. Masoud was awaiting his interrogation, but instead, they did nothing except torture him three times within less than a month.

During that period, a man came to see Masoud. He informed him that he was the one who had taken him down from the ceiling when they hung him at Shalal's house. He assured Masoud that they had interrogated him thoroughly and found no evidence against him, which is why they would release him soon. The man gave him some cold water and juice before returning him to the cell.

Masoud thought they were about to release him when they came for him at one o'clock after midnight. They covered his head and bound him, and the car carrying him began to move. For a moment, he believed they would simply drop him off on the side of any road and he would be free. However, they took him to another location:

"Are you ready?" they asked him.

"Ready for what?" he replied.

"We're going to shoot you and bury you here," they said, laughing.

They didn't open fire. After about fifteen minutes, another car arrived, and a person speaking with an Emirati accent joined them. He asked Masoud to get into the car, which moved only a short distance. They then brought him to a prison called the Alliance Prison.

He forced Masoud to strip off his clothes in the prison facility and undergo a thorough search. The Emirati soldiers tied his legs to prevent him from walking. It was past midnight, around 3 a.m. After an hour, an Emirati man arrived and offered Masoud some water before leaving. Then, another officer came and asked him to call him "Hitler."

Hitler transferred Masoud to a cell measuring 1.5 x 1.5 meters, which already housed three other individuals. The cell was located within a detention center that consisted of several wings and cells.

Masoud attempted to get some sleep, but one of the detainees woke him up at 7 a.m.

"It's time for us to go to the bathroom for two minutes a day and get a little bit of food," the detainee said.

## The Most Severe Torture

Shortly after, "Hitler" came to see Masoud, who bore visible signs of torture.

"How did you sustain those injuries?" Hitler asked him.

"I came from Waddah Hall... I was subjected to torture by Shalal and Yassran," Masoud replied.

Hitler was sympathetic and promised to have Masoud examined by a doctor as soon as possible. However, he speculated that all the torture inflicted on him and the other detainees was under the supervision of the Emiratis.

Masoud continued to wait for Hitler's promised doctor visit for a month and a half. The scheduled transfer to a small container came, but Hitler's promise of a timely appointment did not materialize. The Emiratis who managed the Alliance Prison relocated almost all the detainees from inside the prison to small containers. Each container housed eight people and had a small toilet in the corner. Nobody questioned Masoud during this time.

After a month passed and he kept asking, "Why am I still being held?" they took him to see an Emirati officer named Abu Rashid.



"Why am I being detained here?" Masoud asked him.

Yemenis brought you here?" the Emirati officer, Abu Rashid, replied.

"Why haven't I been interrogated?" Masoud asked again.

"Tell me the story of your life from the day you were born until today," the officer requested.

Masoud indeed recounted his life story. After that, Abu Rashid allowed him to make a brief phone call to his family, but warned him not to disclose his location or the identity of those who had detained him.

"Otherwise, you will be killed," Abu Rashid cautioned him.

When Masoud returned to the container and informed the other prisoners about his phone call, his fellow detainees told him that being allowed to make a phone call was a positive sign and that his release might be imminent.

\*\*\*

Like Hitler's promise, the interpretations of the detainees...

The positive sign did not become clear even after another eight months passed in the container. Once again, they asked Masoud to narrate his life story, and once again, they assured him that they had conducted investigations and found nothing incriminating against him, hinting that his release might be imminent. However, they returned him to the container once again.

After an additional month in the container and almost twelve months in the custody of Emirati guards at the detention center, Masoud, along with twenty other detainees, was transferred to a prison called Bir Ahmed. This prison was under the supervision of Yemeni guards, but the Emiratis maintained a level of authority through their oversight, with Ghassan Al-Aqrabi being in charge.

After sixty days passed without any significant developments, the detainees decided to go on a hunger strike. Some of the detainees who were released during this period managed to convey the situation inside Bir Ahmed prison to the media. After a few days of the hunger strike, some of the prisoners fainted, and due to the media coverage, Emirati officers visited the detainees to negotiate an end to the strike.

Masoud and his fellow detainees asked them,

"What is the reason for our detention?"

Masoud received a report containing all his interrogations, and there was nothing incriminating against him. The media pressure prompted the Emiratis supervising Bir Ahmed prison to treat the detainees better. An Emirati officer informed them that they would be transferred from the old prison in Bir Ahmed to a new prison with better conditions, even though both prisons were in the same location: Bir Ahmed and were also under Emirati supervision.

\*\*\*

Masoud emerged from the detention complex feeling complex emotions, filled with fear. However, shortly thereafter, he was taken by surprise when four armed individuals abducted him and forced him into the backseat of a car. Among them was a man named Ghassan Al-Saadi, a known member of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, whom Masoud recognized from media reports.

The armed individuals blindfolded Masoud and bound his hands behind his back. They led him to a place that he would later come to know as an empty villa. Inside the villa, there was

a small room guarded by men wearing black masks over their faces. Masoud was thrown into the room for approximately two hours until one of the guards came and informed him that Ghassan Al-Saadi wanted to speak with him.

Ghassan Al-Saadi was waiting for Masoud in a large room. The surprise came during the interrogation when Ghassan accused Masoud of communicating with the media about the conditions of the detainees in Bir Ahmed prison and the mistreatment they endured at the hands of the Emiratis, or under their supervision. He also accused Masoud of spying on the Emiratis on behalf of Qatar. Masoud was taken aback and denied everything, refuting the accusations.

As a result of his denial, they began relentlessly beating him with a cable for 30 minutes. Then they dragged him to a room on the second floor of the villa, where they bound his wrists and ankles, rendering him immobile.

Masoud had no doubt that he had been captured by Al-Qaeda in Aden. He had been told this multiple times during his interrogation. Alongside the physical pain he experienced, he feared for his life. The extremists seemed to have some kind of connection with the Emiratis, and he wondered about the nature of that relationship. He was extremely afraid to the point that he couldn't sleep that night.

Masoud noticed a small opening in the room's wall, covered by a wooden panel that concealed the air conditioning unit. Using his teeth, he managed to cut the rope binding his wrist. He removed the wooden panel from the opening and tried to squeeze his body through it. However, he ended up falling onto a closed balcony. He was trapped there and couldn't find an exit.

One of the guards came to search for him, but since he wasn't there anymore, all the guards began searching for him. When they found him, they subjected him to approximately four hours of relentless beating. He was struck on the head and kicked all over his body. They even aimed a gun at his head, threatening to kill him multiple times. Eventually, they stopped and bound his wrists with ten ropes. Masoud was convinced that he would die within hours.

Ghassan Al-Saadi entered Masoud's cell after several hours. He was carrying a long chain and five locks, determined to ensure that Masoud would not attempt to escape again. He tied Masoud's hands together and placed a lock on his wrists. Then he wrapped the chain around his ankles and secured two locks on his ankles. Finally, he wrapped the chain around his chest and added one last lock.

"If you manage to even walk with these chains, we will hear your movements," Ghassan said, emphasizing the futility of any escape attempt.

The interrogations and torture continued on a daily basis. They searched through Masoud's phone, asking about all his friends and the pictures stored in his device. During the interrogations, the "guards" would threaten to cut off Masoud's hands or arms with a sharp knife. They regularly threatened to kill him and would beat him with a cable wire.

After several days, the guards began to forget to wear their head coverings, and Masoud remembered their faces clearly. He started searching for them based on his knowledge of social media and his work on the internet. Next to Ghassan Al-Saadi, Masoud mentioned the names: "Abdul Salam Al-Shatiri, Abdul Qader Al-Saadi (known as 'Abu Asil'), Mohammed Abdul Fattah Al-Saadi, Salem Al-Saadi, Murad Al-Kaladi, Nawaf Abdullah, Mohsen Al-Shatiri, and Fares Al-Saadi."

Ghassan Al-Saadi and his group began pressuring Masoud to recite statements that they dictated to him, treating them as confessions that they recorded using their phone cameras. Masoud was supposed to remember all the names Ghassan mentioned and affirm that they were his comrades. They

recorded around twenty video clips throughout the entire month. Each time, they would tell him that they couldn't publish the videos because it would clearly show the horrifying state Masoud was in as a result of the torture.

After about a week, they changed their approach. One night, around 2 a.m., Ghassan Al-Saadi came to him and injected him with an unknown substance. After that, Abdul Salam Al-Shatiri handed him a pen and a piece of paper and dictated a statement for him to write. According to this statement, Masoud confessed to being affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Qaeda fighters. Masoud was puzzled by what Al-Shatiri wanted from him—to confess that he was a member of Al-Qaeda, the organization that both Al-Saadi and Al-Shatiri were associated with. Al-Shatiri also dictated to him an attempted targeting of several UAE soldiers.

Masoud wrote everything as dictated, but he refused to sign it because it simply wasn't true. They tried to force him, especially by coercing him to drink alcohol, but Masoud also refused. He told them, "You must kill me now."

Despite his insistence on refusing to sign the statement, they didn't kill him. Instead, they forcibly stripped him of his

clothes. The temperature was cold, and they placed him in a small bathroom and bound him with chains once again. He remained in the bathroom for approximately a week.

Following that, a foot soldier arrived at around 3 a.m. He released Masoud from his restraints and instructed him to go to the upper floor of the villa. Ghassan Al-Saadi and Abdul Salam Al-Shatiri were waiting there, clearly indulging in vodka and chewing qat. They informed Masoud that they had been browsing through his phone and that his mother had been constantly messaging and calling him. They ordered him to record a voice message for his mother, informing her that he was fine and in Sana'a, while he was still in Aden.

Masoud recorded the voice message, and Ghassan Al-Saadi and Abdul Salam Al-Shatiri bombarded him with questions. They wanted to know the individual who had been in contact with the media and informed specifically Al Jazeera about the treatment of detainees in Aden prisons at the hands of Emiratis or under their supervision. Al-Shatiri sat beside Masoud, recording his voice and sending the recordings to the Emirati officer Abu Rashid, who supervised the detention facility known as "Al-Hawiyat" (the containers). Abu Rashid was corresponding with him simultaneously.

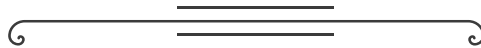


Masoud became disturbed. What was the connection between Ghassan Al-Saadi and Al-Shatiri, who were functioning as leaders in Al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula, and the Emiratis? What was the link between them? Why were they communicating?

The Saadi and Al-Shatiri continued to consume vodka heavily, and eventually Ghassan Al-Saadi fell asleep.

Late at night, Masoud's mother responded to his voice message with a tearful message. Masoud pleaded with Al-Shatiri to call his mother and reassure her so that she would stop crying. Al-Shatiri agreed, but he threatened to kill Masoud if he said anything other than what they had agreed upon.

\* SAM Organization keeps the real name of the detainee, his profession and some details as well, according to his desire and fear for his life



## Between the palace and the airport

*Name: Thaer*

*Arrestee: Hadrami Elite + UAE units*

*Date of arrest: March 2018*

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The soldiers stormed the Thaer's shop, terrifying the customers as they brandished their weapons towards everyone inside the store. However, it turned out that the intended target was not one of the customers, as Thaer realized when they called out a different name. He raised his hand and said, "It's me."

Three soldiers advanced towards him and threw him to the ground. They proceeded to kick him while uttering profanities. They then dragged him outside, only to be surprised by the presence of elite Hadhrami forces deployed on the street in front of the shop. They blindfolded him with a piece of cloth, and he exclaimed,



*The soldiers raided Thaer's shop and arrested him. They beat him inside the presidential palace and tortured him at the international airport, causing him to lose a toe from his foot.*

"They took me, and I don't know where they're taking me!"

The soldiers threw Thaer into a caravan, where there were other people like him. Unable to see in the darkness, he couldn't determine their exact number. In the evening, one of them opened the trailer door and escorted the rebel to a car. "Where are we going?" Thaer asked, only to receive blows and verbal abuse in response.

The car stopped after about half an hour, they transferred Thaer to a quiet room, he lifted the lid from his eyes, he was surprised by someone he knew, imprisoned in the same room. The first question Thaer asked his colleague:

"Where are we?"

The answer was shocking:

"We are in the Presidential Palace in Fuwah."

After a few moments, two masked individuals entered the room to beat Thaer. They warned him, "Anyone who removes the cloth from his eyes will be punished."

During the night, they carried him atop a vehicle and drove him to a cramped room. He could hear agonized voices and people screaming. As time passed, he realized that he was

in Al-Rayyan International Airport, which the United Arab Emirates and the coalition had converted into a base for their affiliated units and a detention facility for prisoners.

Indeed, the movement between the Presidential Palace and Al-Rayyan International Airport may suggest luxury and opulence. However, for Thær, this mobility held no glamour. Instead, it was a journey marked by violence and torment—being subjected to beatings in the palace and enduring suffering at the airport.

On the evening of the second day in Al-Rayyan Airport prison, Thær stood before an Emirati officer for interrogation. Beside the Emirati officer were Yemeni assistants who carried out the act of beating Thær with wires. "Unfortunately, it was Yemenis," he said. "They forced my head down and my feet up, stripped me of my clothes, and placed me on an ice block for approximately an hour before returning me to the cell at dawn."

Thær remained in solitary confinement for three days until they returned to interrogate him once again. "This time, the torture was even more severe," he recounted. "They subjected me to electric shocks and beatings on my feet, causing me to lose one of my toes."

Upon receiving attention for his injuries from others, Thaer was transferred to a small room where he would coexist with a group of fellow detainees. The room's space did not exceed 5 meters, and inside were 20 prisoners. They couldn't all sleep at the same time, so they took turns resting.

\* Thaer was transferred to Al-Munawwarah prison in Hadramawt before being released.



### Instigator

*Name: Saad*

*Place of arrest: First Military Region*

*Date of arrest:*

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The first surprise that Saad, a 22-year-old, encountered upon his arrival at the prison was the overwhelming number of detainees exceeding the capacity of the facility. Saad had been pursued by security forces on charges of belonging to the extremist organization "Al-Qaeda." He surrendered himself to the security authorities in the city of Sayun, who subsequently transferred him to the general prison in the first military zone.

The second surprise for Saad was the presence of Saudi officers in the prison. There was a person named Abu Nawaf, whose real name was Bandar Al-Otaibi, and another named Abu Salem. They were known for brutally torturing the detainees. Their Saudi nationality was particularly intriguing to Saad. The methods they used



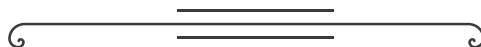
*He surrendered himself to the security authorities in Sayun, and they transferred him to several prisons. He went on a hunger strike due to poor nutrition, which prompted threats from the authorities. When he refused to accept a military sentence, they threw him inside an armored vehicle before transferring him to "Al-Daghata" detention facility.*

in torture were not different from those employed by Yemeni officers and soldiers, especially a person named Al-Wa'il, who was in charge, and another named Habib. They would physically assault the detainees without any apparent reason.

The beatings were not without reason and were the cause for Saad and five other detainees to go on a hunger strike. However, it was the poor nutrition that was the main reason for the strike.

Following Saad and the five detainees returning their lunch meal, they were accused of inciting the other prisoners. That same night, Saad was taken to an office affiliated with the prison, where he was threatened. Then, they demanded that he roll in the dirt as a military punishment, but Saad refused.

Due to Saad's refusal of the military punishment, the prison director ordered him to be thrown inside a bulletproof and extremely hot armored truck used for transporting prisoners, known as a "Dinah." This method is used daily to punish some prisoners. They left him inside the vehicle cage without water until the next afternoon. Then, the director arrived and placed handcuffs on his hands and legs. They took him to the adjacent prison, known as the Mud Prison, where he was immediately placed in a narrow room called "Al-Daghata" or "the Squeeze."



### Putting pressure on the wanted individual

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My brother was wanted on charges of belonging to the Al-Qaeda organization. Our house was raided, but my brother was not present. They proceeded to arrest me along with two of my siblings and my brother's wife as "hostages." They threatened my brother's wife with taking pictures and one of them placed his personal handgun against the child's head, threatening to kill the child if she didn't disclose her husband's place.

After nearly 40 days, my eldest brother was released, only to be arrested again shortly thereafter. He has been detained to this day without any charges or investigation conducted with him, under the pretext of security precautions.



*Three brothers and the wife of their fourth brother, who was wanted on charges of belonging to Al-Qaeda, were arrested. Despite capturing the wanted individual after two months, the authorities did not release the hostages until 11 months had passed.*



They would blindfold us and tell us that a death sentence had been issued against us, creating an atmosphere of fear and terror. Then they would return us to the prison cell.

Despite the authorities managing to apprehend our wanted brother after two months of our detention, they did not release me and the others until after 11 months of captivity.

\*The talk here is for «S.M.» who was arrested in 2016

## Prisoner in Marib

*Name: Saif*

*Arrestee: Security forces in Marib, the "legitimate government"*

*Date of arrest: November 2019*

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Security forces arrested Saif, using the alias "Saif," from his usual location: the passport office in the internationally recognized government-controlled province of Ma'rib.

Saif's charge was that he was involved in issuing passports for Houthi group leaders. As a man supporting four children, he worked as a broker to assist others in their passport application processes, receiving compensation for his services. He remained detained at the passport office for two months before being transferred to a political security prison.



*Seif helps others in obtaining passports in exchange for expenses he incurs for his children. He was arrested by the security forces on charges of facilitating the issuance of passports for Houthi leaders.*

In the political security facility, Saif was interrogated four times. Each interrogation session lasted four hours. His eyes were blindfolded, and his hands were handcuffed behind his back. After each session, he was returned to the prison where he found over 100 inmates. Their charges varied between either working with the Houthi group or being suspected based on their affiliations. Many of them were captured on the roads or during the process of obtaining passports. Saif mentioned that there were more than twenty individuals who went to collect their salaries and ended up being imprisoned, according to what they told him.

There was an individual named Fares who was arrested at the passport office and taken to the security authorities. He was subjected to torture before being placed in a cell, to the extent that he lost consciousness, under the pretext of being a national security threat. After three days, he was called in and apologized to: there was a case of mistaken identity due to a similarity in names.



The prison cells had approximate dimensions of two meters by forty centimeters by two meters. Each cell accommodated eight individuals, with only one blanket provided per person, which also served as a mattress. As for the meals, there were four servings per day. Breakfast consisted of fava beans, dinner consisted of fava beans, and lunch consisted of rice and stew. Each person was allocated five liters of water per day, which was distributed for drinking, washing, and ablution purposes. There were two bathrooms in the cell block without doors, and prisoners were allowed to use them at any time.

The cell block housed a total of seventy inmates.

*A person does not die in prison from  
hunger or heat or cold or beating or  
diseases or insects. But he may die  
from waiting.. Waiting turns time into  
no-time, and thing into nothing, and  
meaning into meaningless.*

*Nawal El Saadawi*

## **SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties**

is an international non-governmental organization that was established in 2017 and works to defend human rights in Yemen.

The organization aims to monitor and document human rights violations, and work to combat them, such as arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, repression of freedoms, especially journalistic ones, stopping illegal trials and stopping unfair executions, and other forms of human rights violations.

SAM Organization relies on research and documentation to highlight violations and seek to stop injustice, and demands justice for the victims and accountability for those responsible for human rights violations. The organization also works to raise public awareness and pressure governments and international institutions to work to improve conditions and protect human rights.

SAM Organization has issued more than 45 qualitative reports, and more than 500 human rights statements, and publishes its publications on its website in Arabic and English, in addition to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages, and also issues many videos on important issues

SAM contributed to the first human rights case, which is the disclosure of secret and illegal prisons, and highlighting the suffering of fighters on the southern border of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and issuing a qualitative report on the looting of money from opponents by the Houthi group in the report "The Judicial Guardian", and also issued many reports on the recruitment of children and the suffering of Yemeni women, especially in the prisons of the Houthi group.



**SAM**  
Rights & Liberties

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**2024**

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**SAM**  
Rights & Liberties

## These Stories:

Torture locations vary from one region to another; some are known, while others remain unknown. Similarly, the perpetrators of torture differ, with some identified and others unidentified. However, the methods of torture and torment inflicted upon Yemenis bear a striking resemblance to one another, some resulting in death and others leading to paralysis. In this edition, we narrate some of the stories documented by the monitoring teams of the SAM organization over the years. The harrowing details condemn the perpetrators who have reached the utmost cruelty during the recent years of Yemen's ongoing war. It was not an easy task when we decided to break through the solid walls, to document the incoming stories that bear witness to the crushing of humanity and the violation of human rights. These actions disregard all international treaties, agreements, conventions, religious teachings, and even moral principles. This report required a considerable amount of time to monitor and verify the violations before releasing them in this narrative form, aiming to establish the rights of the victims and condemn the perpetrators.

