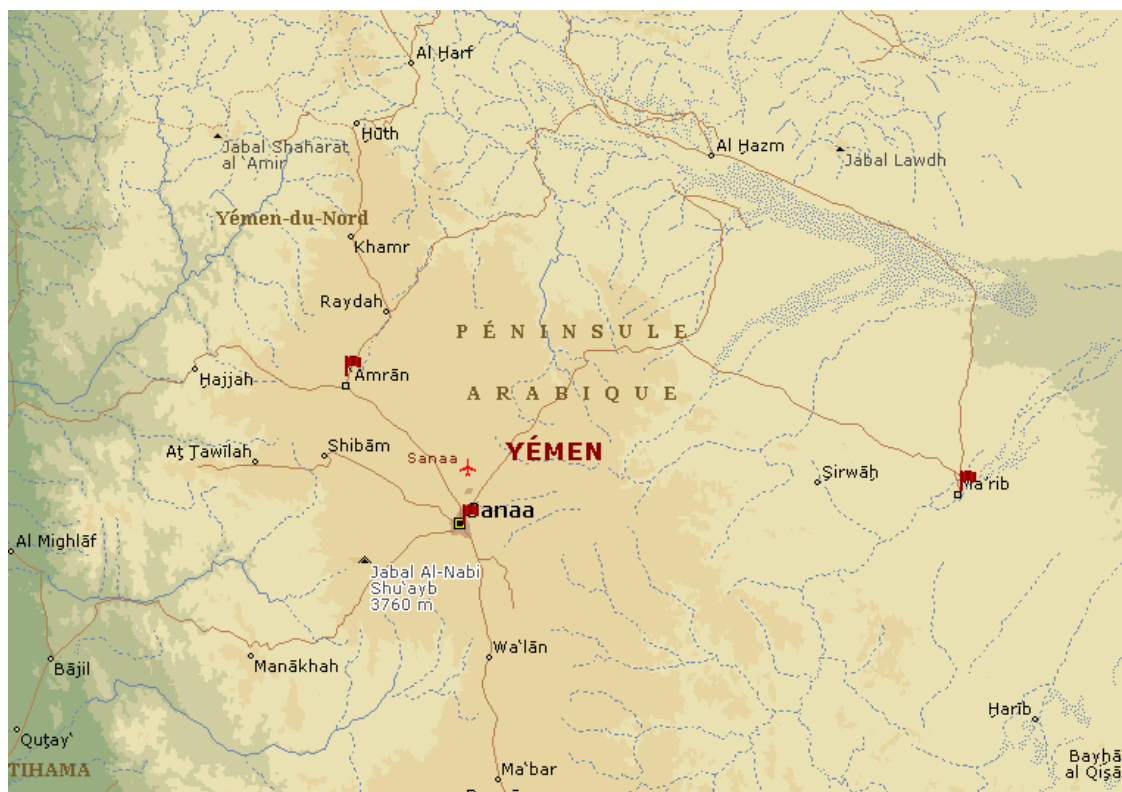
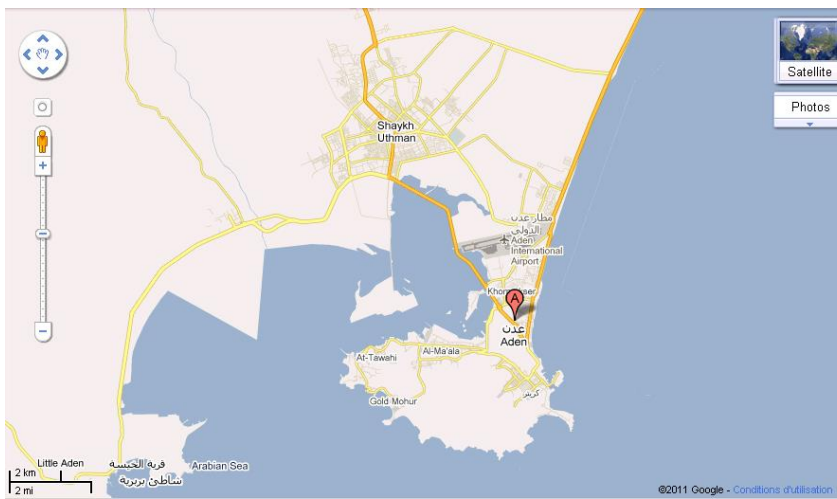
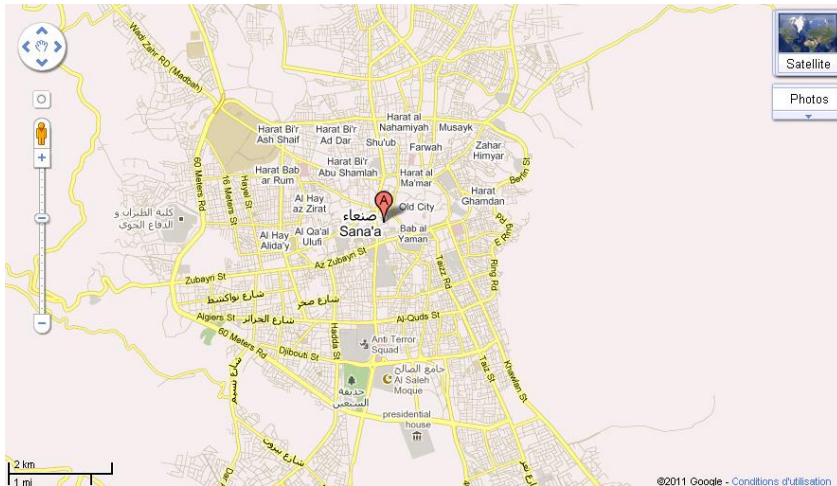


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http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2011/01/16/au-yemen-les-etudiants-appelle-a-suivre-l-exemple-de-la-tunisie_1466270_3212.html

L'onde de choc tunisienne atteint les pays arabes

LeMonde.fr avec AFP | 16.01.11 | 09h59 • Mis à jour le 16.01.11 | 21h45

Un activiste égyptien participe à un rassemblement de soutien au soulèvement tunisien, le 15 janvier au Caire. AP/AMR NABIL

Et si le mouvement tunisien inspirait d'autres Etats arabes ? C'est la question que posait *Le Monde*, samedi, évoquant l'éventualité d'un "*printemps démocratique arabe*", et qui semble faire son chemin dans les têtes des dirigeants et des peuples du Maghreb et du Proche-Orient.

La prudence des réactions des diplomaties de la région est particulièrement éloquente, reflétant la peur de soulèvements populaires des dirigeants arabes. Si les pays occidentaux souhaitent désormais ouvertement la démocratisation de la Tunisie, les capitales arabes restent discrètes, inquiètes du caractère spontané du mouvement ayant mis fin aux vingt-trois ans de régime policier de Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali.

Dans une déclaration d'une extrême prudence, la Ligue des Etats arabes a par exemple invité samedi à la fois les autorités, les partis politiques et les forces vives de Tunisie à faire preuve d'"unité" pour *"maintenir les réalisations du peuple tunisien et parvenir à la paix dans le pays"*. Le seul à regretter ouvertement le succès du soulèvement tunisien est le leader libyen Mouammar Kadhafi : *"Je suis vraiment peiné par ce qui se passe en Tunisie. A quoi cela sert-il ? A quoi bon renverser Zine El-Abidine? Ne vous a-t-il pas dit qu'il s'effacerait dans trois ans ? Soyez patients pendant trois ans et vos enfants resteront en vie"*, a-t-il déclaré.

Un homme s'immole par le feu en Algérie

Du côté des populations, un certain nombre d'incidents et de manifestations survenus durant le week-end montrent l'importance de l'onde de choc créée par la "Révolution du jasmin". Un Algérien de 37 ans est mort après s'être immolé par le feu, samedi, devant une mairie de la région de Tebessa, près de la frontière avec la Tunisie, où il était venu réclamer un emploi et un logement. Mohcin Bouterfif faisait partie d'un groupe d'une vingtaine de jeunes rassemblés devant la mairie pour protester contre le refus du maire de les recevoir. Il s'est aspergé d'essence et transformé en torche vivante. La victime, père d'une fillette, entendait, par ce geste désespéré, *"dénoncer l'attitude de mépris affichée à son égard par les élus de cette commune"*. Le président de l'Assemblée populaire communale – la mairie – a été relevé de ses fonctions par le wali (préfet) de Tebessa qui s'est rendu dans la journée de samedi sur les lieux. Trois autres tentatives de suicide par le feu ont également été enregistrées en Algérie depuis mercredi, selon l'agence APS et le quotidien privé francophone *El Watan*.

Plusieurs suicides ont été enregistrés en Tunisie depuis le 17 décembre, date à laquelle Mohamed Bouaziz, 26 ans, un vendeur ambulant sans permis s'est immolé par le feu pour protester contre la saisie de sa marchandise, déclenchant un mois d'émeutes sans précédent en Tunisie.

Manifestations d'étudiants au Yémen

Dimanche, un millier d'étudiants yéménites ont manifesté à Sanaa, appelant les peuples arabes à se soulever contre leurs dirigeants, à l'instar des Tunisiens. Les étudiants sont sortis du campus de l'université de Sanaa et se sont dirigés vers l'ambassade de Tunisie, accompagnés par des militants des droits de l'homme. *"Tunis de la liberté, Sanaa te salue mille fois"*, scandaient les étudiants, qui répétaient également des slogans appelant les peuples arabes à *"la révolution contre les dirigeants menteurs et apeurés"*. *"Partez avant d'être déposés"*, proclamait l'une des banderoles brandies par les manifestants, sans s'en prendre nommément au président yéménite Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans.

Des étudiants yéménites à Sanaa, le 16 janvier.AP/Hani Mohammed

Sit-in devant le Parlement jordanien

En Jordanie, près de 3 000 syndicalistes, membres de partis de gauche et islamistes ont participé dimanche à un sit-in à Amman, devant le Parlement, pour protester contre l'inflation et la politique économique du gouvernement. *"En Jordanie, nous souffrons des mêmes maux qui ont affecté la Tunisie, et nous devons mettre fin à l'oppression, ainsi qu'aux entraves aux libertés et à la volonté du peuple"*, a affirmé le chef des Frères musulmans, Hammam Said, dans un discours. Après avoir fait l'éloge des Tunisiens qui *"se sont débarrassés de leur dictateur"*, il a souligné que le peuple jordanien *"n'acceptera pas d'avoir faim"*. Les

manifestants, qui brandissaient des drapeaux de la Jordanie et de leurs partis, se tenaient debout devant la grille du Parlement, alors que les députés étaient réunis pour discuter des prix des aliments. *"Jusqu'à quand continuerons-nous à payer le prix des vols et de la corruption ?"*, pouvait-on lire sur une des banderoles.

Parlement jordanien, le 16 janvier.REUTERS/ALI JAREKJI

Vu du Koweït, "une leçon pour tous les peuples de la région"

Des députés de l'opposition koweïtienne ont salué *"le courage du peuple tunisien"* et prévenu que de nombreux régimes étaient menacés. *"Tous les régimes qui oppriment leurs peuple et luttent contre l'identité arabo-islamique connaîtront le même sort"*, a déclaré le député islamiste Walid Al-Tabtabaï. *"C'est une leçon pour tous les peuples de la région"*, a estimé le député Ahmad Al-Saadoun, un vétéran de la vie parlementaire.

Le Soudan "prêt pour un soulèvement populaire"

A Khartoum, Moubarak Al-Fadil, l'un des ténors de l'opposition soudanaise, a estimé que le pays était *"prêt pour un soulèvement populaire"*. Dimanche, des partis d'opposition ont *"félicité"* les Tunisiens et plaidé pour la *"fin du régime totalitaire"* soudanais. Ils demandent aussi la démission du ministre des finances, jugé responsable de la hausse des prix. Un groupe d'ONG arabes, le Forum de la société civile du Golfe, a par ailleurs appelé l'Arabie saoudite à ne pas laisser le président déchu, réfugié à Jeddah, s'installer sur *"une terre du Golfe"*.

Pour la Syrie et l'Iran, un avertissement contre l'Occident

Autre son de cloche du côté de la Syrie et de l'Iran, pour qui les déboires de M. Ben Ali sonnent avant tout comme un avertissement contre l'Occident. Le quotidien syrien *Al-Watan*, proche du pouvoir, a affirmé dimanche que la chute du président tunisien était *"une leçon"* pour les régimes arabes *"à la solde de l'Occident"*. *"C'est une leçon qu'aucun régime arabe ne devrait ignorer, en particulier ceux qui mènent la même politique que celle de la Tunisie et qui comptent sur 'les amis' pour les protéger"*, écrit *Al-Watan*.

Le président du Parlement iranien, Ali Larijani, a ironisé sur les déclarations occidentales de solidarité : *"Les pays qui étaient la principale raison de la tyrannie et de la pression sur les Tunisiens se montrent maintenant compatissants. Beaucoup de pays devraient maintenant retenir la leçon que les super-puissances ne les soutiendront pas en cas de difficultés."*

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2011/01/18/97001-20110118FILWWW00522-manifestation-dispersee-au-yemen.php>

Manifestation dispersée au Yémen

AFP

18/01/2011 | Mise à jour : 14:10 Réactions (2)

Les forces anti-émeutes yéménites ont dispersé aujourd'hui à Sanaa, en tirant en l'air, une manifestation d'étudiants qui réclamaient un changement démocratique.

Les étudiants au nombre d'un millier ont tenté de sortir du campus de l'Université de Sanaa pour se rendre sur la place Tahrir, dans le centre de la ville, mais les forces anti-émeutes ont dispersé la manifestation en tirant en l'air à balles réelles.

Les étudiants ont alors défilé sur le campus en scandant des slogans appuyant le soulèvement populaire en Tunisie et appelant les "peuples arabes à se révolter contre leurs dirigeants".

Un millier d'étudiants yéménites avaient déjà manifesté dimanche à Sanaa, appelant les peuples arabes à se soulever contre leurs dirigeants à l'instar des Tunisiens. Au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, le président yéménite Ali Abdallah Saleh a été réélu en septembre 2006 pour un nouveau mandat de sept ans. Un projet d'amendement de la Constitution, en discussion au Parlement malgré le refus de l'opposition, pourrait ouvrir la voie à une présidence à vie pour l'actuel chef de l'Etat.

http://www.lest-eclair.fr/index.php/cms/13/article/504260/YEMEN__Manifestations_contre_le_pouvoir

YEMEN / Manifestations contre le pouvoir



Les arrestations ont suscité hier une manifestation spontanée de plusieurs centaines de personnes à Sanaa

Article paru le : **24 janvier 2011**

Dix-neuf militants anti-gouvernementaux ont été arrêtés hier au Yémen, dont une militante organisatrice ces derniers jours de deux manifestations d'étudiants contre le président. S'inspirant des récents troubles sociaux en Tunisie qui ont débouché sur la fuite du président tunisien Zine ben Ali, Tawakul Karman a organisé deux manifestations à l'université de la capitale contre les régimes autocratiques arabes, appelant notamment au renversement du président Ali Abdullah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis une trentaine d'années. « Partez avant que vous y soyez forcés », pouvait-on lire sur certaines pancartes brandies lors des rassemblements.

Karman, journaliste membre du parti islamiste Islah, a été interpellée hier matin alors qu'elle rentrait chez elle et inculpée d'organisation illégale de manifestations. Un peu plus tard, la police de Sanaa a arrêté 18 autres activistes, dont les dirigeants des deux plus importantes organisations yéménites de défense des droits de l'homme, alors qu'ils sortaient d'une réunion au cours de laquelle ils avaient discuté de l'arrestation de Karman.

Ces arrestations ont suscité hier une manifestation spontanée de plusieurs centaines de personnes à l'université de Sanaa. Les manifestants, qui

brandissaient des photos de Karman, ont tenté, aux cris de « libérez les prisonniers ! », de se rendre jusqu'au bureau du procureur général qui, selon une source proche des services de

sécurité, avait ordonné son arrestation. Mais une cinquantaine de policiers en tenue anti-émeutes et équipés de matraques les a refoulés et a confisqué leurs caméras. Un manifestant a été brièvement interpellé.

Dans un discours diffusé hier par la télévision, Saleh a réitéré une offre de dialogue avec les groupes d'opposition.

<http://www.dna.fr/fr/monde/info/4526318-des-MILLIERS-DE-manifestants-reclament-le-depart-du-president>

28/01/2011 02:01

des MILLIERS DE manifestants réclament le départ du président

Des milliers de Yéménites, inspirés par la Tunisie et l'Égypte, ont manifesté hier à Sanaa à l'appel de l'opposition pour réclamer le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans.



Le président tunisien « est parti après 20 ans, 30 ans au Yémen, ça suffit », scandaient les manifestants en référence à la révolte en Tunisie qui a chassé le président Ben Ali après 23 ans au pouvoir.

La révolution tunisienne a provoqué une onde de choc dans plusieurs pays arabes, notamment en Égypte (lire en page 2).

« Le Yémen ne ressemble pas à la Tunisie »

Mais le ministre yéménite de l'Intérieur, Motahar Rachad al-Masri, a exclu toute similitude avec la révolte tunisienne qui a conduit à la chute de Ben Ali le 14 janvier.

« Le Yémen ne ressemble pas à la Tunisie », a-t-il déclaré, affirmant que le Yémen « est un pays démocratique » et les manifestations sont pacifiques.

Les manifestants yéménites s'étaient rassemblés pendant deux heures à l'appel d'une coalition de partis de l'opposition parlementaire.

« Nous nous rassemblons aujourd'hui pour demander le départ du président Saleh et de son gouvernement corrompu », a lancé à l'adresse de la foule un député du parti islamiste Al-Islah, Abdelmalik al-Qasuss.

L'opposition a organisé quatre manifestations distinctes dans la capitale pour «disperser les forces de police», selon l'un des organisateurs.

Les forces anti-émeutes se tenaient à distance des manifestants, mais elles ont renforcé les mesures de sécurité autour du ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Banque centrale.

Des contre-manifestations

Le Congrès populaire général (CPG, parti au pouvoir), a organisé quatre contre-manifestations qui ont réuni des milliers de personnes dans la capitale.

«Ne faites pas tomber la démocratie et la Constitution», pouvait-on lire sur l'une des banderoles brandies par des manifestants pro-gouvernementaux.

Les manifestations se sont multipliées ces derniers jours au Yémen, un pays rongé par la pauvreté et le chômage.

Le gouvernement a annoncé cette semaine une augmentation des salaires, une mesure destinée à «prévenir des problèmes similaires à ceux de la Tunisie», selon l'analyste yéménite Mustapha Nasr.

En outre, des milliers de partisans du Mouvement sudiste, un groupe séparatiste, ont manifesté dans plusieurs villes du Sud du Yémen, dont Daleh, Habilayn, Loder et Ezzan, scandant des slogans séparatistes.

Au pouvoir depuis 1978, M. Saleh a été élu pour la première fois en 1999 au suffrage universel direct pour un mandat de sept ans. Il a été réélu pour la deuxième fois en 2006 pour un mandat qui arrive à expiration en 2013.

Un projet d'amendement de la Constitution, en discussion au Parlement malgré le refus de l'opposition, pourrait ouvrir la voie à une présidence à vie pour l'actuel chef de l'Etat.

L'opposition accuse en outre le président Saleh, 68 ans, de vouloir transmettre la présidence à son fils aîné Ahmad, chef de la garde républicaine, unité d'élite de l'armée.

Mais le chef de l'Etat s'est défendu dans un discours télévisé dimanche soir de vouloir transmettre le pouvoir à son fils. «Nous sommes une république, et je suis contre la transmission du pouvoir», a-t-il dit.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/02/us-yemen-president-idUKTRE7111WC20110202>

Yemen president signals won't stay beyond 2013

Wed, Feb 2 2011

By Mohamed Sudam

SANAA | Wed Feb 2, 2011 12:17pm EST

(Reuters) - Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, eyeing protests that threaten to topple Egypt's long-time ruler, indicated Wednesday he would leave office when his current term ends in 2013, after three decades in power.

Saleh, a key U.S. ally against al Qaeda, also vowed not to pass on the reins of government to his son and appealed to the opposition to call off protests as a large rally loomed.

"I present these concessions in the interest of the country. The interests of the country come before our personal interests," Saleh told parliament and members of the military.

"No extension, no inheritance, no resetting the clock," he said, making reference to ruling party proposals on term limits that had been seen as designed to enable him to run again.

The move was Saleh's boldest gambit yet to stave off anti-government turmoil spreading in the Arab world as he tried to avert any showdown with the opposition that could risk drawing people into the streets in deeply impoverished Yemen.

Saleh's remarks came a day before a planned large opposition rally, dubbed a "Day of Rage," seen as a barometer of the size and strength of the Yemeni people's will to follow Egyptians and Tunisians in demanding a change of government.

"I call on the opposition to freeze all planned protests, rallies and sit-ins," Saleh said. "I call on the opposition after this initiative to come and form a national unity government in spite of the ruling party majority. We will not allow chaos. We will not allow destruction."

About 5,000 government supporters held a rally in a sport stadium in a suburb of the capital Sanaa Wednesday, some carrying signs that read "No to sabotage, yes to security and stability" and "Yes to unity, no to separatism."

Yemen, in risk of becoming a failed state, is trying to fight a resurgent al Qaeda wing, quell southern separatism, cement peace with Shi'ite rebels in the north, all in the face of crushing poverty. One third of Yemenis face chronic hunger.

"I think it is very significant," Dubai-based security analyst Theodore Karasik said of the move. "What they are doing in Yemen is trying to not have what happened in Egypt."

"I don't know if it will be enough to satisfy people. It may try to heal some of the cleavages between for example the southern secessionist movement and Sanaa, but is it going to be enough for everyone?"

The United States leans heavily on Saleh to help combat al Qaeda's regional Yemen-based arm that also targets neighboring top oil exporter Saudi Arabia. More instability could mean significant political and security risk for the Gulf region.

RALLY TO GO ON

Yemen's biggest opposition party welcomed the initiative but said Thursday's rally in the capital Sanaa would still go ahead. The rally's size and mood will offer the first glimpse of popular reaction to Saleh's concessions.

"We consider this initiative positive and we await the next concrete steps. As for our plan for a rally tomorrow, the plan stands and it will be organized and orderly," said Mohammed al-Saadi, undersecretary of the Islamist party Islah (reform).

"This is a peaceful struggle through which the people can make their voices heard and express their aspirations."

Saleh had already offered lesser concessions on presidential term limits and pledged to raise civil servants' and military salaries by around \$47 a month, no small move in a country where about 40 percent of the population lives on less than \$2 a day.

However, the pledges Wednesday went much further.

Saleh promised to delay parliamentary elections due in April to conduct reforms to bring the opposition on board by persuading them the vote will be fair. The delay was not expected to last more than several months.

He also pledged to re-open voter registration in an apparent response to opposition complaints that around 1.5 million Yemenis had been unable to sign up. Saleh also renewed an offer for a unity government with the opposition.

Saleh also promised direct election of provincial and local governors, which would give Yemenis more say over local affairs, and put on hold all proposed constitutional changes, including on presidential term limits, pending talks with the opposition.

The current constitution would require Saleh to step down when his term ends in 2013, and opposition had feared the constitution would be amended to extend the time he could spend in office, as was done in 2004.

Members of Saleh's ruling party had riled the opposition in recent months with proposals for constitutional amendments to either lift the 2013 limit or impose fresh term limits of two terms of five to seven years but allow Saleh to run again.

The opposition tried to rally against lifting term limits in December, but failed to bring large numbers to the street. Last week, however, a protest drew around 16,000 people to demand a change of government. Some called for Saleh to leave.

(Additional reporting by Mohammed Ghobari in Sanaa, Erika Solomon and Mahmoud Habboush in Dubai; Writing by Cynthia Johnston; Editing by Jon Boyle/Maria Golovnina)

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2045792,00.html#ixzz1LlhZ8SUj>

Why Yemenis Doubt Their President's Offer to Step Down

By Oliver Holmes Wednesday, Feb. 02, 2011



Pedestrians walk past Yemeni vendors on their way to the entrance of the old city in Sanaa, Yemen.

Hani Mohammed / AP

After more than three decades in power, Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh has announced he will not be seeking re-election when his term expires in 2013, nor will he hand the presidency over to his son. In the wake of the revolts in Tunisia and Egypt, and prompted by street protests calling for him to step down, Saleh's vow is the latest in a string of concessions by the increasingly unpopular leader of the Arab world's poorest nation. But will it be enough to placate a growing number of protesters? And will a public used to government subterfuge even believe that Saleh means what he says?

"I present these concessions in the interests of the country. The interests of the country come before our personal interests," Saleh told parliament and military generals on Wednesday. "I will not extend my mandate and I am against hereditary rule." (See why President Saleh is one of TIME's top 10 autocrats in trouble.)

This is a quick turnaround for the President, who just last month asked Yemen's parliament to approve a constitutional amendment that would allow him to stay in power past the end of his mandate. The move sparked only small protests in the capital, but when the Yemeni people heard about the successful Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia, crowds of thousands started to fill the streets.

On Jan. 27, over 10,000 demonstrators congregated at the capital's main university and smaller groups rallied in rural areas across the country. Like other Arab leaders fearing the Tunisia effect, Saleh quickly started to make motions towards reform. He proposed raising salaries for all civil, armed and security services; ordered income taxes to be slashed in half; and commanded his government to tightly control prices. On Wednesday he told legislators to freeze the constitutional amendment to extend his mandate. (See pictures of the protests taking place in Egypt.)

But in Yemen, many see these proposals as empty promises that have been made time and time again, only to be broken by their President, who has spent half his life in power. "[Saleh] is playing a new game. He is afraid of what happened in Egypt and Tunisia and wants to divide opinion in Yemen and gain international support," said Khaled al Anesi, a Yemeni human-rights lawyer who is part of a small group of organizers leading Yemen's recent protests. During the run up to the 2006 elections, Saleh publicly stated that he would not nominate himself as a candidate, only to do just that at the last minute. Anesi says the President expertly manipulated the media, getting cronies and loyalists to rally people to parliament and weep in front of state-controlled press as they demanded that he run. Yemen's government has a monopoly on TV and radio. "He wants to lower the levels of anger in society," says Anesi of what many see as just another presidential performance. "He has done this many times before."

Yemenis are highly suspicious of their government and expect to be deceived. When WikiLeaks released a diplomatic cable dated September 2009 that revealed the President had offered to lie to his country and say that U.S. strikes in southern Yemen on suspected al-Qaeda hideouts were carried out by the Yemeni army, Washington braced for a backlash in Yemen's capital of Sana'a. But instead the country reacted with a general shrug of despondency. (See a TIME video with WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.)

The same shrug rippled across Sana'a on Wednesday, in response to the President's promise not to hand power over to his son, Ahmed, who many say is being prepped to lead. Ten years ago, the President also said his son would not succeed him, only to later proclaim that as a citizen, Ahmed has the right to nominate himself for election. A Yemeni journalist tells TIME that Saleh once compared himself and his son to George Bush Snr. and George W. Bush: "The President [Saleh] suggested it is fine for his son to take power after him, like in America with George Bush senior and George W. Bush."

As well as the President's son, Hamid al Ahmar, a prominent figure in the main conservative and religious opposition movement, Islah, has been identified as a possible successor. Ahmar's father helped establish the modern Yemeni republic and his brother is now head of the Hashid confederation, the most powerful tribal alliance in the country. There are also rumors that Brigadier General Ali Mohsen, leader of the Yemen Armed Forces and the President's half-brother, has been preparing himself to lead for some time. Although Ahmar is popular among many Yemenis and has a large amount of political and tribal leverage, Mohsen would have the army on his side, which could tip the scales in his favor if Saleh were to topple rather than leave office willingly.

The President's offer to step down in 2013 comes at an opportune time — the eve of what Yemeni protestors and opposition groups are calling a "day of rage." The demonstration on Thursday, which will call for the President to leave office immediately, is likely to be the largest in Yemen since the copycat protests began, inspired by the Tunisians' ousting of their President, Zine al Abidine Ben Ali, in January. In his address on Wednesday, Saleh called on the "opposition to freeze all planned protests, rallies and sit-ins." But a spokesman for Islah told local media that the protests "will go ahead as planned."

Yemeni protests so far have been relatively ineffectual compared to those in its neighboring countries, often led only by Yemen's small middle-class with Facebook-organized youth rallies. Tomorrow's protest is expected to be much larger — led this time by opposition

groups, who command a huge amount of support among the public. Whether this will yield results is uncertain. (See more about the recent protests in Yemen.)

Daniel Masterson, a Yemen researcher at Harvard University, says that Yemen's government is still strong in the face of internal opposition. "The key factor in the success of the so-called popular revolution in Tunisia was the turning of the army," he tells TIME. Saleh has made sure that his closest allies from his family, his tribe and the army overlap, solidifying his grip on power. "There is no evidence that the relationship between the regime and the army is weakening [in Yemen]," Masterson adds. "It is worth noting, however, that no one saw Tunisia coming."

And although analysts in Yemen agree that it is unlikely Saleh will be toppled like his counterpart in Tunisia, there will certainly be fears in Washington about what Yemen, an ally in the war on terror, might look like after if it does lose its leader. Despite a blatant disregard for human rights, Saleh has managed to juggle Yemen's seemingly infinite problems to keep a modicum of stability. But racked by poverty, corruption, water and oil crises, unremitting unemployment, two civil wars, battling tribes and an increasingly active al-Qaeda offshoot, Yemen is far from stable. Whether power is transferred democratically or snatched by an opposition member or a tribal sheikh, it won't be an easy task for Saleh's successor to keep the country together.

Read more: <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2045792,00.html#ixzz1LlhZ8SUj>

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/thousands-protest-in-yemen-march-15072568.html#ixzz1LISYPHgu>

Tens of thousands protest in Yemen

Thursday, 3 February 2011



Thousands of opponents of Yemen's government have taken to the streets of the capital Sanaa (AP)

Tens of thousands of demonstrators, some chanting "down with the regime", have marched in several towns and cities in Yemen against the country's autocratic president Ali Abdullah Saleh, a key US ally in the fight against Islamic militants.

Police opened fire and tear gas to break up one of the marches, said witnesses.

Security officials confirmed a demonstrator was critically wounded by police fire. Two others were also hurt in the eastern town of Mukalla.

In the capital of Sanaa, scuffles and stone-throwing briefly erupted between thousands of anti-government demonstrators and supporters of Mr Saleh. However, police stepped in and there were no reports of injuries.

There was a heavy security presence around the interior ministry and the Central Bank buildings. Military helicopters hovered in some areas.

Anti-government protests have recently erupted in other Arab countries including Tunisia and Egypt.

In Yemen, protests erupted in several towns after Mr Saleh sought to defuse demands for his removal by pledging not to seek another term in 2013 and not to let his son inherit power.

Anti-government protesters said they did not trust Mr Saleh and demanded that he quits immediately. Supporters of the president carried banners warning that the opposition was trying to destabilise Yemen.

The United States has taken a sharp tone on Egypt, urging Mr Mubarak to move swiftly on democratic reform. But it cautiously praised reform pledges in Yemen. State Department spokesman PJ Crowley welcomed Mr Saleh's "positive statements."

In Yemen, where the population is overwhelmingly very young, the unemployment rate is 35% and poverty is endemic. About 40% of the population lives on less than two US dollars (£1.30) a day.

Read more: <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/thousands-protest-in-yemen-march-15072568.html#ixzz1LlSYPHgu>

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-02-03/yemeni-protests-unlikely-to-have-immediate-impact-nevens-says.html>

Yemeni Protests Unlikely to Have Immediate Impact, Nevens Says

By Caroline Alexander - Feb 3, 2011 1:23 PM GMT+0100

Rallies in Yemen are unlikely to have an immediate "tangible impact," and bringing change to the country's political system will be far more complicated than in Egypt and Tunisia, said Kate Nevens, manager of the Middle East and North Africa program at Chatham House, a research organization in London. She spoke in a telephone interview.

On the differences between the Yemeni protests and those in Egypt and Tunisia:

“Until now and including today, which has been called a Day of Anger, all the protests have been peaceful in Yemen. So, there is already a marked difference from Tunisia and Egypt.

“In Yemen, people have some similar grievances to the other two countries, but up to a point. Grassroots opposition to President Ali Abdullah Saleh’s regime has been fragmented and has been taking place mostly in governorates outside of the center. There is a much smaller educated, urban bracket and the literacy level is very low, which may mean that it is harder to have mass-mobilized movements.

“In Yemen, you also have a weak formal opposition. The protests are helping to increase their negotiating power. Yemen’s opposition is much more fractured.

On obstacles to change in Yemen:

“Looking at it like a state doesn’t work because it doesn’t function as a state as we know it.” A new leader “would be inheriting a complicated system of patronage networks, not a state.”

“When we think about countries, we think of them in terms of having a president and government. In Yemen, there is a president, a government, and a shadow party elite; and the ministries don’t actually have much power. This shadow party sits around the president, and you’d have to have a dramatic change in how that all works for things to really change.

“Yemeni people see President Saleh as being illegitimate, but the solution is not that obvious.

“It’s great that the protests are happening, but you are looking at a much longer game. But they are very important because even if they don’t have a tangible impact, they do begin to voice concerns around political inclusion in Yemen.”

To contact the reporter on this story: Caroline Alexander in London at calexander1@bloomberg.net

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/02/03/ap/middleeast/main7313326.shtml>

Feb. 03, 2011

Yemen Police Open Fire To Disperse Protest; 3 Hurt

Witnesses Say Yemeni Police Open Fire To Break Up Protest; 3 Wounded, 1 In Critical Condition



(AP)

(AP) SANAA, Yemen (AP) - Witnesses say police have opened fire to break up an anti-government protest in Yemen, and security officials say one protester has been critically wounded.

It was not immediately clear whether the police were using live ammunition or rubber bullets.

The security officials say two other demonstrators were also wounded in the eastern town of Mukalla, but no details were immediately available.

The protest in Mukalla was one of several anti-government demonstrations across Yemen Thursday. Tens of thousands joined in the protests, chanting "down, down with the regime."

The marches were among the largest yet against President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a key U.S. ally in the fight against al-Qaida. Earlier this week, the president promised not to extend his term beyond 2013 in an attempt to defuse calls for his ouster.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. Check back soon for further information. AP's earlier story is below.

SANAA, Yemen (AP) - Tens of thousands of opponents and supporters of Yemen's president staged dueling demonstrations on Thursday, underscoring deep divisions in a nation seen by the Obama administration as a key ally in its fight against Islamic militants.

Scuffles and stone-throwing erupted briefly between the two sides, but police intervened to keep the sides apart and there were no reported casualties. The relative calm contrasted with Egypt on Wednesday, where supporters of President Hosni Mubarak and anti-government protesters battled in Cairo's central square.

Egypt's turmoil and the revolt in Tunisia inspired Yemen's opposition, who turned out in

unprecedented numbers in the capital, Sanaa, and other cities Thursday to demand the ouster of longtime autocrat Ali Abdullah Saleh.

"Thirty years of promises and thirty years of lies," one protest banner read. Protesters chanted: "Down, down with the regime."

Estimates of the number of anti-government protesters ranged in the several tens of thousands. However, pro-government demonstrations, though smaller, reflected a calculated effort to undercut the opposition, possibly a lesson learned from the huge street rallies that have rocked the Egyptian government since Jan. 25.

Some in the pro-government group were state employees.

Saleh had sought to defuse demands for his ouster by pledging Wednesday not to seek another term in office - his term expires in 2013 - and saying he would not let his son inherit power. However, proposed amendments to the constitution could let Saleh stay in office for two additional terms of 10 years.

Anti-government protesters, several thousand of whom marched from Sanaa University, said they don't trust Saleh and demanded that he quit immediately.

The United States has taken a sharp tone on Egypt, urging Mubarak to move swiftly to meet the demand for democratic reform. But it cautiously praised reform pledges in Yemen. State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley welcomed Saleh's "positive statements."

Saleh is seen as a weak but increasingly important partner of the United States, allowing American drone strikes on al-Qaida targets and stepping up counterterrorism cooperation.

His weak government - which controls little of the impoverished country beyond the capital - is also facing a serious challenge from a secessionist movement in the south and a rebellion in the north.

The U.S.-born radical cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, thought to be hiding in Yemen, is believed to have inspired and even plotted or helped coordinate recent attacks on the U.S. Those include the failed Christmas Day 2009 bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner and the unsuccessful plot to send mail bombs on planes from Yemen to the U.S. in October.

Al-Awlaki also is believed to have inspired the deadly 2009 shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas, and had ties to some of the 9/11 hijackers.

In Sanaa, pro-government demonstrators marched to Tahrir Square, which shares the same name as the plaza in Cairo where the street fighting occurred Wednesday and into Thursday. The demonstrators carried banners supporting Saleh and warning that the opposition was trying to destabilize Yemen.

There was a heavy security presence around the Interior Ministry and the Central Bank. Military helicopters hovering in some areas.

In the city of Aden, thousands of anti-government protesters defied security forces and armored personnel carriers that tried to close the main streets to prevent them from gathering.

Protesters there shouted: "People want the downfall of the regime, the downfall of the president."

All big shops in Sanaa and Aden closed their doors and major companies hired guards to protect against possible looting.

Protesters also scuffled with security forces in the town of Jaar in the southern province of Abyan, where al-Qaida militants have been active.

<http://news.scotsman.com/news/President39s-vow-to-step-down.6710656.jp>

President's vow to step down fails to quell Yemen protests



Tens of thousands of Yemenis squared off in street protests for and against the government on Thursday during an opposition-led "Day of Rage"

Published Date: 04 February 2011

By Mohammed Ghobari in Sanaa, yemen

Tens of thousands of Yemenis squared off in protests for and against the government yesterday during an opposition-led "Day of Rage", a day after president Ali Abdullah Saleh offered to step down in 2013.

Security forces ringed the interior ministry and central bank, and military helicopters hovered over some parts of the city.

The anti-Saleh demonstration drew more than 20,000 people in Sana'a, the biggest crowd since a wave of protests hit the Arabian peninsula state two weeks ago, inspired by the toppling of Tunisia's ruler in a popular uprising.

"The people want regime change," anti-government protesters shouted as they gathered near Sana'a University, a main rallying point. "No to corruption, no to dictatorship!"

Mr Saleh, in power for 30 years but aware of the unrest spreading in the Arab world, indicated on Wednesday he would leave office when his term ends in two years' time. He pledged, among a host of other political concessions, that his son would not take over the reins of government.

Despite this, across Yemen yesterday, tens of thousands of anti-government protesters took to the streets including in Taiz, where Mr Saleh once served as military governor, and in southern towns where a separatist movement has grown increasingly active.

However, analysts claim only the support of non-aligned Yemenis and young people disgruntled by low pay and rising unemployment could force Mr Saleh out immediately.

http://articles.boston.com/2011-02-04/news/29337041_1_peaceful-protests-muslim-brotherhood-tunisia

Government foes, supporters stage peaceful protests

February 04, 2011|Laura Kasinof and Michael Slackman, New York Times

SANA, Yemen — Thousands of pro- and antigovernment demonstrators held peaceful protests in this impoverished capital yesterday, playing out themes that have rocked nations across the Arab world as autocratic leaders struggle to press back the demands of movements hungry for democracy, accountability, and the rule of law.

Yemen's tribal culture and its heavily armed population raised fears of violence as events here seemed to unfold at a consolidated pace, with all sides trying to draw lessons from popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt.

But the events in the city appeared to end peacefully one day after the president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, went on television to offer his own concession to increasingly large opposition protests. He promised that he would not run — and that his son would also not run — when his term expired in 2013.

He also saw to it that the capital was full of supporters when the opposition arrived.

“I came here today to take part in the rally against extremism and to promote democracy,” said Sadiq al-Qadoos, a progovernment demonstrator joined by thousands who were camped in Sana's Tahrir Square, or Liberation Square, for the past two days. “And to show I am against chaos.”

The day's events in Yemen were both driven by — and helped propel — a popular movement for change that drew its inspiration from the revolt in Tunisia that forced the president to flee into exile. Nationwide, crowds of protesters turned to the streets in seven provinces, and while most were peaceful, one person was killed and seven were wounded in clashes between demonstrators and police in the southern port city of Aden.

Opposition protesters wore pink bandannas in Sana, a sign of what has become known as the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia. The opposition crowd, riled up and sensing momentum, had hoped to demonstrate in Tahrir Square but instead had to move to the campus of Sana University. Still, the excited crowds chanted, “The people want to topple the regime.”

“We need real reforms,” said Watha Thaha, 23, a student at Sanaa University who was wearing a pink bandanna and a scarf with the Palestinian flag. “Otherwise, there will be a revolution.”

Meanwhile, in Jordan, King Abdullah II acknowledged yesterday that reforms in the country have slowed, and he urged the nation's Muslim opposition to work with the new government to give the people a greater say in politics.

The appeal comes a day after the powerful Muslim Brotherhood rejected an offer from the country's newly appointed prime minister to join his Cabinet, saying the new premier is the wrong person to introduce reforms.

The Royal Palace said in a statement that Abdullah, who is under growing public pressure to give Jordanians a greater voice in public life following the upheaval in Tunisia and Egypt, told leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups that he wanted "everyone to work together to achieve needed progress in the political reform process and increase the citizens' participation in decision-making."

"Political reform in Jordan has slowed and stumbled," Abdullah said. He said the lack of progress has "cost the country lost opportunities because some had put their personal interests ahead of Jordan's own interests."

Jamil Abu-Bakr, a senior Muslim Brotherhood leader, said the king did not try to persuade the Islamist group during yesterday's meeting to reconsider its refusal to join Prime Minister Marouf al-Bakhit's new Cabinet.

"This matter was not brought up at all," he said.

Material from the Associated Press was used in this report.

<http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/yemen-frustration-turns-to-demands-for-change>

YEMEN: Frustration turns to demands for change

06 Feb 2011 12:55

Source: Content partner // IRIN

SANA'A, 6 February 2011 (IRIN) - In the past two weeks, Yemen has been rocked by some of the biggest anti-government demonstrations seen in a decade, as young people facing a grim economic future vent their frustration on the streets.

Drawing inspiration from uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, thousands of people across Yemen have been taking to the streets to call for change in their country. On Thursday 3 February, around 20,000 protesters, mostly young men, occupied three major roads around the university in the capital, Sana'a. Large-scale protests also took place in other cities across Yemen, including Ibb and Taiz.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh has ruled Yemen for 32 years, first as president of North Yemen and then, after unification with South Yemen in 1990, as leader of the newly united republic. A series of Pro-Saleh demonstrations have also taken place in Sana'a.

Widespread complaints

Saleh's party, the General People's Congress, holds a large majority in parliament, representing a "big tent" coalition. He also maintains an extensive informal patronage network of tribal leaders, businessmen and clerics.

At the beginning of January, Saleh proposed a constitutional amendment that would allow him to stand for re-election in the next presidential election in 2013.

The opposition coalition[, which includes the Islamist party, Islah, as well as socialist and Nasserite parties, vehemently opposed the proposed amendment. Saleh, facing the prospect of major protests against his regime, said he would step down in 2013 and that his son, Ahmed, would not succeed him.

"No extension, no inheritance, no resetting the clock," he said earlier this week, referring to ruling party proposals to abolish term limits that would have allowed him to run again. Constitutional amendments proposed by his party would also be frozen, and parliamentary elections scheduled for April 2011 would be delayed to allow for electoral reform.

After three decades in power, Saleh faces widespread complaints of corruption and the concentration of power within his tribal sub-group, the Sanhan clan.

Large areas of the country are already in open revolt against his regime, with a breakaway movement in the south, attacks on the security services by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and a de-facto semi-autonomous area in the north under the control of rebels.

Economic grievances

"Together we fight against poverty, corruption and injustice," the protesters at Sana'a University chanted on Saturday 5 February, between intermittent bursts of music and speeches delivered by opposition politicians.

One banner hanging on the university gates read simply, "look at the gap between rich and poor".

The mainstream media have focused largely on the political objectives of the protesters, some of whom are calling on President Saleh to step down, but many are calling for changes in their living standards as well as political reform.

For the average young Yemeni, the issues of daily life are far more important than politics. Graduates hope to find a job. Young men struggle to accumulate enough money to be able to get married. New couples battle with price hikes. Nearly half of the population lives on less than US\$2 a day and social development indicators - such as child malnutrition, maternal mortality and educational attainment - remain extremely poor, according to the UN World Food Programme.

In the UN Human Development Index (HDI), Yemen is ranked at 138 out of 179 states listed.

Disenfranchised youth

"I came today because I had nothing else to do. I'd rather be here protesting than sitting on the roadside with my friends," said Jamal Al-Fadli, 19, who scratches a living by ferrying people around Sana'a on his motorbike.

Nearly half the population of 23 million people are under the age of 15, and seventy percent are under 25, but over 50 percent of young people are unemployed and this number is

expected to rise. The youth bulge [<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=90572>] represents a demographic and economic time bomb.

Yemen's population is growing at a rate of 3.2 percent per annum, and is set to double by 2030.

“Our economy simply isn't big or strong enough to provide enough jobs for such a rapidly expanding work force,” said Abdullah Al-Faqih, professor of political science at Sana'a University.

“The government has expanded universities and educated a swelling cohort of youth without laying the groundwork to employ them. The number of graduates has overwhelmed the government's capacity to hire.”

Besides economic marginalization, young Yemenis also face social and political isolation. A 2008 USAID study found that 40 percent of those interviewed expressed frustration, describing the Yemeni job market as one in which only those with connections and power could obtain decent employment.

Yemen's young men and women often feel that social expectations are no longer achievable as a result of deteriorating economic and political conditions.

Yemen's students

Students have played a major part in the demonstrations, and Sana'a University has become a hub for anti-government protests.

Saleh announced earlier this week that he would waive the remaining fees of this year for students enrolled in public universities. He also promised to establish a fund to create job opportunities for recent university graduates.

“Waiving tuition fees will not stop students from protesting - anyway, most of the students have already paid their fees,” said Rudhwan Masude, head of the student union at Sana'a University. “There just aren't enough jobs to go round - the best students don't think twice before leaving the country to seek work elsewhere.”

Students leaving secondary school complain they are not adequately prepared for the world of work.

“My school education was completely disconnected from the realities of employment. I was taught to memorise theoretical concepts, when I should have been learning English,” said Taha Al-Matari, a computer science student at Sana'a University.

“Our education system delivers quantity, but not quality.”

tf/he

http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=235635

February 12, 2011

Yemen: Protests revive in 'Friday of Rage'

ADEN (Reuters) - Thousands of Yemen protesters took to the streets across southern Yemen in a "Friday of Rage", demanding secession from the north, but heavily deployed security forces quickly stamped out protests, residents said.

The protests come in the lull after a wave of anti-government rallies spread across Yemen over the past two weeks, inspired by the revolts that ousted Tunisia's former president and the uprising in Egypt that threatens President Hosni Mubarak's 30-year rule.

"Revolution, revolution for the South," protesters chanted in the flashpoint cities of Aden, Dalea and Zinjibar.

Yemen experts say the real danger to the three-decade rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a key U.S. ally, is if protesters from his political opposition join with the separatists in the south and the Shias has made a shaky truce with in the north.

North and South Yemen united in a bumpy merger in 1990 that later devolved into civil war four years later. Saleh's forces crushed the secessionist south and reunited the country.

Saleh, eyeing the unrest spreading in the Arab world, indicated last week he would leave office when his term ends in 2013. The president had previously cut taxes and promised salary raises to civil servants and the military.

Such concessions could tempt his political opposition into joining him in a unity government - they have yet to take an official stand. But southern separatists may not be satisfied.

Many in the south, which holds most of Yemen's oil installations, complain that northerners usurp their resources while denying them their identity and political rights.

Army tanks rolled into Zinjibar, the capital of Abyan, where suspected al Qaeda militants have been active and over a thousand protesters gathered on Friday. Hundreds of men sat outside a former South Yemen leader's home, wearing white shrouds to symbolize their readiness to fight to the death.

"Ali, Ali, catch up with Ben Ali," they shouted, implying that Saleh should follow former Tunisian President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali to exile in Saudi Arabia.

In Aden, police fired shots in the air and arrested four people to break up protests, but around 600 separatist and anti-government protesters regrouped in the Saada neighborhood, which for months has been sealed off by armed men.

Saada, a stronghold for militants in the south, was shelled by security forces last summer after the military clashed with men who the government said were al Qaeda members.

Yemen is the Arab world's poorest state. Forty percent of Yemenis live on less than \$2 a day.

Yemenis celebrate, situation tense as Mubarak falls



SANAA | Sat Feb 12, 2011 7:03am IST

(Reuters) - Yemenis across the country celebrated the fall of Egypt's president in the streets, as their own president planned an unexpected meeting with military and political leaders late on Friday.

As Yemenis sang Egyptian revolutionary songs in the streets and drivers honked car horns, analysts in Sanaa said the tension in Yemen was palpable on the night that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's three decades of rule ended.

"The decisions (to be discussed at the meeting) are an expression of anxiety and an attempt to absorb anger among the poor," said Fuad Musaad, a Yemeni political analyst.

Last week, Saleh, who has ruled Yemen for 32 years, made his boldest move yet to stave off turmoil when he vowed to step down at the end of his term in 2013. The opposition has yet to respond to his call to join him in a unity government.

Yemen's state news agency Saba news said the Friday meeting would discuss measures to modernise its armed forces and improve the economy in Yemen, the Arab world's poorest country and also the base of a resurgent regional al Qaeda wing.

Friday evening's meeting between Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a key U.S. ally against al Qaeda, and his top defence, political and security officials would include a plan to raise salaries for civil servants and the military -- a second planned wage increase since last month, when Saleh planned a raise of about \$47.

The move suggests that Saleh, a shrewd political survivor eyeing spreading unrest in the Arab world, is trying to ensure his forces would remain loyal in case of potential unrest in the impoverished Arabian Peninsula state.

WIDESPREAD POVERTY

About 40 percent of Yemen's 23 million people live on less than \$2 a day, while a third face chronic hunger. But opposition leaders said Saleh' latest efforts could not quiet discontent.

"This is a quick move to try and get rid of popular anger, but Yemenis are not mad about a lack of spending on wages," said Mohamed al-Sabri, a leader of Yemen's opposition coalition. "This decision misreads the situation and is a simplification of what's happening in Yemen."

After Mubarak's fall on Friday night, hundreds of Yemenis in Sanaa gathered outside the Egyptian embassy holding signs congratulating Egyptians. Others shouted: "Rulers, it's time to wake up! Hosni Mubarak has fallen."

Revellers shot celebratory gunshots in the air in the southern flashpoint city of Habilayn, where there have been several clashes in recent months with suspected militants who advocate succession from the north.

The separatist Southern Movement said police broke up hundreds of Yemenis celebrating in the streets of Aden, where police have been heavily deployed since morning to clamp down planned separatist protests earlier on Friday.

Yemen experts say the real danger to the three-decade rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a key U.S. ally against al Qaeda, is if protesters from his political opposition join with rebel groups such as the separatists in the south and the Shi'ite insurgents he has made a shaky truce with in the north.

Around three thousand protesters across southern Yemen protested on Friday afternoon to demand secession, though most of the protests were quickly broken up by security forces.

(Additional reporting by Mohammed Mukhashaf; Writing by Erika Solomon; Editing by Matthew Jones)

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/after-egyptians-now-yemenis-call-for-revolution/143120-2.html>

After Egyptians, now Yemenis call for revolution

Press Trust Of India

Posted on **Feb 12, 2011 at 04:17pm IST**

Sanaa: As tens of thousands of jubilant people in Cairo celebrated the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak, Yemenis inspired by the Egyptian uprising have begun mustering forces for their own revolution.

In the southern port city of Aden, protesters marched through the Mansoura district, waving the old flag of South Arabia and chanting "Revolution, revolution for the south", the Christian Science Monitor reported.

Just hours before that march, security forces had fired live ammunition during a protest on the same street. Hundreds more staged demonstrations throughout Aden, as well as in other cities across Yemen's south.



"After Hosni Mubarak, Yemen is going to be next. I know it," said Zahra Saleh, a prominent secession activist watching the scenes in Cairo on a TV set in a small Aden office. "Now our revolution has to be stronger," declared Ali Jarallah, a leader in the southern separatist movement.

The Yemeni southern secessionist movement is not calling for political reforms, an end to corruption, or even for President Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down, as the political opposition is doing in the capital city Sanaa.

They are pushing for the end of what they view is northern Yemeni occupation and the restoration of an independent southern Yemeni state.

Though both derive momentum from the recent revolts in Tunisia and Egypt, the divergent aims of the Yemeni protesters represent another example of how anti-regime factions across the Arab world are shaping revolutionary energy to serve their own agendas, the Monitor said.

"What happened in Egypt sent a blink of hope to the (southern) movement," says Tammam Bashraheel, managing editor of Aden's banned Al Ayyam newspaper.

Exiled southern movement leader and former vice president Ali Salim Al Beidh said that events in the Arab world, and especially what is happening in Tunisia and Egypt, reflect a new stage in history that can be likened to the end of the cold war.

Beidh compared the southern Yemeni demonstrations to Egypt, where youths have played a central role. "The revolution of the south is a revolution of the youth and younger generation," he said.

In Sanaa, anti-government protests have focused on pressuring the ruling party to accept political reforms. However, in Yemen's south, the increased number of demonstrations since Tunisia's uprising have been more violent.

"Demonstrations are allowed to happen in Sanaa without weapons, why do they use weapons on us in the south?" asks secession activist Wagdy Al Shaaby.

He criticized the US for supporting its Arab allies, even when they resort to authoritarian measures in the name of stability. "America is a democracy, but when it comes to the Arab world, America supports oppressors," he says. "America protects these countries until they blow up."

The fractured yet popular southern separatists argue that since unification of north and south Yemen in 1990, and especially after a bloody civil war between the two sides of the country in 1994, there has been a systematic attempt to erase the identity of south Yemen.

They claim that southerners don't have proper representation in the central government, and that the government takes resources found in southern governorates, namely oil, without investing back in the south's infrastructure.

<http://www.edmontonsun.com/news/world/2011/02/13/17258336.html>

Clashes erupt in Yemen

By Mohammed Ghobari and Mohamed Sudam, Reuters

Last Updated: February 13, 2011 10:58am

SANAA - Anti-government protesters clashed with police blocking them from marching to Yemen's presidential palace in Sanaa on Sunday, witnesses said.

The clashes occurred while President Ali Abdullah Saleh and the main opposition group were preparing for talks that the government hoped would help avert an Egyptian-style revolt in the Arabian Peninsula state, a vital U.S. ally against al Qaeda.

Saleh decided to postpone a visit to the United States planned for later this month "due to the current circumstances in the region", the state news agency Saba said without elaborating.

About 1,000 people attended the demonstration shouting "the Yemeni people want the fall of the regime" and "a Yemeni revolution after the Egyptian revolution", before dozens broke off to march to the palace.

In the harshest response yet to a wave of protests in the capital, police prevented the smaller group from reaching the palace, hitting them with batons, while protesters threw rocks at the police, witnesses said. Four people were injured.

Anti-government protests have gained momentum in Yemen in recent weeks, inspired by protests in Tunisia and Egypt, and prompted Saleh to offer significant concessions to calm tensions, including a pledge to step down in 2013.

Many of the Sanaa protests, including a “Day of Rage” on Feb. 3 attended by tens of thousands of opposition and pro-government demonstrators, ended peacefully.

Although pro- and anti-government protesters have clashed in recent days, police have generally stayed out of the fray in Sanaa. They have clamped down more firmly outside the capital.

Opposition officials said 10 protesters were briefly detained in Sanaa on Sunday and 120 more were taken into custody overnight in the the city of Taiz after protests on Saturday.

Instability in Yemen would present serious political and security risks for Gulf states. The United States relies heavily on Saleh to help combat al Qaeda’s Yemen-based arm, which also carries out attacks in neighbouring Saudi Arabia.

In the south, where the government faces al Qaeda and secessionist militants, a court sentenced six men to death for kidnappings and armed attacks on police, Saba said.

RIGHTS CRITICISM

U.S.-based Human Rights Watch criticized Yemen for allowing government supporters to assault, intimidate and sometimes clash with protesters calling on Saleh to quit.

“The Yemeni authorities have a duty to permit and protect peaceful demonstrations,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch. “Instead, the security forces and armed thugs appear to be working together.”

There was no immediate response from Yemeni officials.

Saleh, in power for more than three decades and concerned about unrest in some parts of the Arab world, said more than a week ago he would step down when his term ends in 2013 and pledged his son would not take over the reins of government.

U.S. President Barack Obama has urged Saleh to follow up his pledges of reform with concrete action.

The offer, which included an invitation to dialogue, was Saleh’s boldest gambit yet to avoid a showdown with protesters in the poverty-stricken country, where some 40 percent live on less than \$2 a day, while a third suffer from chronic hunger.

“The opposition does not reject what came in the invitation by the president and is ready to sign an agreement in no more than a week,” said former Foreign Minister Mohammed Basindwa, now an opposition politician.

Another opposition official said the talks should start within days. Yemen’s opposition, which wants the talks to take place under Western or Gulf auspices, has said it is seeking assurances reforms would be implemented.

Saleh, a shrewd political survivor, has backed out of previous promises to step aside. Analysts say his concessions could be a genuine way to exit gracefully but he may hope to wait out regional unrest and reassert his dominance another day.

(Additional reporting by Mohammed Mokhashaf in Aden; Writing by Cynthia Johnston and Firouz Sedarat; editing by Andrew Dobbie)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12443463>

13 February 2011 Last updated at 22:14 GMT

Yemen rocked by third day of protests



Witnesses said several people were hurt in the latest clashes to rock Sanaa

About 2,000 people have clashed with police in Yemen's capital Sanaa on the third day of anti-government protests.

Violence broke out as demonstrators, inspired by the Egyptian uprising, marched through the city, demanding political reform and the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Mr Saleh, in power since 1978, has already pledged to step down in 2013, but has previously promised to quit.

State media said he had postponed a trip to the US because of the unrest.

An official in Mr Saleh's office said the two countries would "communicate via diplomatic channels" to arrange a new date, according to the Saba news agency.

Demonstrators attempted to march to the presidential palace in Sanaa on Sunday, chanting: "A Yemeni revolution after the Egyptian revolution."

Witnesses said several people were hurt as police armed with batons clashed with stone-throwing protesters. At least 10 people were arrested, said reports.

Hundreds of people also took to the streets in the southern city of Aden, said witnesses.

“It's my right to express what I suffer from this regime”

Muhamad Protester
'Treat us like humans'

A rights group has accused the government of colluding with thugs - armed with sticks, clubs, axes and daggers - to suppress the protests.

"The Yemeni authorities have a duty to permit and protect peaceful demonstrations," said Sarah Leah Whitson, of Human Rights Watch (HRW).

"Instead, the security forces and armed thugs appear to be working together."

One of the protesters, Muhamad, told HRW he had been stabbed, beaten and shocked with a Taser gun, and that other people had suffered similar treatment.

"I want the regime to treat us like humans," he said. "So it's my right to express my opinion and express what I suffer from this current regime."

On Saturday, supporters of the president routed demonstrators in the capital.



A day earlier, protesters were dispersed by security forces from Sanaa as they celebrated the toppling of President Hosni Mubarak.

The unrest comes as Mr Saleh is preparing to hold talks with opposition groups on possible political reforms, in an attempt to prevent his overthrow in the manner of Egypt and Tunisia.

He has promised he will stand down in 2013 and that his son will not replace him in office.

Yemen, the poorest country in the Arab world, is a key ally for the US in its efforts to combat al-Qaeda in the region.

The country also faces a separatist movement in the south and an uprising of Shia rebels in the north.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121211858966496.html#>

Thousands rally across Yemen

Several injured as protesters clash with police on fourth straight day of demonstrations in capital and country's south.

Last Modified: 14 Feb 2011 18:07 GMT

A Yemeni protester waves a dagger as he shouts slogans in support of President Saleh in Sanaa [AFP]

Thousands of protesters have taken to the streets across Yemen for the fourth straight day, demanding political reforms and the downfall of Ali Abdullah Saleh, the country's long-serving president.

The 3,000-strong throng of demonstrators in the capital, Sanaa, comprising students, human rights activists and lawyers clad in black robes, clashed with police and pro-government supporters on Monday.

Rival groups, armed with clubs and rocks, were seen facing off after supporters of Saleh reportedly confronted the protesters.

At least three people were injured, including one stabbed with a traditional Yemeni dagger, in fighting outside Sanaa's university where protesters chanted: "A revolution of free opinion ... A revolution of freedom ... We should be allowed to decide."

Further chants of "After Mubarak, Ali" and "No corruption after today" reverberated around the city.

"It's very tense on the streets here," Al Jazeera's Hashem Ahelbarra, reporting from Sanaa, said.

"The anti-government protests are gathering momentum, despite the huge concessions given by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who said that he will step down in 2013, and that his son, General Ahmed Abdullah Saleh - who was being groomed to take over - won't inherit power.

"Thousands of young Yemenis are saying: 'We won't trust Ali Abdullah Saleh, because we trusted him in the past, particularly in 2006, when he said he was about to resign - only for him to continue and to ask for the constitution to be amended to allow him to be appointed for life'."

Public squares blocked

Protesters have been using social media networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, in an attempt to mobilise people throughout Yemen, an impoverished country at the south of the Arabian peninsula.

But state forces have blocked access to public squares, several coincidentally named "Tahrir Square" - both in Sanaa, and around the country.

The move was an apparent attempt to prevent the world's media from linking the protests with those that took place in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, our correspondent says.

Several checkpoints have appeared on streets leading to Sanaa's presidential palace, and many have been blocked with razor wire.

"What we are seeing is thousands of pro-government protesters - and people are saying these are government officials and policemen disguised as civilians - armed with batons, attacking

the pro-democracy protesters and dispersing the crowd using violence," our correspondent said.

Unrest spreads

While it is possible to find Yemenis who say Saleh, 64, is "the best we've had, and after him would be chaos", thousands have hit the streets in protests across the country, including in Aden and Taaz, a southern city, Al Jazeera's Ahelbarra said.

At least 12 people were injured as police shot tear gas to break up protests in the southern city of Taaz, where human rights groups say protesters were also given electric shocks by security officials.

And in Aden, dock workers stormed the offices of the Yemen Gulf of Aden Port Corporation, seizing its chairman, Mohamed Bin Aefan, and other senior corporate figures, they said.

"We have had it with corrupt officials and it's time to tell them to leave," Ali Bin Yehya, a port worker, said.

"What happened in Egypt and Tunisia motivated the workers to demand their rights."

Opposition groups appear to have backtracked on an agreement made on Sunday to meet with Saleh to find a political settlement to the crisis, our correspondent said.

The groups had also aimed to establish a coalition "government of national unity" - after their supporters pointed to the success of Egyptians in overthrowing Hosni Mubarak from power, Ahelbarra said.

The US connection

Saleh has reportedly cancelled a planned trip to the US at this moment of unrest, and will be visiting tribal areas in a bid to convince community leaders not to join the ongoing protests.

Military ties between the US and Saleh's administration have grown stronger in recent months, as the country struggles with the increasing militancy of a secessionist movement in the south, as well as unrest provoked by rising food prices, unemployment reaching 40 per cent - and demands for human rights to be recognised.

The US is shortly to embark on a \$75 million project to train Yemen's counterterrorism unit, US officials say.

Saleh became leader of North Yemen in 1978 and has ruled the Republic of Yemen since the north and south merged in 1990.

Source:

Al Jazeera and agencies

URL

Armed Yemen gov't supporters chase down protesters

By Mohammed Ghobari and Khaled Abdullah

SANAA | Mon Feb 14, 2011 6:07pm IST

(Reuters) - Government backers armed with broken bottles, daggers and rocks chased down thousands of pro-reform demonstrators in Yemen's capital on Monday, turning unrest inspired by Egypt's uprising increasingly violent.

Police who had been trying to keep the sides apart locked several thousand fleeing protesters inside the Sanaa University campus near where they were rallying to stem the bloodshed. Five people were wounded in the melee, an opposition source said.

"Hey Ali, get out, get out!" anti-government protesters shouted, referring to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a U.S. ally against al Qaeda's resurgent Yemen-based wing who has been in power for over 30 years. "There is no solution except to leave."

Protests in impoverished Yemen have gained momentum in recent weeks, sometimes drawing tens of thousands of people, but have become more and more violent since Friday with clashes between rival protesters and police or pro-government groups.

The threat of turmoil in Yemen, already teetering on the brink of failed statehood, has pushed Saleh to offer significant concessions, including a pledge to step down in 2013 and an invitation to the opposition for a reconciliation dialogue.

Analysts have said Yemen is not yet at the point of an Egypt-style revolt, and any upheaval would likely unfold more slowly, and perhaps with more bloodshed, in a heavily armed country where tribal allegiances run strong.

"With our blood, we sacrifice for you Ali!" Saleh supporters chanted in Sanaa before violence erupted. Some of the several hundred Saleh backers who gathered held pictures of the man who has ruled Yemen for 32 years, and they waved Yemeni flags.

CLASHES IN TAIZ

Another 12 people were reported hurt south of Sanaa, where police fired shots into the air as hundreds of anti-government demonstrators clashed with Saleh supporters, witnesses said.

But police were unable to control the crowds in the agro-industrial town of Taiz, where thousands of protesters had held a night-long rally.

The disturbances occurred while Saleh and the main opposition group were preparing for talks that the government hoped would help avert an Egypt-style revolt. They were due to begin within days, an opposition official has said.

Saleh, under pressure from the United States to make good on promised reforms, postponed on Sunday a U.S. visit scheduled for later in the month due to regional conditions, according to a state news agency.

Human Rights Watch criticised Yemeni police for what they described as unnecessary brutality against demonstrators, including the use of electroshock tasers.

"Without provocation, government security forces brutally beat and tasered peaceful demonstrators on the streets of Sanaa," said Sarah Leah Whitson, the Middle East and North Africa director of the U.S.-based rights group.

Police have generally stayed out of the fray in Sanaa, while crackdowns have been stronger outside the capital.

But on Sunday, police broke up an anti-government march to the presidential palace, sparking clashes in which police beat protesters with batons and protesters hurled rocks at police, witnesses said. Several journalists were briefly detained.

Even as it faces popular unrest and is fighting al Qaeda militants, Yemen is also struggling to quell a separatist rebellion in the south and cement a ceasefire with Shi'ite Muslim insurgents in the north.

(Writing by Erika Solomon; editing by Cynthia Johnston and Mark Heinrich)

http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jkb6KGRrVmZ07V3bS2ty_h87haGw?docId=CNG.9c4e83d9deee75dc95a2a63e1c3bfc33.3e1

Yémen: affrontements entre manifestants et partisans du pouvoir à Sanaa

(AFP) – 15 févr. 2011

SANAA — Au moins trois manifestants ont été blessés mardi lors d'affrontements entre des manifestants qui ont tenté sans succès de se diriger vers le palais présidentiel à Sanaa et des partisans du pouvoir, selon un correspondant de l'AFP.

Des partisans du Congrès populaire général (CPG, parti au pouvoir), armés de gourdins et de haches, se sont opposés aux manifestants à quelque 1,5 km du palais, et ont jeté des pierres en leur direction.

Les étudiants et activistes, qui descendaient dans la rue pour la quatrième journée consécutive, ont riposté en leur lançant également des pierres, selon le correspondant de l'AFP.

Selon des témoins, des policiers en civil équipés de pistolets à impulsion électrique Taser ont pris part, aux côtés des contre-manifestants, aux affrontements qui ont cessé en milieu de journée.

Des partisans du CPG ont tenté d'agresser un député indépendant, Ahmad Seif Hached, selon des témoins.

Quelque 3.000 manifestants, pour la plupart des étudiants, étaient sortis mardi matin de l'Université de Sanaa pour se rendre au palais du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, sur la place Sabiine.

"Le peuple veut la chute du régime", répétaient-ils, reprenant le principal slogan du soulèvement en Egypte.

Les étudiants manifestaient contre le régime de M. Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans. L'opposition parlementaire, qui a décidé de reprendre le dialogue avec le régime, ne s'est pas associée à ces manifestations.

"Nous allons poursuivre les manifestations malgré les agissements du parti au pouvoir. Les manifestations en Egypte se sont poursuivies pendant 18 jours, nous pouvons pour notre part continuer pendant un, deux, voire trois mois", a déclaré l'AFP un porte-parole des "Jeunes du 3 février", un groupe d'activistes qui lancent sur le réseau social Facebook les appels à manifester.

A Taz, au sud de Sanaa, des affrontements ont également opposé des centaines de manifestants à des partisans du CPG, selon des témoins qui n'ont pas fait état de victimes.

Les manifestants observent depuis quatre jours un sit-in dans le centre de la ville, selon ces témoins.

Lundi, des heurts avaient déjà opposé à Sanaa des milliers de manifestants et des partisans du CPG.

L'organisation de défense des droits de l'Homme Amnesty international a appelé le Yémen à "freiner immédiatement ses forces de sécurité et arrêter l'usage excessif de la violence".

Human Rights Watch a demandé aux autorités de ne pas employer les pistolets Taser pour disperser les manifestants.

Dans un communiqué, l'organisation "Reporters sans frontières" a pour sa part "fermement dénoncé les attaques perpétrées par des agents de sécurité yéménites, des policiers et des hommes en civil, contre les journalistes couvrant les manifestations populaires au Yémen".

Pour sa part, le président Saleh a annoncé dans un communiqué qu'il avait "décidé d'ouvrir son bureau pour accueillir toutes les personnalités politiques, sociales, et représentants des jeunes pour écouter leur opinion".

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/02/16/idINIndia-54938220110216?pageNumber=2>

Anti-government protests spread across Yemen

By Mohammed Ghobari and Khaled Abdullah

SANAA | Wed Feb 16, 2011 6:45pm IST

(Reuters) - Protests against the rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh spread across Yemen on Wednesday with hundreds of people taking to the streets of Sanaa, Aden and Taiz.

In the capital Sanaa, at least 800 protesters marched through the streets near Sanaa University despite police efforts to break up the demonstration.

"We're no weaker than Tunisians and Egyptians, and our situation is worse than theirs," said Rafea Abdullah, a Sanaa University student, referring to the "people power" revolts that ousted the presidents of Egypt and Tunisia over the last month.

Saleh, a U.S. ally against al Qaeda, has ruled the poor and fractious Arabian Peninsula State for more than 30 years.

The threat of turmoil in Yemen, struggling to quash a resurgent wing of al Qaeda and keep rebellions at bay in its north and south, pushed Saleh to say he would step down in 2013 and call for a national dialogue, that the opposition accepted.

But anti-government protests have continued for the past six days, despite often violent clashes with government loyalists.

Police in Sanaa had earlier on Wednesday been unable to block hundreds of government loyalists wielding batons and daggers from beating and chasing off protesters and journalists at the university, which has become a launchpad for protests. A Reuters journalist saw four people wounded in the melee.

After locking student protesters inside the campus, police fired shots in the air to break up the loyalist groups, who were picked up by luxury cars which sped away, a Reuters reporter said. Students later left the campus to join hundreds of anti-government protesters in the streets.

At least 500 people rallied in the agro-industrial city Taiz, south of Sanaa, and 500 or more protesters had gathered in the southern port town of Aden.

"No more marginalisation of the people of Aden! No more corruption and oppression," chanted protesters there. Most demonstrators were from among the unemployed youth in Yemen, where the jobless rate is at least 35 percent.

Of the 23 million people in Yemen, which is teetering on the brink of collapse into a failed state, 40 percent live on less than \$2 a day and a third suffer chronic hunger. Jobs are scarce, corruption is rife, and the population is expanding rapidly as oil and water resources are drying up.

TIPPING POINT

Protests over the past week have been smaller than in preceding weeks, when tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets, but demonstrators have become more strident in calling for Saleh's resignation.

Analysts say protests could reach a tipping point because they are more spontaneous and youth-led, instead of run by the opposition, which works within the existing political framework and has called for reform, not for Saleh's resignation.

Yemen's opposition has agreed to negotiate with Saleh, but many young student protesters are becoming frustrated.

"We'll keep protesting until the regime leaves," said Murad Mohammed. "We have no future under current conditions."

Analysts say any uprising in Yemen -- which neighbours Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter -- could unfold more slowly than in Egypt and Tunisia and with more bloodshed in a country where one in two people own guns.

"It's an escalation, but this country is armed to the teeth. When people get fed up enough that they escalate it to sticks, the next step is probably Molotov cocktails, then weapons," said Theodore Karasik, a security analyst at the Dubai-based INEGMA group. "We're getting close to a tipping point."

Elsewhere in Sanaa, dozens of journalists rallied outside the journalist union, protesting against what they said were targeted attacks against them for covering the demonstrations.

In southern Aden, thousands of workers at different companies protested against what they said were poor working conditions and low pay. Scattered protests led by the unemployed were also breaking out in Aden, a Reuters correspondent said.

"Protest, protest until the regime falls!" they shouted.

Saleh on Sunday cancelled a trip to Washington planned for later this month, which the state news agency said was due to regional conditions.

On Tuesday, Saba news reported Saleh would open his office to Yemenis who wanted to air their grievances.

But in another sign dissent may grow, the leader of a northern Shi'ite rebel group Abdel Malek al-Houthi issued a statement encouraging protesters.

"Yemenis should take advantage of this opportunity and create serious mobilisation ... which will be responsible for changing the reality and removing this criminal government."

(Additional reporting by Mohammed Mukhashaf; Writing by Erika Solomon; Editing by Janet Lawrence)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/blog/2011/feb/16/middle-east-protests-live-updates?commentpage=all#block-26>

Middle East protests - Wednesday 16 February

- Bahrain: two killed in police assault on Pearl roundabout
- Yemen: protests broken up by pro-government supporters
- Iran: students and academics arrested at protest
- Egypt: protesters plan return to Tahrir Square
- Libya: clashes in the eastern city of Benghazi

(excerpt)

12.26pm - Yemen:

Pro-Saleh supporters are being bused in to the Yemeni capital Sana'a to beat anti-government protests, Tom Finn reports.

People have seen them arriving in buses, and they have also seen people handing out signs and sticks and weapons to plain clothes men from the back of SUVs and trucks at the protests.

The danger in Yemen is that it is a heavily armed country. There are three times as many guns as people here. What people are very worried about is that if things become violent it may escalate.

There were three or four students injured today. The pro-Saleh guys have been pre-empting the demonstrations. They have been arriving in the morning at the places that the anti-government protests are due to take place. It sounds like the numbers are similar [on both sides].

The protests are much much smaller than anything that happened in Egypt. The difference now is that they are becoming more violent. And also, importantly, they are no longer under the control of the opposition.

President Saleh is worried and he's making efforts to calm these protests. He has cancelled a trip to Washington. But he does have more support than Mubarak had in Egypt.

As things stand it is still a small group that is protesting [in Sana'a]. The real concern is taking place in Taiz, a city in the south. There you have seen demonstrators staying out over night, and people being arrested, and larger protests. People are saying that if something is going to happen it may well happen in the south, as opposed to in the capital.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703961104576148180844151592.html?mod=googlewsj#printMode>

MIDDLE EAST NEWS
FEBRUARY 16, 2011, 2:49 P.M. ET

Two Die in Yemen Protests

By CHIP CUMMINS And HAKIM ALMASMARI



Anti-government protesters and regime loyalists clash in Yemen's capital Sanaa as unrest continues to sweep the region. Video courtesy of Reuters and photo courtesy of AP.

Two antiregime demonstrators died in clashes in Yemen's southern port of Aden Wednesday, triggering pledges by protest leaders there that they would ratchet up pressure on longtime President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The deaths were the first amid a series of recent protests that have rocked Yemen, initially triggered by Arab revolts in Tunisia and Egypt. The country's relatively powerful opposition parties led tens of thousands of demonstrators in consecutive Thursday rallies in the capital San'a earlier this month, calling for political overhauls.

A succession of rallies and demonstrations, in Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Algeria, Bahrain and Iran have been inspired directly by the popular outpouring of anger that toppled Tunisian President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali. **See how these uprisings have progressed.**

But more recently, opposition leaders have appeared to lose control of what they had previously asserted were carefully choreographed demonstrations. Students and young activists, with no political affiliation, have taken to the streets of the capital for several days in a row.

In Aden, hospital officials confirmed that two protesters were killed Wednesday when security forces tried to disperse demonstrations there. The nature of their injuries weren't clear, but the deaths triggered a fresh outpouring of unrest.

Protesters raided a local council building in Aden in retaliation for the deaths and set alight four government vehicles in the vicinity, according to eyewitnesses. By nightfall, protesters had surrounded a local police station in Aden.

"We will not stop protesting until the corrupt regime changes," said Mohammed Ahmed, the head of Aden's labor-union umbrella.

A government spokesman wasn't available Wednesday to comment on the deaths in Aden. Zaid Thari, a senior official in the ruling party, said it was "always sad when innocent protesters die. We call on security authorities to be wise and not use force, whatever the situation may be."

Yemen, an impoverished mountainous country on the southwestern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is torn by a patchwork of allegiances to tribal and local chieftains, whose power often rivals that of Mr. Saleh's central government.

Opposition-led protests earlier this month were far larger than this week's gatherings. But the violence and lack of organization recently has raised concern that Yemen's well-armed tribes could be drawn into the fracas. Blood feuds are still common, and a single death could trigger a spiral of tribal revenge killings.

Aden has been the epicenter of previous bloody protests by a secessionist movement that has long bedeviled Mr. Saleh. Southern Yemeni demonstrators, nonetheless, have sought to capture momentum from wider Arab unrest, and from the recent protests in the capital San'a, turning out in the streets in large numbers this week.

In San'a, a sixth consecutive day of violent clashes unfolded Wednesday, as hundreds of pro-government supporters attacked a gathering of protesters with sticks, witnesses said. Students had assembled early in the day at San'a University to call for educational reform.

They were joined by antigovernment demonstrators, who chanted, "Saleh, Saleh, your regime is corrupt and must fall," and "People want the fall of the regime." Government supporters soon arrived, beating protesters, throwing rocks and chasing demonstrators away. Small groups of government supporters attacked fleeing students and activists, beating them with sticks, witnesses said.

Human-rights groups and opposition leaders have accused Mr. Saleh's uniformed security forces of using disproportionate force in recent protests. But on Wednesday, police were noticeably restrained from the San'a University protests, said witnesses.

Write to Chip Cummins at chip.cummins@wsj.com

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90777/90854/7290430.html>

One protestor killed, 14 injured in clashes rattling Yemen (4)

08:37, February 17, 2011

"Hundreds of security forces blocked Al-Sabeen street in front of the crowds of about 2,000 demonstrators, threatening to torture any protestor who try to break the barricades," a security official told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Hundreds of students staged a rally at noon inside the campus, where there were no government supporters and no clashes were reported as police of the university managed to disperse them.

Elsewhere in the capital Sanaa, hundreds of judges staged a sit-in Wednesday in front of the building of the Ministry of Justice, calling for enhancing the independence of the judiciary and demanding Minister of Justice Shaif al-Aghbari and the Higher Judiciary Council to resign.

In the southern province of Taiz, thousands of demonstrators held protests simultaneously Wednesday morning, where skirmishes between the police and protestors left at least six demonstrators injured, according to eyewitnesses.

http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2011/02/17/au-moins-cinq-blesses-dans-des-heurts-entre-manifestants-a-sanaa_1481367_3218.html

Yémen : l'armée déployée à Aden, où les violences ont fait cinq morts

LEMONDE.FR avec AFP et Reuters | 17.02.11 | 11h14 • Mis à jour le 18.02.11 | 17h27



A Aden, jeudi 17 février 2011.AFP/-

Trois personnes ont été tuées et dix-neuf blessées dans de violents heurts entre la police et des manifestants, jeudi soir 17 février, à Aden, portant à cinq le nombre de morts dans cette ville du sud du Yémen en quarante-huit heures, selon une source hospitalière vendredi. Selon un responsable de l'hôpital Al-Joumhouriya, les corps de trois personnes tuées par balles se trouvaient vendredi à la morgue.

Un précédent bilan recueilli auprès des hôpitaux de la ville jeudi soir faisait état d'un mort et de dix blessés. Les violences se sont poursuivies jusque tard dans la nuit dans différents quartiers de la ville entre des centaines de manifestants réclamant le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis trente-deux ans, et la police, selon le correspondant de l'AFP sur place.

Ces manifestations se sont déroulées en dépit d'un déploiement jeudi de l'armée, après de violents affrontements, mercredi, entre manifestants et forces de l'ordre, qui avaient fait deux morts et vingt blessés. Les centaines de jeunes manifestants en colère dans le quartier de Moualla ont déchiré les portraits du président ornant les rues. La police a eu recours aux gaz lacrymogènes et a tiré des coups de feu pour disperser les manifestants, qui ont riposté en lançant des pierres. Une poignée de manifestants étaient armés, selon des témoins. Dans un autre quartier, Crater, les protestataires ont mis le feu au bâtiment de la municipalité et à une voiture gouvernementale, selon des témoins. Des manifestants ont également mis le feu au siège de la municipalité du quartier de Cheikh Othmane.

Vingt manifestants au moins impliqués dans ces troubles ont été arrêtés jeudi, selon un responsable local, alors que le président Saleh ordonnait la formation d'une commission d'enquête.

VIOLENTS AFFRONTLEMENTS À SANAA

Plus de vingt-cinq personnes ont été blessées, jeudi, dans de nouveaux affrontements à Sanaa entre des étudiants et des partisans du pouvoir. Les manifestants, estimés à environ 2 000 personnes, ont été attaqués dès leur sortie du campus par des partisans du Congrès populaire général (CPG), armés de gourdins et de pierres. Selon des témoins, des partisans du CPG ont

également tiré à balles réelles. Quinze manifestants ont été blessés, ainsi que dix partisans du CPG, selon le correspondant de l'AFP.

Les heurts avec les partisans du président Ali Abdallah Saleh ont lieu pour la cinquième journée consécutive à Sanaa. "*Le peuple réclame la chute du régime*", répétaient d'une seule voix les étudiants jeudi, certains ripostant à coups de pierre à leurs attaquants. Les forces de sécurité ont tiré en l'air pour tenter de séparer les deux parties.

Mercredi, au moins dix étudiants ont été blessés lors d'affrontements similaires. Des centaines d'étudiants avaient tenté de marcher vers le palais présidentiel sur la place Sabiine, avant d'être sauvagement pourchassés par des partisans de M. Saleh, armés de gourdins, de poignards et de pierres.

"ALI, DÉGAGE"

A Taz (270 km au sud-ouest de Sanaa), des centaines de jeunes manifestants ont campé, pour la sixième journée consécutive, sur un carrefour de la ville, rebaptisé "*place de la Liberté*", à l'instar de celle du Caire qui fut l'épicentre du soulèvement contre le régime égyptien. "*Ali, dégage*", "*Après Moubarak, Ali*", proclament les banderoles installées par les protestataires. A Ebb (190 km au sud-ouest de Sanaa), des centaines de personnes ont également manifesté jeudi, appelant à la chute du régime, selon des témoins.

Les dernières manifestations ont réuni moins de participants que celles des dernières semaines, qui avaient mobilisé des dizaines de milliers de personnes. Mais les violences sporadiques sont de plus en plus nombreuses. Un Yéménite sur deux possède une arme, dans un pays à structures tribales fortes et en proie à des rébellions chroniques ainsi qu'à un activisme croissant d'Al-Qaida dans la péninsule Arabique.

L'OPPOSITION RESTE À L'ÉCART

L'opposition parlementaire, qui a décidé de reprendre le dialogue avec le régime, est restée à l'écart de la contestation. Elle n'a plus organisé de manifestation depuis une marche de dizaines de milliers de ses partisans le 3 février, après les promesses de réformes annoncées par le chef de l'Etat.

M. Saleh avait annoncé, le 2 février, le gel des amendements constitutionnels, qui lui auraient permis de briguer un nouveau mandat en 2013, et avait affirmé qu'il ne chercherait pas à ce que son fils lui succède.

<http://french.cri.cn/781/2011/02/17/304s238416.htm>

Yémen / heurts : au moins 15 manifestants et un policier blessés

2011-02-17 22:12:11 cri

Au moins 15 manifestants et un policier ont été blessés jeudi dans la capitale yéménite Sanaa, lors d'affrontements violents qui ont marqué le septième jour consécutif de tensions entre, d'un côté, les partisans pro-gouvernement et la police, et de l'autre côté, les manifestants antigouvernementaux, selon des témoins.

Quelque 500 manifestants, des étudiants pour la plupart, réclamant l'éviction du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, se sont réunis à l'Université de Sanaa et ont marché jusqu'à l'entrée sud du campus, où ils sont entrés en conflit avec des partisans pro-gouvernement brandissant des poignards et des bâtons, qui ont blessé au moins 15 manifestants.

La police anti-émeute est rapidement arrivée sur les lieux dans la rue Al-Rubat pour tenter de faire cesser les affrontements entre les deux groupes rivaux, et un policier a été grièvement blessé, a indiqué à l'agence Xinhua un responsable policier sous couvert d'anonymat.

Les partisans pro-gouvernement s'opposent encore aux manifestants, les deux camps se jetant des pierres l'un contre l'autre, alors que les policiers effectuent des tirs de semonce, a indiqué un correspondant de Xinhua.

Des centaines d'autres manifestants sont descendus dans les rues dans les provinces d'Al-Bayda, d'Al-Hodayda, de Taiz, d'Abyan et d'Aden, scandant des slogans appelant au départ du président Saleh, selon une source de sécurité du ministère de l'Intérieur.

Dans le même temps, un groupe de religieux, qui s'est réuni à Sanaa, a appelé à la formation d'un gouvernement d'union nationale entre le parti au pouvoir et la coalition de l'opposition afin d'éviter que le pays ne sombre dans le chaos.

Ils ont indiqué que la formation d'un gouvernement d'union nationale apaiserait les tensions politiques et placerait le Yémen dans la même situation que l'Égypte et la Tunisie mais sans effusion de sang.

Le président Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 33 ans et qui fait face à une contestation populaire de plus en plus forte réclamant sa démission, a déclaré la semaine dernière qu'il partirait à la fin de son mandat en 2013 et a promis de ne pas céder le pouvoir à son fils.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121616448133524.html>

Protesters killed in Yemen clashes

Police shoot dead two in Yemen's main southern city of Aden, while clashes erupt for the sixth straight day in Sanaa.

Last Modified: 16 Feb 2011 20:51 GMT



Police was separating government supporters from anti-government protesters at Sanaa university [EPA]

Police shot and killed two protesters in Yemen's main southern city of Aden, medics said, while unrest in the capital Sanaa against the rule of Ali Abdullah Saleh, the president, continued for a sixth straight day.

Mohammed Ali Alwani, 21, was shot dead after clashes broke out between police and demonstrators, his father said. The other victim has not yet been identified.

Police in Aden fired shots into the air to try to break up around 500 protesters. Medics said one of the victims had been hit in the back.

The demonstrators hurled stones at police, set tyres and vehicles on fire and stormed a municipal building where heavy gunfire was heard.

Security forces, heavily deployed in Aden, arrested at least four people as they fired warning shots and tear gas to disperse protesters who had gathered at the Al-Ruweishat bus station in the Al-Mansura neighbourhood of Aden.

Protesters chanted "The people want to overthrow the regime" and "It's time to leave, Ali".

Later in the evening, people were demonstrating in Crater district.

Several hurt

In the capital Sanaa, at least 10 protesters were hurt amid clashes between students demanding the ouster of President Saleh and supporters of his ruling General People's Congress.

Hundreds of students had set off for Al-Sabiine square near the presidential palace, only to be attacked by a like number of Saleh loyalists armed with batons, stones and daggers.

The protesters responded by hurling stones, and when the violence spread into the campus of Sanaa university, where the march began, police fired warning shots.

"The thugs and supporters of the ruling party ... want to massacre" the students, the head of the university's student union, Radwan Masud, said, adding that 10 students had been hurt.

He vowed that the students would "continue their revolt and will not be hindered by the ruling party's actions."

Elsewhere in Sanaa, a sit-in by judges demanding greater independence for the judiciary and the sacking of the entire Supreme Judicial Council, including the justice minister, went into its second day outside the justice ministry.

The judges, who have poured into Sanaa from all over Yemen, also want higher salaries.

In other protests, workers in Sanaa gathered at several state-owned companies to demand that their managers to step down. They too also called for higher wages.

On Tuesday, police in Sanaa stepped in when supporters and opponents of the president clashed, leaving three injured. In Taz, south of the capital, the two sides also clashed.

On Monday, rocks and batons flew in the capital as protesters - mainly students and lawyers - confronted police and Saleh's supporters. Police also clashed with around 2,000 protesters in Sanaa on Sunday.

In the face of the unrest, Saleh has postponed a visit to the United States that had been planned for later this month, after the opposition agreed on Sunday to resume talks suspended since October.

Eyeing protests that brought down the presidents of Tunisia and Egypt, Saleh, in power since 1978, pledged earlier this month not to stand in the next presidential elections. He also vowed not to pass on the reins of power to his son.

Of the 23 million people in Yemen, 40 per cent live on less than \$2 a day and a third suffer chronic hunger.

Source:

Al Jazeera and agencies

<http://www.romandie.com/infos/news2/110217172728.rd4le40m.asp>

Yémen: un mort et dix blessés parmi les manifestants d'Aden

ADEN (Yémen) - Un manifestant a été tué et dix autres ont été blessés dans la dispersion par la police de manifestations jeudi à Aden, dans le sud du Yémen, selon un bilan recueilli auprès des hôpitaux de la ville.

"Un mort a été transporté dans notre hôpital et quatre blessés touchés par balle y ont été admis", a déclaré à l'AFP un responsable de l'hôpital Al-Joumhouriah. Il a qualifié l'état de deux blessés de "très grave".

Quatre blessés par balles ont été admis à l'hôpital Naqib, selon des membres de cet établissement et deux dans celui de Wali, dans le quartier de Mansoura, qui a connu une manifestation imposante demandant la chute du régime.

Une marche de plusieurs centaines de jeunes était toujours en cours dans la soirée à Crater, un autre quartier d'Aden, selon des témoins.

Les nouvelles manifestations à Aden se sont produites en dépit d'un déploiement jeudi de l'armée au lendemain de violents affrontements entre des manifestants et forces de l'ordre qui ont fait deux morts et 20 blessés.

Dans la nuit de mercredi à jeudi, des centaines de manifestants avaient défilé jusqu'à Aden en réclamant la chute du régime.

Dans le quartier de Mansoura, ils ont tenté de prendre d'assaut le poste de police et la prison centrale. A Khor Maksar, ils ont attaqué trois hôtels, brisant leur devanture ainsi que les vitres de commerces, et coupé la circulation en incendiant des pneus, selon le correspondant de l'AFP.

(©AFP / 17 février 2011 18h27)

<http://french.peopledaily.com.cn/International/7291957.html>

Français>>International *Mise à jour 18.02.2011 08h43*

Un manifestant succombe à ses blessures lors d'affrontements avec la police dans le sud du Yémen

Un manifestant a succombé mercredi aux blessures reçues lors des affrontements avec la police à Aden, une ville portuaire du sud du Yémen, a annoncé un conseiller provincial à Xinhua.

"Un manifestant qui a pris part à la manifestation organisée plus tôt aujourd'hui, a succombé à des blessures qu'il avait subies, comme quatre autres protestataires, lors d'affrontements avec la police anti-émeute à al-Mansoura, un quartier d'Aden", a ajouté Ahmed Tahir, conseiller lors d'un entretien téléphonique avec Xinhua.

Une grande manifestation de près de 3.000 personnes a tenté de pénétrer dans l'immeuble du conseil local d'al-Mansoura plutôt mercredi, selon Tahir.

Source: xinhua

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/8330935/Gunfire-heard-during-Yemen-protests.html>

Gunfire heard during Yemen protests

Police fire warning shots to disperse crowds as anti-government protesters and loyalists clash during the seventh day of demonstrations demanding an end to President Saleh's 32-year rule.

4:05PM GMT 17 Feb 2011

Fighting broke out in the capital Sanaa after around roughly 800 government loyalists armed with knives and clubs confronted about around 1,500 protesters, who responded by hurling rocks.

It is unclear how many have been hurt but reports have put the number at least 40 people.

It is the seventh straight day of social unrest in Yemen. Besides poverty and unemployment in the Arab world's poorest country, Saleh's government is grappling a secessionist movement in the south, rebellion in the north and a regrouping of al-Qaeda on its soil.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/02/2011217991104240.html>

Yemen clerics urge unity government

Influential group of clerics demand transitional unity government, as two demonstrators are shot in continuing violence.

Last Modified: 18 Feb 2011 06:54 GMT

A group of senior clerics in Yemen has called for the formation of a national unity government in order to save the country from chaos.

The influential figures are demanding a transitional unity government that would see the opposition represented in key ministries, followed by elections in six months.

They say the move would place Yemen in the same situation as Egypt and Tunisia, without suffering bloodshed.

Their comments on Thursday came amid fresh clashes between thousands of pro- and anti-government protesters in Sanaa, the capital.

Dozens of pro-democracy protesters, including two suffering gunshot wounds, have been injured in the confrontations.

"Police are trying to form lines to separate protesters and pro-government supporters - but they're also attempting to disperse crowds with live ammunition, a sign of the very tense situation in the capital ahead of calls for tomorrow's 'Friday of Fury'," said Hashem Ahelbara, Al Jazeera's correspondent in Sanaa.

Loyalists of the government wielding batons and daggers chased a group of protesters meeting at the city's university, witnesses said. At least five people were injured in the violence there.

Municipal vehicles ferried sticks and stones to the pro-government side, witnesses among the estimated 6,000-strong crowd said.

"President Ali Abdullah Saleh is meeting daily with powerful tribal chiefs in areas surrounding the capital, telling them he needs their support for this crucial moment," said Ahelbara.

"He has struck a very harsh tone, describing the protesters as 'anarchists'.

"His entourage is telling media that the situation here is very different to Egypt and Tunisia - and if this country degenerates into violence, it could end up in a very, very difficult situation.

"People here are armed across the country. Tribes have caches of weapons - and the situation here could become much, much worse."

Ahelbara said that distrustful protesters have rejected the president's calls to wait for elections in 2013, saying: "The only way is for us to keep fighting in the streets to bring about the dramatic changes that have taken place in Tunisia and Egypt." Demonstrators are also continuing to protest in the southern city of Taiz.

Visit postponed

On Wednesday, two protesters were killed Aden, a southern port city, while protesting against the rule of Ali Abdullah Saleh, the president.

Unrest has swept the streets of Yemen for the past one week, with anti-government protesters clashing with government supporters and security forces.

In the face of the unrest, Saleh has postponed a visit to the US that had been planned for later this month, after the opposition agreed on Sunday to resume talks suspended since October.

Eyeing protests that brought down the presidents of Tunisia and Egypt, Saleh, in power since 1978, pledged earlier this month not to stand in the next presidential elections. He also vowed not to pass on the reins of power to his son.

But his pledges apparently have done little end the protests.

Of the 23 million people in Yemen, 40 per cent live on less than \$2 a day and a third suffer chronic hunger.

Source:

Al Jazeera and agencies

« Jour de la Colère » au Yémen

Au moins six personnes ont été tuées alors que des dizaines de milliers de manifestants, à la fois pro-et anti-gouvernement, marchent dans plusieurs villes.

Des dizaines de milliers de Yéménites ont pris part à des manifestations anti-gouvernementales à travers le pays, les partisans du gouvernement se rassemblant aussi dans plusieurs villes.

Au moins six personnes ont été tuées dans les manifestations. L'un des décès a lieu après qu'une grenade ait été lancée contre des manifestants anti-gouvernementaux dans la ville de Taiz ce vendredi.

Des émeutes ont également éclaté pendant la nuit dans la ville portuaire d'Aden, les manifestants mettant le feu à un bâtiment du gouvernement local et les forces de répression tuant un manifestant, selon des responsables locaux. Dix-sept personnes ont été également été blessées dans ces affrontements.

Les manifestants à travers le pays exigent que le président Ali Abdullah Saleh se retire, après 32 années au pouvoir, dans un soulèvement qui est maintenant entré dans son huitième jour au Yémen.

Des dizaines de milliers de manifestants se sont réunis dans les villes de Sanaa, Taiz et Aden pour un « vendredi de colère », comme ce jour a été nommé par les organisateurs des manifestations.

Dans la capitale, Sanaa, la foule s'est dirigée vers le palais présidentiel, en scandant des slogans anti-gouvernementaux, en dépit de la police anti-émeute qui tentait de les en empêcher.

Rassemblements pro-gouvernementaux

Des manifestations ont également eu lieu ailleurs dans la ville à l'appui du président Saleh. Environ 10 000 manifestants pro-Saleh sont descendus dans les rues de Taiz.

Des dizaines de manifestants pro-démocratie ont été blessés dans des affrontements entre manifestants de bords opposés.

Les principaux griefs des manifestants sont la pauvreté et les allégations de corruption gouvernementale. Saleh avait déjà promis de ne pas briguer un nouveau mandat en 2013, ni de proposer son fils comme successeur, mais ces engagements n'ont pas réussi à endiguer le mécontentement populaire.

« Bien que les foules soient moins nombreuses par rapport à ce qui se passe dans les autres pays, l'ambiance hostile des 48 dernières heures peut déclencher de nouvelles violences », a déclaré Hashem Ahelbarra, correspondant d'Al Jazeera à Sanaa.

« La crainte est que si les événements atteignent un point de basculement, les tribus armées peuvent attaquer la capitale et c'est pourquoi les gens sont inquiets des affrontements sanglants. »

Appels à l'unité par des responsables religieux

Au milieu des protestations, un groupe de hauts dignitaires religieux au Yémen a appelé à la formation d'un gouvernement d'union nationale afin de sauver le pays du chaos.

Ces personnages influents exigent un gouvernement d'union de transition qui verrait l'opposition représentés au sein des ministères clés, suivi d'élections dans les six mois.

Ils déclarent que cette initiative placerait le Yémen dans la même situation que l'Égypte et la Tunisie, mais sans avoir à subir d'effusion de sang.

Leurs commentaires de ce jeudi a eu lieu au milieu des affrontements entre des milliers de manifestants pro et anti-gouvernement à Sanaa.

« La police cherche à former des lignes pour séparer les manifestants et les partisans du gouvernement - mais ils tentent aussi de disperser la foule avec des tirs de balles réelles, un signe que la situation est très tendue dans la capitale avant le 'Vendredi de colère' », a dit notre correspondant.

Les loyalistes du gouvernement brandissant des bâtons et des poignards ont chassé un groupe de manifestants réunis à l'université de la ville, selon des témoins. Au moins cinq personnes ont été blessées dans la violence.

Des véhicules municipaux ont convoyé bâtons et des pierres pour le côté pro-gouvernementale, selon des témoins.

« Le président Ali Abdullah Saleh se réunit tous les jours avec de puissants chefs de tribus dans les zones entourant la capitale, en leur disant qu'il a besoin de leur soutien en ce moment crucial », dit notre correspondant.

« Il a adopté un ton très dur, décrivant les manifestants comme des 'anarchistes'. »

« Son entourage affirme devant les médias que la situation ici est très différente de celle de l'Égypte et de la Tunisie - et que si ce pays dégénère dans la violence, il pourrait se retrouver dans une situation très, très difficile ».

« Les gens ici sont armés et les tribus à travers le pays ont des caches d'armes. Et la situation ici pourrait encore empirer. »

Ahelbarra a déclaré que les manifestants ont rejeté les appels du président à attendre les élections de 2013, en disant : « Le seul moyen pour nous est de continuer à nous battre dans les rues pour apporter les mêmes changements que ceux qui ont eu lieu en Tunisie et en Égypte. »

19 février 2011 - Al Jazeera -

Yemen observes 'Friday of Fury'

At least six people killed as tens of thousands of protesters, both pro- and anti-government, march in several cities.

Last Modified: 18 Feb 2011 14:12 GMT

Police have been trying to control the situation as violence in the country escalates

Tens of thousands of Yemenis have taken part in anti-government demonstrations across the country, with pro-government supporters also rallying in several cities.

At least six people have been killed in the demonstrations with one of the deaths taking place after a hand grenade was thrown at anti-government protesters in the city of Taiz on Friday.

Riots also flared overnight in the southern port city of Aden with protesters setting fire to a local government building and security forces killing one demonstrator, local officials said. Seventeen people were also confirmed to have been injured in those clashes.

Protesters across the country are calling for president Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down after 32 years in power, in a movement that has now entered its eighth day in Yemen.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators turned out in the cities of Sanaa, Taiz and Aden for a "Friday of Fury", as it was termed by protest organisers.

In the capital, Sanaa, the crowd marched towards the presidential palace, chanting anti-government slogans, despite riot police attempting to stop them from doing so.

Pro-government rallies

Demonstrations were also held elsewhere in the city in support of president Saleh. About 10,000 pro-Saleh demonstrators took to the streets in Taiz.

Dozens of pro-democracy protesters, including two suffering gunshot wounds, have been injured in confrontations between pro- and anti-government demonstrators so far.

Protesters' main grievances include poverty and alleged government corruption. Saleh had earlier promised not to seek re-election in 2013, or to position his son as a successor, but the moves have failed to quell public discontent.

"Although the crowds are smaller in number compared to what happens in different countries, the hostile and fearful mood setting over the last 48 hours may spark more violence," Hashem Ahelbarra, Al Jazeera's correspondent in Sanaa, said.

"The fear here is that if events reach a tipping point, armed tribes may raid the capital and this is why people are worried about bloody confrontations."

Clerics call for unity

Amid the protests, a group of senior clerics in Yemen has called for the formation of a national unity government in order to save the country from chaos.

The influential figures are demanding a transitional unity government that would see the opposition represented in key ministries, followed by elections in six months.

They say the move would place Yemen in the same situation as Egypt and Tunisia, without suffering bloodshed.

Their comments on Thursday came amid fresh clashes between thousands of pro- and anti-government protesters in Sanaa.

"Police are trying to form lines to separate protesters and pro-government supporters - but they're also attempting to disperse crowds with live ammunition, a sign of the very tense situation in the capital ahead of calls for tomorrow's 'Friday of Fury'," our correspondent said.

Loyalists of the government wielding batons and daggers chased a group of protesters meeting at the city's university, witnesses said. At least five people were injured in the violence there.

Municipal vehicles ferried sticks and stones to the pro-government side, witnesses among the estimated 6,000-strong crowd said.

"President Ali Abdullah Saleh is meeting daily with powerful tribal chiefs in areas surrounding the capital, telling them he needs their support for this crucial moment," our correspondent said.

"He has struck a very harsh tone, describing the protesters as 'anarchists'.

"His entourage is telling media that the situation here is very different to Egypt and Tunisia - and if this country degenerates into violence, it could end up in a very, very difficult situation.

"People here are armed across the country. Tribes have caches of weapons - and the situation here could become much, much worse."

Ahelbarra said that distrustful protesters have rejected the president's calls to wait for elections in 2013, saying: "The only way is for us to keep fighting in the streets to bring about the dramatic changes that have taken place in Tunisia and Egypt."

Source:

Al Jazeera and agencies

Protest bomber arrested in Yemen

[18/February/2011]

TAIZ, Feb 18 (Saba) – The police arrested on Friday seven people including the main suspect in throwing a grenade at anti-government protesters in Taiz province injuring at least 16 people, all with minor injuries.

A security source said the police rushed to the protest site in Oseifra district after the incident and arrested suspect Muhammad Muqbil, the main suspect, along with six others.

The police are investigating the suspects and the source did not rule the thrower was a saboteur who wanted to inflame violence to divert the attention from the million-people protest in favor of the regime.

The source warned that saboteurs may join protests to illegal acts, affirming the security authorities will face any violent acts strictly as the people continue to express themselves with freedom in various Yemeni cities.

FR
Saba

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/8335586/Middle-East-protests-Yemenis-clash-with-riot-police-across-the-country.html>

Yemen

Middle East protests: Yemenis clash with riot police across the country

Yemen was racked by a ninth consecutive day of violence on Saturday as street battles broke out across the capital and live ammunition was used against students calling for an end to President Saleh's 32-year rule.



Supporters of the Yemeni government shout at anti-government demonstrators, not pictured, in Sanaa Photo: AP

By Tom Finn and Collette Hogg, Sana'a 5:00PM GMT 19 Feb 2011

A group of 1,000 protesters, mainly students and educated professionals, were attacked outside Sana'a University by pro-Saleh tribesmen armed with batons, rocks and guns.

"After retreating some of them returned with AK-47's and started firing into the crowd," said Yasir Al-Mahwi, an English-language student with a bloodied hand, showing a crowd of people mobile videos and photos of the shootings.

"I saw one shot in the stomach and another bleeding from the neck."

Later, supporters of President Ali Abdullah Saleh dispersed the protesters and took control of the area around the university campus and surrounding roads.

The demonstrations came a day after four Yemenis were killed in the southern city of Aden. One resident who did not wish to be named told *The Sunday Telegraph* that Aden looked like a "war zone," saying there were no police present on the streets and that people were looting and destroying government buildings.

Local newspaper *The Yemen Post* reported that people were being prevented from entering or leaving the port city.

Friday's clashes left four dead and 17 injured in Aden.

Meanwhile in Taiz, an impoverished city around 100 miles south of the capital, medics reported that one person died and 47 others were injured on Friday when a grenade was thrown into a crowd of protesters. Local authorities announced that eight officials connected to the attack have been detained.

About 10,000 protesters gathered in Taiz's Hurriya Square, and a similar number of government loyalists assembled in the centre of the city in some of the largest demonstrations seen throughout Yemen in a decade.

Taiz has a sizeable middle class and its population of four million is from both the north and the south.

Speaking on Saturday at a conference of civil society organisations Mr Saleh accused foreign countries of "plotting against Yemen and its security and stability".

"Those who want power should seek it through the ballot boxes or else the Yemeni people will face destruction," he said

The American embassy in Yemen issued a statement on Friday calling on the government of Yemen to "fulfil its responsibility to protect the life and property of all Yemenis and to safeguard their basic human and civil rights."

"The attacks are contrary to the commitments that President Saleh has made to protect the right of Yemeni citizens to gather peacefully to express their views," the statement said.

Although the numbers of protesters in Yemen have remained in their thousands, rather than the tens of thousands seen elsewhere, they are becoming increasingly unpredictable and violent.

And there has been a familiar pattern emerging whereby young and largely educated, peaceful anti-Saleh protesters are dispersed by older more traditionally dressed pro-government supporters with batons and rocks.

<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/actualite/monde/20110219.FAP5260/yemen-la-police-ouvre-le-feu-sur-les-manifestants-un-manifestant-et-cinq-blesses.html>

19/02/11 14:29 Réagir

Yémen: la police ouvre le feu sur les manifestants, un manifestant et cinq blessés

Mots-clés : YEMEN, MANIFESTATIO

SANAA, Yémen (AP) — Au dixième jour de manifestations au Yémen, la police a ouvert le feu samedi pour disperser des protestataires qui défilaient, par milliers, dans les rues de la capitale Sanaa pour réclamer le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans. Un protestataire a été tué et cinq autres blessés, selon une source médicale.

Tôt samedi matin, les manifestants étaient partis de l'Université de Sanaa pour gagner le ministère de la Justice, en scandant "le peuple veut la chute du régime". Ils se sont ensuite heurtés à des policiers des unités anti-émeutes, appuyés par des éléments en civil.

Des partisans du président ont attaqué la foule et lancé une bataille de jets de pierres. La police a tenté ensuite de disperser les manifestants en tirant en l'air.

Selon un responsable médical, qui a requis l'anonymat, un homme est mort après avoir reçu une balle dans la nuque.

A Aden, des habitants ont déclaré que les forces de sécurité, après 10 jours de manifestations, ont déserté les rues de la ville portuaire. Des groupes d'hommes ont attaqué, pillé et brûlé des bâtiments officiels, sans intervention de la police ou de l'armée, selon des témoins.

Au moins quatre personnes sont mortes dans les manifestations à Aden. AP

ll/sb/v0227

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1358379/Seven-killed-Yemen-police-open-day-anti-government-protest.html#ixzz1HonP1Zyh>

Seven dead in Yemen as police open fire on the tenth day of anti-government protests

By Daily Mail Reporter

Last updated at 1:05 PM on 19th February 2011

- Student protester shot dead in the neck
- Five others injured in march at a university

Yemeni riot police shot dead a protester and injured five others on Saturday when they opened fire on thousands marching in the 10th day of unrest rocking the capital Sanaa.

Protesters began marching early in the morning from the University of Sanaa to the Ministry of Justice while chanting, 'the people want the fall of the regime,' until they were met by riot police.

Security forces backed by plain clothes elements opened fire on them and threw stones.

A medical official said one man was shot in the neck and killed. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press.



Furious: Yemeni anti-government demonstrators voice their anger on the streets President Ali Abdullah Saleh



Violence: Two people were killed in uprisings after police and security forces battled to quash uprisings



Damage: In the the city of Taiz a hand grenade was thrown at a group of protesters seriously wounding at least eight people in the blast and stampede that followed,

It was the 10th straight day of protests in Yemen inspired by uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, which have killed seven people across the country. Demonstrators are calling for the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh - a key U.S. ally in fighting al-Qaida terrorists - who has ruled the country for 32 years.

Meanwhile residents of Yemen's port city Aden, where fierce riots have resulted in at least four deaths, said security forces have disappeared from the streets, threatening to plunge the city into chaos.

Residents say groups of men are looting and burning government buildings and there is no sign of police or armed forces.

Saleh is already facing a restless population, with threats from al-Qaida militants who want to oust him, a southern secessionist movement and a sporadic armed rebellion in the north.

To try to quell the new outbursts of dissent, Saleh pledged to meet some of the protesters' demands and has reached out to tribal chiefs, who are a major base of support for him.

But a key chief from Saleh's own tribe was critical of his policies and threatened to join the protesters - an apparent attempt to pressure the embattled leader of the world's poorest Arab country.

For now, most of the protesters are students, educated professionals and activists who used social media sites Facebook and Twitter in summoning people to the streets.

Riot police fired tear gas and shots in the air to disperse the angry crowds inspired by victorious protests in Tunisia and Egypt.

The latest deaths came as clashes flared yesterday in Aden, where at least one of the deaths was that of a demonstrator after cars and a local government building were set ablaze, officials said. The other death was reported in Sana'a.

It was the tenth straight day of protests in Yemen where citizens are demanding democratic reform.



Wounded: A protester critically injured during a demonstration in the southern Yemeni city of Taizis receives treatment

Demonstrators in the Arab world's poorest country are calling for the ousting of President Ali Abdullah Saleh - a key U.S. ally in fighting al-Qaida terrorists - who has ruled the country for 32 years.

Saleh is already facing a restless population, with threats from al-Qaida militants saying they want to oust him, a southern secessionist movement and an on-and-off armed rebellion in the north.

To try to quell the new outbursts of dissent, Saleh pledged to meet some of the protesters' demands and has reached out to tribal chiefs, who present a major base of support for him.

But a major chief from Saleh's own tribe was critical of his policies and threatened to join the protesters - an apparent attempt to put pressure on the embattled leader.

For now, most of the protesters are made up of students, educated professionals and activists who used social media sites Facebook and Twitter in summoning people to the streets for the 'Friday of Rage' following noon prayers.

Tens of tens of thousands responded in the capital of Sana'a, the southern port of Aden and the political hotbed of Taiz. Some websites also referred to the day as 'Friday of the Beginning.'

In a twist, many mosque preachers took a critical tone with the government.

A preacher at the Sana'a University mosque spoke out against torture and beating of demonstrators, telling many protesters who had gathered there: 'We have been living for 30 years without purpose or hope.'

Imam Jabri Al Yamani admonished the crowd that 'protests must be peaceful and not scare and harm the people,' but as demonstrators marched toward the presidential palace afterwards, the scene descended into violence.

Another Sana'a preacher, Imam Abdel Raqib Obad, urged people to join the protests and criticized the security for 'battling' the youth.

The crowd, chanting anti-government slogans, was met by a heavy deployment of riot police and hundreds of Saleh supporters, similar to confrontations earlier this week. The pro-and anti-government sides attacked each other with rocks, and the riot police began firing in the air and launching tear gas canisters.

At least four people were hurt seriously enough to be taken away by ambulances.

The demonstrators dispersed to other streets, some of which were blocked by police.

Journalists also came under attack by government supporters. An Associated Press reporter saw men with sticks attack a TV crew, smashing their camera. Other photographers took refuge in a building to avoid the mob.



Mass protest: Crowds surge through the Yemini capital in 'day of rage' protests in which two people were killed and hundreds more injured



Chants: A youngster strides forward with a deadly knife tucked into his belt as protesters take to the street inspired by victories in Egypt



Battle: Angry residents took to the streets in the eighth straight day of protests in Yemen where protesters are demanding democratic reform

The U.S. Embassy in Sana'a said it has seen 'a disturbing rise in the number and violence of attacks against Yemeni citizens' at peaceful protests.

The statement added that diplomats also saw reports that Yemen government officials 'were present during these attacks', which it called 'contrary to the commitments that President Saleh has made to protect the right of Yemeni citizens to gather peacefully to express their views.'

It urged the government 'to prevent any further attacks on peaceful demonstrations and to ensure that all Yemenis, both pro- and anti-government, have equal rights to speech and assembly.'

In Taiz, about 270 miles (435 kilometers) south of Sanaa, the call for demonstrations brought out thousands of people, and witnesses said men in a speeding civilian car threw what appeared to be a grenade into a crowd of demonstrators, causing a stampede when it exploded.

At least eight protesters were seriously wounded, and many others were hurt as they fell in the stampede and chaos, said Ghazi al-Samie, a lawyer and activist in Taiz, Yemen's second-largest city.

In Aden, protesters burned four government cars and a local council building in the Sheik Othman neighborhood. Similar government buildings in the Mansoura and Crater districts were set on fire in the past two days.

Later Friday, thousands marched in the city.

A large demonstration also was reported in eastern Hadramawt province, where police fired in the air to disperse protesters.

Saleh, a weak but increasingly important partner for Washington, had pledged not to seek re-election in 2013 or pass power to his son. The promise was seen as an attempt to defuse calls for his dismissal.

Opposition groups said they are suspicious of Saleh's offer and want concrete proposals for change.

Tribal chief Hussein al-Ahmar, a member of Saleh's tribe, told a crowd in his home province Thursday that if violence against protesters continued, his tribesmen may come in to the defense of the demonstrators.

The threat, apparently aimed to get more concessions from Saleh, could turn the protests more violent. Al-Ahmar's tribe, Hashed, is one of the largest and best-armed in Yemen.

'It is not the armed forces, nor Saleh and his army that protect Sanaa, but the tribes of Hashed' and others, Al-Ahmar told the crowd in Amran province. 'If the authorities continue to scare the protesters with their thugs, we will have to interfere.'

Yemen has become a main battleground against al-Qaida. The government, which receives millions of dollars in U.S. military aid, has allowed American drone strikes on al-Qaida targets and has stepped up counterterrorism cooperation.

The U.S.-born radical cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, thought to be hiding in Yemen, is believed to have inspired and even plotted or helped coordinate recent attacks on the U.S. Those include the failed December 2009 bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner and the unsuccessful plot to send mail bombs on planes from Yemen to the U.S.

Al-Awlaki also is believed to have inspired the deadly 2009 shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas, and had ties to some of the 9/11 hijackers.

Nearly half of Yemen's population lives below the poverty line of \$2 a day and its government is riddled with corruption.

The country also is plagued by shrinking water and oil resources and an inability to feed its people. Poverty and malnutrition are rampant in the country's rugged hinterland.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1358379/Seven-killed-Yemen-police-open-day-anti-government-protest.html#ixzz1HonP1Zyh>

<http://www.yobserver.com/front-page/10020822.html>

Fares Anam, "Protests Take a Peaceful Turn in Yemen," Yemen Observer, February 20, 2011.

Protests take a peaceful turn in Yemen

Posted in: Front Page

Written By: Fares Anam

Article Date: Feb 20, 2011 - 9:55:34 AM

Protests in Yemen continued this week as around 300 protesters demonstrated in front of Sana'a University's gates on Sunday in the capital city – but the streets were more peaceful.

The protest scene appeared calm and there were no clashes between pro- and anti-governmental supporters. Police officials monitored the demonstration to ensure that there were no clashes as had occurred in recent days across the country.

An official source at the Ministry of Interior meanwhile denied on Saturday any media reports that claimed that the killing of one student during clashes on that day between some pro- and anti-government supporters in Sana'a. The source pointed out that the security services rushed to the fight that took place in front of Sana'a University gates, indicating that a number of protesters were injured though.

Most of the injured were taken to hospitals and four patients required treatment. The source said that the clash took place in front of the university gate and that there has been no clash in the campus. By yesterday, the tenth day of protests had passed in Yemen. In Sana'a, these demonstrations turned increasingly violent after Friday prayers last week as Central Security officers tried thrice to stop anti-government demonstrations by creating a human barrier while holding wooden sticks.

Anti-government protesters wanted President Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down while pro-government protesters want him to stay. Some demonstrators chanted phrases condemning Saleh. "The people want to topple the regime" and "Go out Saleh" were among their demands. They marched from Sana'a University to al-Zubairy Street which is one of the most important streets in Sana'a. Here they encountered the pro-government protestors. Some of the anti-government demonstrators carried stones, in case they were attacked by pro-government demonstrators.

It is not clear who threw the first stone, but violent attacks were perpetrated by both sides. Security forces tried to stop the conflict but it was futile. Anti-government demonstrators had been pushed back by the pro-government demonstrators who outnumbered them. Journalists did not escape safely from this demonstration.

An Al-Arabia TV reporter was attacked during the conflict and his cameraman's camera was confiscated. Sana'a was not the only city that witnessed demonstrations or violence. Citizens have demonstrated in Taiz, Aden and Mukalla. An official security source in Aden, quoted on the website of the Ministry of Interior, said that demonstrations there led to two deaths and 19 injuries, which included five soldiers in al-Mansoura, Crater, Khormaksar and Sheikh Othman districts. He also denied some media reports about allegations that security forces opened fire on protesters. In Taiz, nine persons were accused of throwing a bomb at protesters. One anti-government protester died and many were injured when men passing by in a car threw a grenade at the protesters.

<http://www.20min.ch/ro/news/monde/story/20165862>

Révolte au Yémen

21 février 2011 11:05; Act: 21.02.2011 11:16

Les ulémas prohibent le recours à la force

Les ulémas du Yémen ont prohibé lundi le recours à la force contre les manifestants, alors que la contestation populaire s'amplifie contre le président Ali Abdallah Saleh.



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Les funérailles de plusieurs des 52 opposants tués par des tirs attribués à des partisans du régime, vendredi à Sanaa...

Photo: Keystone/AP/Muhammed Muheisen

Les funérailles de plusieurs des 52 opposants tués par des tirs attribués à des partisans du régime, vendredi à Sanaa... .., ont eu lieu dimanche. Une foule immense s'est rassemblée à

cette occasion pour une marche considérée comme la plus importante depuis le début des manifestations fin janvier. Les démissions se succèdent au sein de la diplomatie yéménite. Le président Ali Abdullah Saleh est toujours plus isolé. Les funérailles de quelques-uns des 52 tués lors des manifestations anti-gouvernementales ont eu lieu dimanche. Le 19 mars, la contestation se poursuit contre le président Saleh, au Yémen. Les tirs contre des manifestants ont fait 52 morts à Aden. Ali Abdullah Saleh, président yéménite, dont les manifestants demandent le départ, a proclamé l'état d'urgence après des heurts sanglants qui ont fait 41 morts. Selon des témoins, des partisans du régime ont ouvert le feu sur des milliers de manifestants depuis les toits. Le président yéménite Ali Abdallah Saleh, contesté dans la rue depuis des semaines, a promis jeudi un référendum cette année sur une nouvelle Constitution. Le 19 février, un étudiant a été tué par balle à Sanaa, au Yémen. Les heurts de jeudi soir ont fait trois nouveaux morts au Yémen. Les manifestants demandent toujours le départ du président Ali Saleh au pouvoir depuis 31 ans. «Après Moubarak, c'est le tour d'Ali», ont scandé quelque 4.000 protestataires, samedi 12 février ... en réclamant le départ du président yéménite. Vendredi 11 février au soir les Yéménites avaient fêté le départ du président égyptien Hosni Moubarak. Trois personnes ont été blessées, dont l'une grièvement, jeudi soir dans le sud-est du Yémen... ...lorsque la police a tiré à balles réelles et aux gaz lacrymogènes pour disperser une manifestation de militants séparatistes. Plusieurs milliers d'opposants du gouvernement yéménite ainsi que des partisans manifestaient séparément dans la capitale, Sanaa, et d'autres villes du pays jeudi.

Les ulémas, sunnites et zaïdites, branche du chiisme prépondérante dans le nord du Yémen, ont publié un communiqué en ce sens à l'issue d'une réunion extraordinaire sous l'égide de l'influent chef islamiste cheikh Abdelmajid Zendani, soupçonné par Washington de soutenir le terrorisme.

«Toute agression contre les manifestants est un crime», ont affirmé les ulémas, prohibant dans le même temps de «tuer des membres des forces de sécurité». Des partisans du régime s'étaient acharnés quotidiennement jusqu'à samedi sur des manifestants à Sanaa qui réclament la chute du régime, faisant un grand nombre de blessés.

A Aden, la grande ville du sud, 12 personnes ont été tuées en moins d'une semaine dans la dispersion par les forces de sécurité de manifestations tournant à l'émeute.

Le président refuse de démissionner

Le président du Yémen Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, a souligné lundi qu'il ne démissionnerait pas et qualifié de provocations inacceptables les manifestations contre son régime.

Samedi, au dixième jours de manifestations, la police a ouvert le feu pour disperser des protestataires dans les rues de la capitale Sanaa. Selon un responsable médical, un homme a été tué d'une balle dans la nuque. Au total, neuf personnes ont été tuées dans le pays depuis le début des manifestations.

Lors d'une conférence de presse lundi, Ali Abdallah Saleh a affirmé qu'il avait ordonné à l'armée d'ouvrir le feu «uniquement pour se défendre».

Il s'est refusé à démissionner. «Oui à des réformes politiques, oui à des réformes légales, mais non aux coups d'Etat», a-t-il affirmé.

AFP - Publié le 21/02/2011 à 11:03 - Modifié le 21/02/2011 à 11:05

Yémen: sit-in à Sanaa pour réclamer la chute du régime, un tué à Aden



M. Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans dans ce pays pauvre de la péninsule arabique, a déclaré lors d'une conférence de presse qu'il ne partirait "que par les urnes".

Des milliers de personnes ont entamé lundi à Sanaa un sit-in pour exiger le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, alors qu'un manifestant était tué par les forces de sécurité à Aden, portant à 12 le nombre de morts dans cette ville en moins d'une semaine.

M. Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans dans ce pays pauvre de la péninsule arabique, a déclaré lors d'une conférence de presse qu'il ne partirait "que par les urnes".

Pour leur part, les ulémas du Yémen ont prohibé le recours à la force contre les manifestants, dans un communiqué publié à l'issue d'une réunion extraordinaire.

Les manifestants, des étudiants mais également des députés de l'opposition et des militants, se sont massés sur une place devant l'Université de Sanaa, foyer de la contestation dans la capitale, qu'ils ont rebaptisée "place Tahrir" (place de la Liberté), en référence au soulèvement en Egypte.

"Le peuple veut la chute du régime" et "le peuple veut le changement", proclamaient les banderoles brandies par les manifestants.

Ce sit-in intervient au lendemain de la décision de l'opposition parlementaire de se joindre au mouvement de contestation du régime, mené jusqu'à présent principalement par des étudiants.

Les forces de sécurité yéménites ont érigé des postes de contrôle aux accès de la place mais n'ont pas tenté de disperser les manifestants.

Les manifestations, qui se déroulent quotidiennement à Sanaa depuis une dizaine de jours, ont été violemment réprimées par des partisans du pouvoir armés de gourdins, de pierres et d'armes blanches.

Dimanche, pour la première fois, les étudiants sortant de l'Université pour manifester n'ont pas été inquiétés par les partisans du pouvoir, tenus à l'écart par la police.

A Aden en revanche, les forces de sécurité ont continué à tirer à balles réelles sur les manifestants, faisant un nouveau mort lundi à l'aube, selon des sources médicales.

Ce décès porte à douze le nombre de manifestants tués depuis le début le 16 février de manifestations quotidiennes tournant à l'émeute dans la principale ville du sud du Yémen, selon un bilan établi par l'AFP.

Des membres des forces de sécurité à bord de deux véhicules ont tiré en direction de jeunes rassemblés dans le quartier de Khor Maksar, dans une rue où des manifestants avaient placé des pneus enflammés pour couper la circulation, selon des témoins.

Cinq personnes ont été blessées et l'une d'elles a succombé à ses blessures, selon des sources hospitalières.

Dimanche soir, un manifestant avait été tué et un autre blessé lorsque la police avait tiré des gaz lacrymogènes et des balles pour disperser des centaines de manifestants rassemblés à Aden.

Dans le même temps, des milliers de jeunes ont poursuivi, pour la troisième journée consécutive, un sit-in sur une place du quartier de Mansoura, d'où était parti le mouvement de contestation le 16 février dans la ville, selon le correspondant de l'AFP.

Les manifestants retranchés sur la place al-Rouaychane réclament le départ du président Saleh, brandissant comme à Sanaa des banderoles affirmant "le peuple veut la chute du régime" et "Pars, Ali".

"On me demande de partir, mais je ne partirai que par les urnes", a déclaré le chef de l'Etat lors d'une conférence de presse à Sanaa lundi.

Le président Saleh, qui dirige le Yémen depuis 1978, a promis le 2 février de mener des réformes et de ne pas briguer un nouveau mandat lors de la prochaine élection présidentielle prévue en 2013, sans parvenir à calmer la rue.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/23/world/middleeast/23yemen.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&pagewanted=print>

February 22, 2011

Clashes Over Yemen's Government Leave 2 Protesters Dead

By LAURA KASINOF

SANA, Yemen — Two young men were shot dead by government supporters on Tuesday night during a protest in front of Sana University, medical workers said. They are the first deaths in clashes between pro- and antigovernment demonstrators in Sana in the nearly two weeks since students began calling for the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Eight other people were wounded, the medical workers said, when government supporters in plain clothes opened fire on the protesters, who have been staging a sit-in in front of Sana University since Sunday morning.

A makeshift medical clinic treated the wounded while they waited for ambulances to arrive. Protesters surrounding the clinic chanted, "There is no God but God."

About 2,000 protesters remained on Tuesday night after the shooting. They have vowed to stay until Mr. Saleh steps down.

According to witnesses, the clashes between the pro- and antigovernment demonstrators started when the two sides began hurling rocks back and forth over the heads of about 10 members of the security forces.

The security forces began to shoot live ammunition in the air in an attempt to stop the rock-throwing, but then the pro-government demonstrators started to run toward the students, shooting automatic weapons and pistols. When the gunmen started shooting, the police ran away, according to multiple witnesses.

According to one government official, who was not authorized to speak to the news media, the antigovernment protesters also fired live ammunition at the pro-government demonstrators, killing one and wounding more than a dozen.

Some foreign journalists at the scene said they did not see any attack by antigovernment protesters, who have largely been peaceful. But the government official said: "Witnesses noted a surge of armed individuals in the vicinity of the opposition camp. Later on, clashes erupted between the pro- and antigovernment camps. The riot police attempted to separate the crowds. Soon thereafter, a barrage of bullets hit the pro-government demonstrators."

Both sides have clashed before, but some Yemenis said that the escalation of violence would now draw more people into the streets.

"The number of people coming to the protest will increase after they see innocent people dying," said Mohamed al-Ghasary, 23 and unemployed, who was sitting on a wall beside a group of about 50 men. A large crowd of pro-government demonstrators waited about five blocks away.

The antigovernment protesters occasionally taunted the government supporters, calling them "baltegeya," or thugs. Piles of rocks lay behind them from a battle only about an hour before.

"The one who is killed is a martyr and will enter heaven; this is why we aren't scared of the bullets," said Yasser Abdullah, who came to Sana from Amran to join the protests two days ago.

His left cheek was stuffed full of qat, the stimulant wildly popular in Yemen, and he wore a jambiya, or Yemeni-style dagger, on his belt. Mr. Abdullah is one of the increasing number of Yemenis from rural areas coming to Sana to call for Mr. Saleh's removal.

The protesters say they believe that the pro-government demonstrators have been sent by the government to terrorize them, further cementing their disgust for the president. But the Yemeni government has denied that it has any connection with the men attacking the students.

Last updated: 09:26:32 PM GMT(+03) Thursday, 24, February, 2011

Arab League: Situation in Yemen More Complicated Than in Others

Yemen Post Staff

Director of the Arab League Secretary General's Office said on Thursday that the situation in Yemen is more complicated as protests and revolts are continuing to sweep through Arab countries.

The Yemeni government refused the participation of the Arab League in contacting the opposition figures outside the country, saying the initiative was interference in its internal affairs, said Hisham Yousif.

The fury in the Arab streets needs serious addressing and a quick agreement on a general Arab framework taking the difference from a country to another into consideration, he said, adding: "the current situation in some Arab countries, the protests demanding the ouster of regimes, really needs exceptional procedures".

"The Arab League can't force any Arab country to accept its intervention to tackle a problem in this country, especially when such a country refuses the League's effort," he said.

To address the situations in Arab countries, the Arab League should bring together all political forces including the opposition, though officials in some Arab countries look self-restrained towards this ways of tackling crises, he added.

Yousif's remarks were given during Good Morning Egypt TV Programme on Thursday as tens of thousands of people are continuing sit-ins and protests in several Yemeni cities demanding the departure of the Saleh regime.

Inspired by the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions and fed up with the deteriorating economic situation, high unemployment rates, poverty, a corrupt elite, poverty and the boring 33-year rule of Saleh, the sit-inners and protesters said they are determined to continue their protest until the regime was ousted.

Whatever happens to us we will not abandon this and we are ready to die for the sake of removing this oppressive and corrupt regime, protesters and protest organizers said.

Yemen Post Staff

Factbox: Protests in Middle East and North Africa

Fri Feb 25, 2011 12:58pm EST

(Reuters) - Here are latest details of some of the major protests against authoritarian leaders which have already deposed the presidents of Tunisia and Egypt and shaken the Arab world.

LIBYA -- Several people may have been killed when security forces opened fire on Friday on anti-government protesters in the Janzour district in the west of the Libyan capital, Tripoli.

-- The violence came after anti-Gaddafi protesters took control of several towns close to Tripoli following a rebellion centered in the second city of Benghazi that wrested much of eastern Libya from Gaddafi's control.

-- In the first practical attempt to enroll the support of citizens since the uprising began, Libyan state television announced the government was raising wages, increasing food subsidies and ordering special allowances for all families.

-- The turmoil has caused particular global concern because Libya supplies 2 percent of the world's oil, the bulk of it from well and supply terminals in the east.

-- Rebels have seized Libya's east and said they controlled almost all oil facilities east of the Ras Lanuf terminal. A Reuters reporter saw that the other main terminal, Marsa el Brega, was in rebel hands, with soldiers securing the port.

-- Industry sources said oil shipments were near standstill.

YEMEN -- One person was killed and at least 25 wounded in the southern city of Aden on Friday when more than 10,000 people took to the streets after Friday prayers demanding President Ali Abdullah Saleh step down.

Thousands of supporters and opponents of Saleh also held rival demonstrations in the capital Sanaa, in a test of support for the veteran leader's 32-year rule. Protesters outside Sanaa University, repeating slogans which have echoed round the Arab world chanted: "The people demand the downfall of the regime."

-- Eighteen people have died in the past nine days in a sustained wave of nationwide anti-Saleh protests galvanized by revolts in Tunisia and Egypt. Saleh has said he will not give in to "anarchy and killing." -- Saleh has pledged to step down in 2013 and reform parliamentary election laws. State news agency Saba said Saleh has also assigned a committee headed by Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Megawar to open a dialogue with protesters to hear their demands. However opposition parties say they cannot negotiate with a government they accuse of using violence against protesters.

BAHRAIN -- Thousands of Shi'ite Muslims marched in the capital on Friday, declared as a day of mourning by the government after seven anti-government protesters died and hundreds were wounded in clashes with police last week.

-- Protesters have since set up camp at Pearl Square in the capital Manama where some 10,000 gathered on February 21 demanding more say in a country whose rulers are seen by the West and Arab allies as a bulwark against the influence of Shi'ite power Iran. The island hosts the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet. -- King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has asked his son, the crown prince, to conduct a dialogue with all parties but after bloodshed on the streets, opposition parties are wary.

-- Bahrain has released 23 Shi'ites accused of trying to topple the island's Sunni Muslim monarchy. The government said on Wednesday they were among a total of 308 prisoners freed on the orders of the king.

-- Bahrain's 70 percent Shi'ite majority wants to overhaul a system where parliament has little power and policy remains the preserve of an elite centered on the royal al-Khalifa family.

ALGERIA -- Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, seeking to prevent opposition calls for protests from building momentum, has promised more democratic freedoms, cuts in food prices, and ordered new job-creation measures.

-- An order signed by Bouteflika lifting the state of emergency came into force on Thursday after it was published in the government's official gazette. However, he said earlier this month that a ban on protest marches would remain despite lifting the emergency rules.

-- Algerian police in riot gear on February 19, surrounded about 500 protesters trying to stage a march through the capital inspired by uprisings in other parts of the Arab world in defiance of a ban.

-- About 150 protesters held a protest on February 12 in May 1 Square and said they wanted to make it a weekly event until their demands for more democratic freedoms are met.

IRAQ -- Thousands of Iraqis protested nationwide on Friday against corruption and poor basic services in a "Day of Rage" in which at least 10 people were killed and scores were injured in clashes with security forces.

Demonstrators tried to storm government buildings and security personnel fired shots to try to disperse them.

-- The government has taken a series of steps to calm public anger over the economy in recent weeks. It has offered Iraqis free electricity and bought sugar to support food rations.

EGYPT -- President Hosni Mubarak stepped down on February 11 following 18 days of massive protests.

-- Egypt's new military rulers, promising to guard against "counter-revolution," faced political pressure on Friday to purge the cabinet of ministers appointed by Mubarak as thousands of protesters again gathered in Cairo.

On the eve of the rally, the military, which has promised elections within six months, assured Egyptians there would be "no return to the past" of the Mubarak era.

-- The military, facing strikes over pay as well as turmoil in Libya, treads a fine line between granting people new freedoms and restoring normal life.

IRAN -- Iranian security forces arrested a son of opposition leader Mehdi Karoubi, his website reported on Tuesday, a week after his supporters took to the streets in their first demonstrations in more than a year.

-- Supporters and opponents of the government clashed on February 16 at a funeral for a student shot dead during February 14's banned opposition rally. An opposition website said at least 1,500 were arrested while taking part in the banned protests.

-- A large majority of Iranian lawmakers signed a motion for two opposition leaders to be tried, calling them "corrupts on earth." The term "corrupt on earth" is a charge which has been leveled at political dissidents. It is a capital offence.

JORDAN -- King Abdullah swore in a new government on February 9, led by a former general who promised to widen public freedoms in response to anti-government protests.

-- A mix of tribal and Islamist-led opposition has called for moves toward a constitutional monarchy that limits the powers of the throne.

TUNISIA -- Tens of thousands of people filled the streets of central Tunis on Friday in what they called a "Day of Rage," calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi, a former ally of the ousted president.

-- The wave of unrest across the region started in Tunisia after Mohamed Bouazizi, a fruit vendor, set himself on fire on December 17 in protest at his treatment by local police.

-- Protests eventually forced President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali to flee the country on January 14. More than 100 people were killed in the uprising which sparked pro-democracy protests across the Arab world.

-- The interim government charged with organizing elections to replace Ben Ali has already undergone several changes after street protests, but Ghannouchi, seen by some as an asset for his familiarity with the country's affairs, has remained.

(Writing by David Cutler, London Editorial Reference Unit; Editing by Elizabeth Fullerton)

<http://www.thenational.ae/news/worldwide/middle-east/protester-killed-in-yemen-demonstration>

Protester killed in Yemen demonstration

Mohammed al Qadhi

Last Updated: Feb 25, 2011

SANAA// Security forces shot and killed a protester in the south yesterday, two days after President Ali Abdullah Saleh promised security forces would not harm demonstrators.

In Aden, police shot dead a protester and wounded at least eight others after police used tear gas and fired bullets in the air to disperse a crowd of thousands. On Wednesday, Mr Saleh said he instructed security forces to protect demonstrators and stop clashes between the government supporters and opponents.

The protesters in Aden were among the hundreds of thousands of people who took to the streets across the country after Friday prayers, demanding the ouster of Mr Saleh.

The massive anti-government protests yesterday swept 12 provinces including Sanaa, Taiz, Ibb, Aden, Hadramaut, Sa'ada, Lahj, Abyan, Dhale, al Baidah, Hodiedah and Thamar, according to sources and media reports.

In the capital, Sanaa, thousands of Saleh supporters were overshadowed by tens of thousands of anti-government protesters who prayed at what has been dubbed "Change Square" in front of Sanaa University. Between prayers, the protesters chanted, "Leave...the people want the regime to fall."

Things were peaceful, for the most part, in Sanaa where dozens of protesters donated watches, mobile phones and other belongings for "the revolution". One watch fetched US\$3,000 (Dh11,000) - money that will go to cover the expenses of the thousands who have staged a sit-in in front of the university since Sunday.

At the biggest anti-government protest the capital has seen so far, Sheikh Abdullah Sattar, an influential imam, said the peaceful demonstrations were "religious obligation".

"Every Yemeni citizen is religiously and duty-bound to go to the street and demand the change of this regime. The regime [of Saleh] is a devil who has driven us to the stone ages ... and drove the country from a war into another," Sheikh Sattar said.

"The blood of martyrs will not go in vain. You are performing the best form of Jihad ... there is no solution to Yemen and its woes only by the departure of this corrupt regime," Sheikh Sattar said during the Friday sermon.

In an attempt to defuse the demonstrations that have been inspired by the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, Mr Saleh ordered on Thursday the formation of a government committee to open a dialogue with protesters who have been staging demonstrations for weeks, the state-owned Saba news agency reported. He has also promised to step down when his term ends in 2013.

Saba also reported that the president and top officials discussed Yemen's economy and ways of solving the country's chronic unemployment problem. A lack of jobs in Yemen has been one of the complaints of the protesters.

But that did little to quell the anger on the streets yesterday.

"We do not accept any call for dialogue. You [Saleh] have no choice but to leave with your sons who are leading military institutions. You have to return the money you looted from the wealth of the people. If you do not leave, we will march to your palace," Tawakul Karaman, a protest leader," said at the rally in Sanaa.

In Taiz, 260 kilometres south of Sanaa, tens of thousands filled in the "Freedom Square" and the surrounding streets demanding an end to Mr Saleh's 32 years in power, protest organisers said. They marched to the Kalaba cemetery where they buried the body of the protester who was killed on February 18 when a grenade was thrown at demonstrators.

About 14 protesters have been killed and dozens wounded in clashes with riot police and government supporters across the country in the past two weeks.

Yemeni City Feeds Unrest's Roots



Muhammed Muheisen/Associated Press

The ranks of protesters opposed to President Ali Abdullah Saleh swelled Friday. One banner said, "Leave Ali, I lost all I had."

By LAURA KASINOF

Published: February 25, 2011

TAIZ, Yemen — Tens of thousands of demonstrators massed in pivotal Yemeni cities on Friday, holding their largest demonstrations against President Ali Abdullah Saleh since the wave of anti-authoritarian unrest began sweeping across North Africa and the Middle East.

In Taiz, a mountainous city in central Yemen that has long been a bastion of opposition sentiment, as many as 100,000 demonstrators held Friday Prayer in unison as a local cleric preached to the crowds of men and women sitting on the pavement.

"This is not a revolution against a person, a family or a tribe," he said over a loudspeaker to the gathering, which stretched over blocks and blocks of the city's streets. "This is a revolution against oppression and corruption."

After the mass prayer was finished, the crowd burst out into the kind of chant that has echoed across the Arab world since the Tunisian revolution: "The people want the regime to fall."

Large demonstrations also took place across Yemen's southern port city of Aden, where at least one person was fatally shot amid reports of snipers being used against protesters.

And in the capital, Sana, tens of thousands of demonstrators held their largest protest since the unrest began, swelling what started as marches by a few dozen students and activists only a few weeks ago.

Protesters in Taiz have held their own continuous sit-in for the past two weeks since Hosni Mubarak stepped down as president of Egypt. It has been much more organized than the one in the capital, with scheduled speakers, civilian-run checkpoints and even a series of distinct protest committees arranging security, food and media access.

A four-block section of the road has been cordoned off by rocks and dubbed “Freedom Square.” A handful of Yemeni soldiers stand on the outskirts, relaxing against cars with AK-47s at their sides.

Many of the protesters say they feel that if a democratic revolution is possible in Yemen, it will be a result of the momentum gained here in Taiz, an opposition stronghold often described as a geographic and ideological link between the north and south of the country.

“We feel that we want to start the revolution here, but that the results will be felt in Sana,” said Fahim al-Mawfy, a lawyer who works with youth protesters in Taiz and Yemen’s popular Islamist Al Islah political party.

“Taiz will be the heart of the revolution,” said Abdul-Ghani al-Iryani, a prominent Yemeni political analyst. “If the government can crush the protesters in Sana, it won’t be able to crush it in Taiz.”

As with other democracy movements in the region, the protest in Taiz started on Facebook. About 50 activists organized small demonstrations before Mr. Mubarak fell, but it quickly escalated.

“One step in our plan is to start mobilizing the people in the countryside,” said Boshra al-Maqtari, a protest leader, shouting directions into her phone to activists in Aden on how to get to the protest here.

The Taiz organizers said that if the president had not stepped down after another month of protests, they would move to nationwide strikes, despite Yemen’s fractured society.

“It will be difficult,” said Ms. Maqtari, but “we can also make our demands across the country one.”

Organizers said they had seen some movement in that direction already, with protest chants across south Yemen changing from calls for separation — the demand of the south’s popular secessionist movement — into calls for the government to fall.

While protests in the capital have been tense, with repeated clashes between forces for and against the government, the demonstration in Taiz took on an exhilarated feel. Families walk around the cordoned off area. Hundreds of tents have been set up. On Wednesday, two weddings were held at the sit-in. And on Friday, three famous actors took the stage before prayers to tell jokes about the president as the crowd laughed on cue.

Taiz's population is often described as the most educated in Yemen, but the people here complain that they are treated as second-class citizens, and that the culture of Yemen has been dominated by the northern tribes since Mr. Saleh came to power.

“I have a master's degree, while my boss has only graduated from high school,” said Mr. Mawfy, the lawyer.

Sadeq Qasim, from a village in Taiz Province, the most populous in Yemen, said he heard about the demonstration on a local television station.

“The opinion is united” in my village, said Mr. Qasim, 32 and unemployed. “We want Saleh to go.”

http://www.lepoint.fr/monde/yemen-quatre-morts-dans-des-manifestations-a-aden-depuis-vendredi-26-02-2011-1299815_24.php

AFP - Publié le 26/02/2011 à 07:49 - Modifié le 26/02/2011 à 07:50

Yémen: quatre morts dans des manifestations à Aden depuis vendredi



Quatre personnes ont été tuées et 40 autres blessées par les tirs de la police lors de la dispersion de manifestations demandant la chute du régime vendredi après-midi et dans la nuit à Aden, grande ville du sud du Yémen, a-t-on appris samedi de sources médicales.

Quatre personnes ont été tuées et 40 autres blessées par les tirs de la police lors de la dispersion de manifestations demandant la chute du régime vendredi après-midi et dans la nuit à Aden, grande ville du sud du Yémen, a-t-on appris samedi de sources médicales.

Un jeune manifestant de 17 ans, Mohammed Ahmed Saleh, touché vendredi après-midi par des tirs de la police est mort à l'hôpital et 30 personnes ont été blessées, selon des sources médicales.

Une source hospitalière a aussi confirmé dans la nuit les déclarations de témoins sur la mort d'un autre manifestant, qui n'a pas été identifié, lors de la dispersion d'une manifestation.

Le corps d'un autre mort, Haïl Walid, 21 ans, a été transporté à l'hôpital Naqib, et une dizaine de blessés y ont été admis, selon un responsable de l'établissement.

Enfin, une source médicale du même établissement a indiqué qu'un responsable de la compagnie d'électricité d'Aden, Salem Bachatj, avait été mortellement touché par la balle d'un tireur d'élite alors qu'il se trouvait devant sa maison.

Les victimes ont été touchées lors de la dispersion d'une manifestation tardive dans le quartier de Maalla, selon des témoins.

"Notre quartier a vécu de véritables scènes de guerre menées par des éléments de la garde républicaine (corps d'élite de l'armée yéménite) qui ont pris pour cible des jeunes innocents voulant manifester pacifiquement", a déclaré un habitant sous le couvert de l'anonymat.

Ces décès portent à 16 le nombre de morts à Aden depuis le début de la contestation le 27 janvier contre le régime du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans.

Deux autres personnes ont été tuées à Sanaa et une troisième à Taez, ville située au sud de la capitale.

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=2011022520593875>

YEMEN: Student protests gather strength after deaths Ahmed Mohamoud Elmi
27 February 2011
Issue: 160

Student sit-ins in front of Sana'a University have increased in size despite the killing of three students and wounding of several others in the past week. About 50,000 protestors gathered on Thursday to await Friday prayers, and their numbers swelled to hundreds of thousands on Friday.

Many tents were set up across the street and strong security measures were being taken by the protestors, with at least three rows of young volunteers searching everyone entering the area. Students camped out in tents at the university entrance for at least five days.

One student told me that a group of students and other youth were planning direct talks with President Ali Abdullah Saleh and were in the process of arranging a meeting. But it is not yet clear to what extent this group of students represents the protestors.

Last Saturday, 19 February, one student was shot dead and five others were wounded near the university after clashes broke out between anti-government student protestors and government supporters. The dead student and three of those injured were hit by bullets, according to the student union.

All the wounded have been hospitalised and are in a stable condition, according to Ridwan Masoud, chairman of the General Union of Yemeni Students at Sana'a and Amran universities. "Two of the injured are suffering from bullets [that] hit their legs," he said. "They

have undergone successful operations and will soon leave the hospital."

There are no official reports confirming the source of the bullets

Earlier this week, clashes erupted in front of the university campus between protesters - mainly students, activists and other youth - and government supporters armed with batons and daggers. But there were no deaths.

But on Tuesday night, two people were killed and 26 injured when pro-government gunmen attacked students and other protestors. Witnesses said government supporters were using guns. Medics confirmed that the two students died from bullet wounds.

The government has denied claims by student protestors that the attackers were *balaataja* - paid pro-government thugs.

Earlier on Tuesday, students overturned a car and set it on fire. Protestors said it contained weapons and the occupants fled.

Meanwhile clashes between pro- and anti-government forces have intensified over the past few days as protestors have sought to control the space in front of the university campus, naming it "The Change Square".

By Tuesday night student protestors along with hundreds of youth activists controlled the area and they erected tents, sang national songs and marked the roads with anti-government slogans.

On Thursday, the president ordered the security forces to prevent clashes and fully protect both loyalists and anti-regime protestors. Since the order there has been a heavy anti-riot police deployment near the streets leading to the university and a doubling of the security force presence.

Saleh said the security authorities would not attack the demonstrators demanding his departure, adding that they were there to protect the people. "The security forces are very wise and act with a sense of responsibility as the National Defence Council ordered them not to use force against the people, except in the case of self-defence," he said.

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/0e1d5176-4c27-43b5-b3f3-1d58a348c5bb.aspx>

Tunisia, Yemen, Algeria rallies continue

February 27, 2011

TUNIS: Security forces fired warning shots and tear gas, and protesters responded by hurling stones as clashes erupted on Saturday during a demonstration in the Tunisian capital, reporters said.

Meanwhile, two powerful tribal chiefs in Yemen joined opposition forces demanding the ouster of the country's longtime president.

Tens of thousands of protesters, from both the Hashid tribe and Baqil, the second largest tribal

federation in Yemen, took to the streets in Emran.

Separately, hundreds of demonstrators protested in Martyrs Square in Algeria's capital to demand the ouster of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika with police out in far larger numbers to counter the protesters.

In a speech to the Yemeni protesters, Sheikh Hussein Bin Abdullah Al-Ahmar, a key Hashid leader and a longtime ally to Saleh, said he is resigning from the leadership of the ruling party.

Mohammad Abdel Illah Al-Qadi, a key leader of the Sanhan, a Hashid affiliate and a longtime bulwark of Saleh's regime, said he too was resigning from the ruling party.

A loud blast was heard at about 5:00pm in Tunis but its cause was not immediately clear.

Automatic weapons fire could also be heard. Riot police and masked police in civilian clothes chased protesters through the streets after about 300 demonstrators chanting anti-government slogans gathered for a fresh protest outside the interior ministry.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/01/world/middleeast/01yemen.html?ref=yemen>

Opposition in Yemen Supports Protesters

By LAURA KASINOF

Published: February 28, 2011

SANA, Yemen — Yemen's political opposition rejected an invitation from President Ali Abdullah Saleh to form a national unity government and instead threw its support for the first time behind street protests calling for an immediate end to his authoritarian rule.



Muhammed Muheisen/Associated Press

An antigovernment protester at a demonstration in Sana demanding the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The proposal — and its immediate rejection — came ahead of what organizers have dubbed a “day of rage” on Tuesday, a title chosen for its resonance with protests in Egypt that led to the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak.

“I stress that this invitation comes too late and is no longer feasible,” said Mohammed al-Qubati, a spokesman for the Joint Meetings Parties, a umbrella coalition of opposition parties. “What is required now to meet the people's demands is the regime leaving and for authority to meet the will of the people.”

Mr. Saleh suggested including opposition party members in main leadership positions in an effort to quell weeks of sustained protests in several major cities, but the details were left vague and open to negotiation.

Directly calling for Mr. Saleh to step down is a shift in the official rhetoric of the opposition, which had focused on extracting concessions and reforms. Mr. Saleh has promised not to run for president again when his term expires in 2013, but the protesters who have taken to the streets day after day — mostly students and other young Yemenis — have continued to demand his immediate departure.

If opposition parties join the street protests on Tuesday, as they have indicated, it would signal a more permanent shift in the nature of the protests.

The strength of the Yemeni youth movement that began after the Egyptian revolution put the established opposition parties in a tough place, said Abdul Karim al-Eryani, a former prime minister and presidential adviser.

“If they start producing a series of logical steps that will lead the country peacefully during the transition, they think that the youth will not accept,” he said in an interview. “At the same time, they carry on with the youth while knowing they are carrying the country practically to nowhere. The only place they are leading the country to is civil war.”

Further deepening Yemen’s political crisis, 13 members of Parliament from both opposition and ruling parties announced Monday that they would not attend parliamentary activities in order to “hold accountable those responsible for these abuses and bring them to trial” for attacks against protesters in the south, where clashes with security forces have been more violent than those in the capital, Sana.

At least 20 protesters have been killed in the southern port city of Aden since mid-February, including eight on Friday when, according to reports, snipers fired on demonstrators.

At least 10 other members of Parliament have resigned from the ruling party over the past week, and on Saturday, a main tribal leader, Hussein al-Ahmar, left the party and advocated a change in government in front of thousands of tribesmen in the northern Amran Province.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/03/01/uk-yemen-protests-idUKTRE71R5VA20110301?pageNumber=2>

"Day of rage" in Yemen, clashes in south

By Mohammed Ghobari and Mohammed Mukhashaf

SANAA/ADEN | Tue Mar 1, 2011 6:03pm GMT

(Reuters) - Tens of thousands of protesters flooded Yemen's streets on Tuesday in a "Day of Rage," demanding an end to the president's three-decade rule.

In the capital Sanaa, demonstrators chanted "With blood and soul we support you, Aden," referring to the southern port city where most of the 24 people killed in the past two weeks of protests have died.

Some demonstrators flashed "V" for victory signs while others wore white headbands with "Leave" written in red -- a message addressed to President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Tens of thousands more marched through the streets of Ibb and Taiz, south of Sanaa.

Already rocked by separatism and an al Qaeda insurgency, Yemen has been one of the Arab nations most shaken by a wave of popular protests sweeping across North Africa and the Middle East.

Saleh, a U.S. ally against Islamist militants, has failed to quell two months of protests in a country of 23 million where 40 percent live on less than \$2 a day and a third are undernourished.

On Monday he offered talks to form a unity government but the opposition spurned the proposal. On Tuesday, Saleh replaced the governors of five mostly southern provinces at the centre of the protests, state media reported.

"Victory is coming and it is near," Hassan Zaid, an opposition leader, shouted to the protesters gathered in Sanaa, where they have been camping out for two weeks. "We have one goal and one demand, and that is the quick end of the regime."

Protesters are angry at widespread corruption, as Yemeni university graduates struggle to get jobs without connections, and youth unemployment is high. Northern rebels and southern separatists say they are denied resources and a say in politics.

As oil and water resources dry up, the 68-year-old Saleh is less able to pay off allies to keep the peace.

CLERIC SWITCHES SIDES

A leading hardline Muslim cleric, Sheikh Abdul-Majid al-Zindani, who two weeks ago backed the idea of Saleh staying in power until his term ends in 2013, joined protesters on the streets of Sanaa.

"There is no legitimacy to a ruler whose people do not want him," Zindani said.

Saleh himself lashed out at U.S. President Barack Obama over demands that leaders show restraint in tackling unrest as protests, galvanised by successful uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, rage across Libya, Yemen, Bahrain and Oman.

"Every day we hear a statement from Obama saying 'Egypt you can't do this, Tunisia don't do that'," Saleh said in a speech at Sanaa University, a rallying point for protests in the capital where tens of thousands have gathered outside campus.

"What do you have to do with Egypt? Or Oman? Are you the president of the United States, or president of the world?"

In Aden, protesters covered their tents with black flags and pictures of people killed in clashes with police.

In Hodeidah province in the north, Saleh loyalists and protesters fought with rocks and sticks. Four people were hurt.

Security forces in the south have come under frequent attack in recent days. On Tuesday, separatists fought the army in southern Habilayn, killing two soldiers and wounding three.

The U.S.-based group Human Rights Watch said at least eight people detained by Yemen security forces last month, including several southern separatists, had disappeared.

"Snatching and hiding political opposition leaders ... is hardly compatible with the government's claim to protect rights," said Sarah Leah Whitson, HRW's Middle East director.

Also in the south, tribesmen kidnapped an Uzbek doctor, saying they would use him as leverage for demands that the government hold accountable those behind an airstrike aimed at al Qaeda that killed dozens of civilians in December 2009.

(Additional reporting by Mohamed Sudam; Writing by Erika Solomon; Editing by Mark Trevelyan)

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2011/03/yemen-protests.html>

YEMEN: Two protesters shot in clashes

March 2, 2011 | 3:33 pm

Two anti-government protesters were shot and killed in southern Yemen on Wednesday after security forces fired tear gas at demonstrators, according to reports by the Associated Press quoting a hospital official in the town of Sadr.

The wire service cited witnesses who described how security forces fired tear gas to disperse the protesters, to which the protesters responded by setting three police vehicles on fire. It was unclear exactly how those who perished were killed.

Thirteen protesters were injured during clashes with government supporters and security forces in the Red Sea city of Hodeida, the AP reported.

The violence marked the latest round of upheaval in Yemen, which in recent weeks has seen massive demonstrations demanding an end to the 32-year presidency of Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Protesters are demanding an end to what they describe as widespread government corruption, and they are desperate for better job opportunities. Nearly a third of the workforce is out of a job, according to the English-language version of the Arab television network Al Jazeera. And more than 40% of Yemen's 23 million people live on less than \$2 a day, the network reports.

An Al Jazeera correspondent reporting from Yemen's capital, Sana, said the opposition had presented Saleh with a roadmap for his departure, and they were "waiting for an answer."

"They have decided to organize what they are calling a Friday of warning in case they don't get an answer," the correspondent said.

On Tuesday, Saleh, who has been an important U.S. ally in the fight against Al Qaeda, blamed the United States for destabilizing the Arab world, saying the upheaval rocking his capital was being run by the White House. He also laid blame on Israel for the unrest.

But on Wednesday, Saleh called U.S. homeland security advisor John Brennan to express his regret for any misunderstanding caused by his inflammatory comments, according to the AP. The Yemeni leader also reaffirmed his commitment to meaningful political reform, the wire service reported.

-- Ann M. Simmons

http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_17519300?nclick_check=1

2 killed in clashes during protests in south Yemen

By AHMED AL-HAJ Associated Press

Posted: 03/02/2011 07:31:24 AM PST

Updated: 03/02/2011 01:39:34 PM PST



An anti-government protestor with his face painted with the colors... ((AP Photo/Muhammed Muheisen))

SANAA, Yemen—Security forces fired tear gas at hundreds of anti-government protesters in south Yemen on Wednesday, killing two demonstrators, a medical official and witnesses said.

The deaths occurred during protests in the town of Sadr in Lahaj province, a hospital official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media.

Witnesses said security forces fired tear gas to disperse the protesters, who responded by setting three of police vehicles on fire.

Violence also erupted during demonstrations in the Red Sea city of Hodeida, where protesters clashed with government supporters and security forces in a battle that included sticks and rocks. Thirteen demonstrators were



An anti-government protestor, left, sprays foam to cool off other demonstrators shouting slogans during a demonstration demanding the resignation of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in Sanaa, Yemen, Wednesday, March 2, 2011. Yemen's embattled president on Tuesday accused the U.S., his closest ally, of instigating the mounting protests against him, but the gambit failed to slow the momentum for his ouster. Banner on right reads in Arabic, "I would rather die but my people live". ((AP Photo/Muhammed Muheisen))
injured, medical officials said.

Yemen has seen large protests in recent weeks demanding the ouster of longtime President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a weak but important U.S. ally in the fight against al-Qaida. Key tribal allies of Saleh have also joined the protests.

Saleh spoke with the U.S. homeland security adviser by telephone Wednesday and expressed his regret for any misunderstanding caused by his public accusations a day earlier that the U.S. and Israel are behind the unrest threatening his 32-year rule, the White House said.

During the call with John Brennan, Saleh also reaffirmed his commitment to meaningful political reform. Thousands of people have been demonstrating across the Middle Eastern country in support of democratic change and Saleh's ouster.

Brennan responded that comments that seek to lay blame for recent developments in the region are unhelpful.

On Tuesday, Saleh accused President Barack Obama of meddling in the affairs of Arab countries, and asked whether Obama is president of the United States or president of the Arab world.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gZmRFkdvTG4mFmbyJovgV8FLKzcQ?docId=c9239cb31ec343fda8e11f9a441e984f>

Yemeni medics say 2 protesters killed in south

(AP) – Mar 2, 2011

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — A medical official says two protesters have been shot and killed in anti-government protests in southern Yemen.

The hospital official said the deaths occurred Wednesday during demonstrations in the town of Sadr, located in the province of Lahaj. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

Witnesses said security forces fired tear gas and shot at hundreds of protesters, and the demonstrators responded by setting three of their vehicles on fire.

Yemen has seen large protests in recent weeks demanding the ouster of longtime President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a weak but important U.S. ally in the fight against al-Qaida. Key tribal allies of Saleh have also joined the protests.

At least 3 dead in Yemen clash as tens of thousands protest Saleh's rule



Violent clashes erupt during Yemen protest

Several thousand Yemeni protesters defied appeals for calm and marched through the capital on Thursday, pressing on with their campaign to oust the country's president. (Feb. 17)

By Portia Walker

Friday, March 4, 2011; 6:28 PM

SANAA, YEMEN - Tens of thousands of Yemenis took to the streets Friday to protest the 33-year rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, as violence in a restive northern town left at least three people dead.

Members of a rebel Shiite group said they were holding a peaceful demonstration in the town of Harf Sufyan when they were attacked by government forces. The attack left three people dead and seven injured, according to Abu Hashem, a spokesman for the group.

The government disputed that account, saying that an armed group of men had attempted to overrun a military checkpoint, and that seven people were injured in the resulting clashes. The government said there were no peaceful demonstrations in the vicinity of the checkpoint.

Friday's demonstrations were focused in the capital, Sanaa, and in other major cities. Demonstrators in Yemen are calling for Saleh to leave office immediately, but he has shown no sign of budging.

The protests have, for the time being, united formerly disparate anti-government groups, including a separatist movement in the south and rebel tribes in the north.

Harf Sufyan, the scene of Friday's clashes, has long been the stage for fighting between Houthis, a Shiite rebel group, and government forces. The Houthis said late last month that they would put their guns down and join the peaceful calls for Saleh's resignation.

"It's a big change when the Houthis are marching and when the Southern Movement are asking for regime change," said Khalid al-Anisi, a Sanaa-based human rights activist and a key figure in the anti-government movement. "This is our historic moment to make a change."

Opposition parties have been trying to agree on a deal with the president that would allow for the peaceful transition of power.

Saleh's grip on his office appears precarious. But so is the bond among the Houthis, southern separatists, students, tribesman and human rights activists. The groups have little in common beyond their mutual contempt for Saleh. If they succeed in ousting him, they probably will struggle to reach agreement on a new system of governance for Yemen.

Adel al-Surabi, a student leader, said he wants the aftermath of any revolution to resemble what is happening in Egypt. Although he said he is optimistic that Yemen will become "a secular democratic state," he conceded that "after the revolution, everyone will have their own agenda."

Perhaps foreshadowing future rifts, many demonstrators on Friday stressed their differences with the formal opposition parties. One of the protesters was Abdulwahab Makrafi. The unemployed 26-year-old said that he and his fellow protesters would not accept any deal agreed upon by the Joint Meeting Party, the coalition of opposition parties that is negotiating with Saleh. "The JMP do not represent us," he said. "We represent ourselves. This is our revolution."

http://gulf-times.com/site/topics/printArticle.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=420180&version=1&template_id=37&parent_id=17

Clashes, gunfire erupts at protest

Publish Date: Monday, 7 March, 2011, at 12:24 PM Doha Time

Reuters/Sanaa

The US warned citizens in Yemen yesterday to consider departing as protests seeking the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh gather momentum, saying the security risk in the country was extremely high.

Tens of thousands of protesters have camped out in major Yemeni cities, their tone hardening daily, and protests turned to clashes in the town of Ibb yesterday when government loyalists attacked demonstrators with sticks and stones.

Violence also flared in outlying provinces, where six security men were killed in attacks blamed on Al Qaeda.

"The Department (of State) urges US citizens not to travel to Yemen. US citizens currently in Yemen should consider departing," the US State Department said in a travel warning.

"The security threat level in Yemen is extremely high due to terrorist activities and civil unrest," it added.

Britain has also warned against travel, advising those without a pressing need to stay to leave by commercial flights.

The growing Yemeni protests, and a series of defections from Saleh's allies, have added



Yemeni anti-government protesters hold pieces of bread during a demonstration in Sanaa yesterday

pressure on Saleh to end his three-decade rule in the state. But neither side appears willing to compromise to end the deadlock.

Protesters want Saleh to step down by the end of this year, if not sooner, while the president is sticking to an earlier pledge to leave office only when his current term ends in 2013..

“The country is on the brink of imploding,” said Dubai-based security analyst Theodore Karasik. “This popular uprising is going to hit some kind of crescendo and you might have an outbreak of more violence. We might be looking at a Libya situation emerging in Yemen.” Washington said its ability to help citizens in a crisis could be restricted, and evacuation options would be “extremely limited”. It authorised the voluntary departure of the family members of US embassy staff and non-essential personnel.

Yemeni protests, relatively peaceful in recent days, turned to violence in the town of Ibb when Saleh loyalists marched on an anti-government protest site in a park where thousands were camped out, attacking demonstrators with stones and batons.

“There were a large number who tried to storm the park carrying clubs and pelting us with stones and shouting: ‘No to destruction and chaos’,” said protester Ahmed Saleh, citing a slogan widely used by Saleh supporters.

Police fired in the air to disperse the protesters. At least 47 people were hurt in the melee, six critically, including a youth protest leader, an activist and witnesses said. Some 26 people have been killed since protests surged in early February.

Opposition leader Yassin Said Noman said there was currently “no dialogue or even discussion” with the government and that so long as street protests continued, any future talks would be only about bringing down the government.

On Saturday, protesters blocked Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Megawar from arriving at Sanaa University to hold talks with protesters there.

Protesters say they are frustrated with corruption and soaring unemployment in Yemen.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/mar/8/yemeni-prisoners-riot-call-presidents-ouster/print/>

Yemeni prisoners riot, call for president’s ouster



Anti-government protesters chant slogans during a demonstration demanding the resignation of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in Sanaa, Yemen, Monday, March 7, 2011. (AP Photo/Hani Mohammed)

By Ahmed al-Haj

Associated Press

12:02 p.m., Tuesday, March 8, 2011

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Thousands of inmates rioted at a prison in the Yemeni capital Tuesday, taking a dozen guards hostage and joining the growing calls for the country's president to step down. At least one prisoner was killed and 80 people were wounded, police said.

The unrest at the central prison in the capital, Sanaa, started late Monday when prisoners set their blankets and mattresses ablaze and occupied the facility's main courtyard, a security official said.

Yemen has been rocked by weeks of protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh, inspired by recent uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia that ousted those nations' leaders. In a sign that the protests are gaining traction, graffiti calling for Mr. Saleh to step down surfaced Tuesday in his birthplace, village of Sanhan, for the first time since the protests began in mid-February.

Mr. Saleh, a key U.S. ally in the campaign against al Qaeda, has been in power 32 years.

On Tuesday, prison guards fired tear gas and gunshots in the air but failed to subdue the rioters, the security official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. The prison revolt was still going on Tuesday afternoon, he said.

Residents close to the prison reported hearing gunfire and blasts and said troops were bringing in military reinforcements.

Abdelrahman Burman, a lawyer who heads a human rights organization called "Sajin" — Arabic for prisoner — said at least one inmate was killed by a bullet fired by riot police and more than 80 people were wounded, including 20 policemen and prison guards.

He said about half of the wounded were shot and the rest suffered breathing problems and fainting because of the tear gas.

A police official confirmed the casualty numbers. He spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

In Sanaa, the army deployed armored cars at junctions leading to the president's office, the Central Bank, Sanaa University and sensitive government buildings.

Also Tuesday, large demonstrations were held in various parts of the country. In the southern port city of Aden, a crowd of women joined a demonstration after a young protester was shot in the head and critically wounded during a rally there the previous day.

Tens of thousands took to the streets in the Ibb province, calling on the government to bring to justice those responsible for a deadly attack there Sunday. Opposition activists blamed "government thugs" who descended on protesters camped out on a main square. One person was killed in that violence and 53 people were hurt.

Even before Yemen was hit by the wave of protests, the country was growing increasingly chaotic with a resurgent al Qaeda, a separatist movement in the south and an off-on Shi'ite rebellion in the north.

In an attempt to quell escalating protests, the president called for national dialogue after meetings Monday with the country's top political and security chiefs. The state-run news agency said the conference would be held Thursday and would include thousands of representatives from across Yemen's political spectrum.

But opposition leader Yassin Said Numan said there would be no dialogue unless Mr. Saleh agreed to step down by year's end.

Mr. Saleh's recent pledge not to run for re-election in 2013 has failed to quell the protests.

<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/actualite/monde/20110308.FAP6071/yemen-emeute-dans-une-prison-de-sanaa.html>

08/03/11 20:53 Réagir

Yémen: émeute dans une prison de Sanaa

Mots-clés : YEMEN, MANIFESTATIO

SANAA (AP) — Une émeute a éclaté dans une prison de la capitale yéménite Sanaa, où environ 2.000 détenus se sont joints au mouvement d'opposition appelant au départ du président Ali Abdullah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans. Au moins un prisonnier a été tué et 80 personnes blessées, selon la police.

L'émeute a éclaté lundi soir. Les prisonniers ont incendié des matelas, occupé la cour de la prison et pris une dizaine de gardiens en otage, selon une source des services de sécurité.

Les gardiens ont fait usage mardi de gaz lacrymogènes et ont tiré en l'air, sans parvenir à ramener le calme. Plusieurs prisonniers ont été blessés, selon cette source. La sécurité a été renforcée autour de la prison.

Des habitants vivant près de la prison ont rapporté avoir entendu des coups de feu et des explosions.

Selon Abdelrahman Burman, un avocat à la tête de l'organisation de défense des droits de l'homme Sajin, au moins un détenu a été tué et plus de 80 personnes blessées, dont 20 policiers et gardiens de prison. Il a précisé qu'environ la moitié des blessés l'avaient été par balles, les autres souffrant de problèmes respiratoires à cause des gaz lacrymogènes. Un responsable de la police a confirmé ces chiffres sous le couvert de l'anonymat.

Des femmes se sont jointes à une manifestation mardi dans la ville portuaire d'Aden (sud), où un jeune a été grièvement blessé par balle à la tête lors d'un rassemblement lundi.

Plusieurs dizaines de milliers de personnes sont également descendues dans la rue dans des villes de la province méridionale d'Ibb, appelant les autorités à traduire en justice les auteurs d'une attaque contre des manifestants dimanche qui a fait un mort et 53 blessés. Des appels à manifester ont été lancés dans tout le Yémen pour soutenir les revendications des manifestants d'Ibb.

Dans la province de Dhamar (sud-est), des milliers de protestataires ont réclamé mardi le départ du président Saleh. D'importantes manifestations avaient également lieu dans la province montagneuse de Shabwa et dans les provinces d'Hadramawt et Taz.

Par ailleurs, pour la première fois depuis le début du mouvement de contestation au Yémen, des graffitis hostiles au président Saleh ont été découverts dans son village natal de Sanhan, aux portes de Sanaa. La police a annoncé avoir ouvert une enquête pour tenter de découvrir les auteurs du slogan "le peuple veut que le régime se retire", peint sur les murs de la localité.

L'opposition manifeste depuis plusieurs semaines au Yémen pour obtenir le départ du président Ali Abdullah Saleh. Celui-ci a proposé lundi la tenue d'une conférence nationale rassemblant l'ensemble des courants politiques du pays, mais l'opposition a rejeté l'idée. AP

jp/v/lma

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/03/2011386028510475.html>

Inmates riot at Yemen prison

Unconfirmed reports of deaths and injuries after security forces open fire on inmates protesting against the president.

Last Modified: 08 Mar 2011 07:38



Protests demanding an end to Saleh's rule have been raging across Yemen for more than a month now [Reuters]

Detainees in one of Yemen's largest prisons say that they are in solidarity with protesters who have been calling for the ouster of president Ali Abdullah Saleh, following a day of riots within the compounds walls.

A number of prisoners gathered in the prison's interior courtyard on Monday chanting "the people want to overthrow the regime", prompting security forces to open fire with tear gas and live ammunition.

At least three prisoners in the Sanaa facility were reported killed and four others injured, Sharif Mobley, an inmate, told Al Jazeera via phone from within the prison.

"At the moment there is no violence, there is no fighting," Mobley said on Tuesday morning, "but the situation is really looking very bad".

"The offices of the prison official have been burned down and the guards have all left and are now outside," he said.

"Authorities are outside the prison gates and we are inside the prison. We don't want to make any problems and are afraid for our lives."

Political uprising?

Al Jazeera's Hashem Ahelbarra, reporting from Sanaa, said the prison is one of the largest incarceration facilities in the Arabian peninsula nation.

"The security forces responded by firing tear gas canisters and gunshots were also heard. There is now a security presence outside the facility. We are told the situation is contained but authorities have not confirmed any deaths."

Ahelbarra said that officials are claiming that this revolt has nothing to do with the political situation in Yemen.

However, prisoners are saying that they are "unhappy with the direction the country is going in", Mobley said.

"The main demand from the prisoners is they want justice and they want to be treated equally. They complain that if you don't have money and if you don't have ties to strong tribes, then you stay in prison," he said.

US-Yemen operations

Mobley stressed that he was not a part of the uprising, and was being wrongfully held. He was arrested early last year, and his lawyers allege that he was abducted by Yemeni security agents operating on behalf of the US government.

Legal documents seen by Al Jazeera paint a disturbing picture of shadowy security co-operation between the US and Yemen. The documents were part of a freedom of information request submitted by Mobley's legal team to US authorities.

"I'm not taking part in the riots - I am an American citizen and will just tell you what I am seeing here," Mobley said.

"My embassy is not helping me and I have heard that Americans were told to leave the country."

The US state department issued a warning to American citizens last week, urging them not to travel to Yemen, and those in the country already "to think about leaving it".

"The security threat level in Yemen is very high due to terrorist activities and civil unrest," a statement said.

Demonstrations across Yemen demanding an end to Saleh's presidency have left at least 27 people dead since late January, according to a toll by Amnesty International, the London-based rights group.

Scores have also been wounded in the violence.

<http://yemenpost.net/Detail123456789.aspx?ID=3&SubID=3257&MainCat=3>

Last updated: 01:21:31 AM GMT(+03) Tuesday, 08, March, 2011

Parliament Panel to Investigate Anti-Saleh Riot inside Central Prison

Yemen Post Staff

The House of Representatives formed on Tuesday a panel to investigate the revolt inside the Central Prison in Sana'a, Yemen's capital, as many inmates continued for a second day their rioting demanding the removal of the regime.

The panel will investigate attacks against inmates after policemen used live ammunition to control the rioting that started on Monday.

Today, policemen spread inside and outside the prison in large numbers as the prisoners insisted on their protest demanding the departure of Saleh, informed sources said.

There were conflicting reports some were killed, and confirmed reports tens were injured.

A source at the prison also said that some patient inmates suffered inhalation when riot police fired teargas, and others were injured when police used live bullets against those who refused to leave the jail to receive medical care.

Also, policemen, more than 20, were wounded in the clashes at the prison

<http://www.radio-canada.ca/nouvelles/International/2011/03/08/007-yemen-emeute-sanaa.shtml>

Mise à jour le mardi 8 mars 2011 à 20 h 48

Répression devant l'université de Sanaa au Yémen



Photo: AFP/Ahmad Gharabli Des protestataires campent devant l'université de Sanaa, au Yémen

Des soldats yéménites ont tiré des balles de caoutchouc et des gaz lacrymogènes, mardi, contre les milliers d'étudiants qui campent sur le campus de l'université de Sanaa pour exiger la démission du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, faisant au moins 98 blessés, selon des responsables.

L'armée a donné l'assaut sur le campus de l'université quelques heures après que des milliers de prisonniers eurent déclenché une émeute dans une prison de la capitale, prenant une dizaine de gardiens en otages tout en appelant à la démission du président Saleh. Au moins un prisonnier a été tué et 80 personnes ont été blessées pendant que les gardes tentaient de reprendre le contrôle de la situation, selon la police.

Le Yémen est touché depuis plusieurs semaines par des manifestations antigouvernementales inspirées par les récents soulèvements en Égypte et en Tunisie. Ali Abdallah Saleh, un allié clé des États-Unis dans la lutte contre Al-Qaïda, est au pouvoir depuis 32 ans. Signe que les manifestations prennent de l'ampleur au Yémen, des graffitis demandant la démission du président sont apparus mardi dans son village natal, Sanhan, pour la première fois depuis le début des manifestations.

Les étudiants de l'université de Sanaa campent sur le terrain de l'établissement depuis la mi-février, peu après le début des manifestations réclamant la démission du président.

Des responsables médicaux ont affirmé que plusieurs des 98 personnes blessées étaient dans un état grave. Ces responsables ont requis l'anonymat puisqu'ils n'étaient pas autorisés à diffuser l'information aux médias. Des témoins ont rapporté avoir vu des véhicules blindés et des véhicules de transport de troupes se diriger vers la zone de l'université.

« C'est un massacre », a dit un porte-parole de l'opposition, Muhammad Qahtan. « C'est un crime des troupes de sécurité contre les étudiants engagés dans un sit-in pacifique ».

Des manifestations ailleurs au pays

Les manifestations se sont également poursuivies ailleurs dans le pays. Dans la ville portuaire d'Aden, dans le sud du pays, de nombreuses femmes se sont jointes aux manifestants après qu'un jeune protestataire eut été grièvement blessé par une balle reçue dans la tête lors d'une manifestation tenue la veille au même endroit.

Des dizaines de milliers de manifestants sont également descendus dans les rues de la province d'Ibb, appelant le gouvernement à traduire en justice les responsables des attaques meurtrières de dimanche. Des militants de l'opposition ont blâmé des « hommes de main du gouvernement » pour l'attaque contre les manifestants, qui a fait un mort et 53 blessés.

Dans une tentative de calmer la colère populaire, le président Saleh a appelé à la tenue d'un dialogue national après avoir eu des entretiens, lundi, avec de hauts responsables politiques et de la sécurité du pays. L'agence de presse officielle a indiqué que la conférence aurait lieu jeudi et qu'elle comprendrait des milliers de représentants de la scène politique yéménite.

Mais le leader de l'opposition, Yassin Said Numan, a affirmé qu'il n'y aurait aucun dialogue jusqu'à ce que le président Saleh accepte de démissionner d'ici la fin de l'année.



Photo: AFP/STR

Mobilisation sécuritaire autour de la prison de Sanaa où a eu lieu l'émeute.

L'émeute dans la prison a éclaté lundi soir, quand des prisonniers ont incendié des matelas, occupé la cour de la prison et pris une dizaine de gardiens en otage, selon un responsable de la sécurité ayant requis l'anonymat. Les gardiens ont fait usage de gaz lacrymogènes et ont tiré en l'air pour rétablir le calme, mais n'y sont pas parvenus, d'après ce responsable. La révolte des prisonniers était toujours en cours mardi après-midi, a-t-il précisé.

Des personnes vivant près de la prison ont affirmé avoir entendu des tirs et des explosions et ont indiqué que l'armée avait appelé des troupes en renfort. Abdelrahman Burman, un avocat à la tête de l'organisation de défense des droits de l'homme Sajin, a affirmé qu'au moins un détenu avait été tué et que plus de 80 personnes avaient été blessées, dont 20 policiers et gardiens de prison. Il a précisé qu'environ la moitié des blessés l'avaient été par balle, les autres souffrant de problèmes respiratoires causés par les gaz lacrymogènes. Un responsable de la police a confirmé ces chiffres sous le couvert de l'anonymat.

The Associated Press

<http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE72757420110309?sp=true>

Killing hardens opposition resolve in Yemen

Wed Mar 9, 2011 8:16pm GMT

By Khaled Yacoub Oweis and Mohammed Ghobari

SANAA (Reuters) - Opposition supporters swore on Wednesday to keep up their protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 32-year rule despite violence in which one anti-government demonstrator was killed.

Witnesses said Abdullah Hameed Ali, 28, was shot in the head late Tuesday after policemen and security agents fired on a group setting up tents in front of Sanaa University -- the focal point of the civil unrest.

"They charged at us with their guns and bats and started shooting," said Raafat Baji, who was one of around 80 people wounded in the attack.

The state news agency Saba blamed the shooting on gunmen linked to a tribal leader and said police were hunting for the culprits. Opposition figures dismissed this and said the attack showed Saleh was getting desperate.

"These attacks signal the beginning of the disintegration of the regime in the face of the youth revolution," said Mohammed Qahtan, a spokesman for Yemen's opposition coalition.

Yemen, a neighbour of oil giant Saudi Arabia and the poorest country on the Arabian Peninsula, has seen a wave of protests in recent weeks inspired by the turmoil in Tunisia and Egypt.

Almost 30 people have been killed in the unrest and analysts have said the situation could degenerate rapidly.

"This is a further indication of the escalation of violence in Yemen as the protests continue," said Theodore Karasik, a security analyst at the Dubai-based INEGMA group.

"Yemen is following the Libya model in that this is tribal-based, whereas Egypt was secular," he added.

Wednesday, one protester was killed as demonstrators and supporters of Saleh clashed in Seiyun, a town in the southern province of Hadramout, a local official said.

Two people were injured earlier when police used batons and tear gas to disperse an anti-government demonstration of about 5,000 people in the town, residents said.

AL QAEDA

Saleh was battling to maintain order in Yemen even before this year's unrest, struggling to quell rebellions in the north and south, while also helping the United States combat al Qaeda's active Yemeni operations.

The Saudi-backed president has offered to form what he termed as a unity government, but has refused to bow to demands to remove his relatives from the security apparatus or to step down himself before his term ends in 2013.

Police cars and armoured vehicles with armed soldiers and water cannon deployed across the capital Tuesday and continued to surround the area where protesters are gathered.

Ali Omrani, a major tribal figure who was an ally of the president until this month, said Tuesday's university attack would only strengthen sentiment against Saleh.

"The president can either leave or keep spilling blood. I hope he retains his dignity and spares Yemen more tragedy after decades of bloody conflicts, most of which could have been avoided," he said.

(Additional reporting by Mohamed Sudam in Sanaa, Mohammed Mukhashaf in Aden and Erika Solomon in Dubai)

(Writing by Crispian Balmer; editing by Elizabeth Fullerton; Angus MacSwan)

Saleh supporter killed in Yemen clash

(AFP) – Mar 9, 2011

ADEN, Yemen — A supporter of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was killed Wednesday in clashes with anti-regime demonstrators in the southern province of Hadramaut, a security official told AFP.

"One of Saleh's partisans was killed and another was injured in dawn clashes Wednesday between anti- and pro-regime" demonstrators in the southeastern province of Hadramaut, said the official requesting anonymity.

Anti-regime members of the Nahd tribe opened fire on loyalist fellow tribesmen near the town of Seiyun, killing Rabie al-Nahdi and wounding another man, a local official said.

Also in Seiyun, security forces used tear gas and batons and fired warning shots in the air to disperse thousands of protesters who took to the streets calling for Saleh's departure, wounding two, witnesses said.

A medical official in the town said the hospital had received two wounded people.

In the provincial capital Mukalla, thousands also protested against Saleh's regime, according to witnesses.

In the capital Sanaa, a Yemeni protester died of gunshot wounds Wednesday after being hit when police opened fire overnight on anti-regime demonstrators, a medical official has said.

17 protesters wounded in security violence in Yemen

11/03/2011

News Yemen

At least 14 young anti-regime protesters were injured in Aden and three in Sana'a in violence by anti-riot police on Friday, eyewitnesses said.

In Change Square in Sana'a, protesters were trying to extend their camp by setting more tents when anti-riot police, along with some thugs, attacked them by electric shocks and batons to push them back.

Eyewitnesses said that some thugs carrying Kalashnikov rifles were deployed on the roof of some houses next to the square, expecting more attacks on protesters.

Protesters, estimated more than one million, rallied in Change Square in Sana'a to demand the departure of the regime and to reject a new initiative President Saleh announced on Thursday to prepare a new constitution with a parliamentary system.

In Aden, anti-riot police fired live bullets to disperse thousands of protesters in the city of al-Mansura who demanded the overthrow of the regime and rejected the initiative.

More than one million protesters also rallied on Friday in Taiz and demanded the regime to leave.

Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in Ibb, Dhamar, al-Bidha, Hadramout and Hajja and shouted slogans against the regime and denounced violence against protesters.

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2011/03/11/97001-20110311FILWWW00574-yemenmilitants-l-onu-veut-une-enquete.php>

Yémen/militants: l'ONU veut une enquête

AFP

11/03/2011 | Mise à jour : 16:20

Le Haut commissariat de l'ONU aux droits de l'homme a demandé aujourd'hui au gouvernement du Yémen d'enquêter sur des informations faisant état de militants tués durant des manifestations.

"Nous appelons le gouvernement à faire preuve de retenue et à enquêter sur toutes les allégations d'exécutions extrajudiciaires et de violations des droits de l'homme par des forces de sécurité", a déclaré aux médias Rupert Colville, porte-parole de la Haut commissaire, Navi Pillay. "Le bureau est très préoccupé par des allégations d'usage excessif de la force par des forces de sécurité, a-t-il ajouté.

M. Colville a indiqué que 37 militants et au moins six agents de sécurité auraient été tués depuis le début des troubles au Yémen.

Ces chiffres incluent le décès de deux manifestants à l'université de Sanaa le 9 mars, le décès de deux ou trois prisonniers au cours d'émeutes à la prison centrale de Sanaa le 8 mars et le meurtre présumé de deux manifestants le 4 mars près de la ville Harf Sufyan, dans la province septentrionale d'Amran.

Aujourd'hui, quatorze personnes ont été blessées lorsque la police a dispersé une manifestation réclamant le départ du président yéménite Ali Abdallah Saleh à Sanaa, principale ville du sud du Yémen, selon des sources médicales.

La manifestation est intervenue au lendemain d'une proposition du président, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, d'abandonner ses pouvoirs exécutifs avant la fin de l'année mais cette nouvelle concession a été rejetée par l'opposition qui exige son départ.

Le président est la cible d'une contestation populaire depuis la fin janvier qui a déjà fait une trentaine de morts.

Yémen: cinq manifestants tués, dont un écolier de 12 ans

Publié le 12.03.2011, 11h39

Cinq personnes, dont un écolier de 12 ans, ont été tuées et des centaines blessées au Yémen dans la violente dispersion par la police de manifestants hostiles au régime samedi, l'une des journées les plus sanglantes depuis le début du mouvement de contestation. | **Ahmad Gharabli**

Cinq personnes, dont un écolier de 12 ans, ont été tuées et des centaines blessées au Yémen dans la violente dispersion par la police de manifestants hostiles au régime samedi, l'une des journées les plus sanglantes depuis le début du mouvement de contestation.

Les protestataires, qui réclament la chute du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, ont accusé la police d'avoir utilisé des gaz toxiques, mais les autorités ont démenti l'usage de "gaz autres que lacrymogènes".

Estimant que la persistance de l'instabilité ferait le lit d'Al-Qaïda, déjà bien implanté dans le pays, l'ambassadeur des Etats-Unis à Sanaa, Gerald Feierstein, a plaidé en faveur d'un dialogue entre le pouvoir et l'opposition qui a épousé les revendications de la rue sur le départ immédiat de M. Saleh.

A Sanaa, la police a lancé un assaut à l'aube contre les manifestants qui campent depuis le 21 février sur la place de l'Université.

Un manifestant a été tué et près de 300 blessés, dont 30 par balles, les autres ayant été intoxiqués par les gaz, selon le comité médical formé par les manifestants, qui a accusé les forces de sécurité d'employer des gaz toxiques.

Dans l'après-midi, un autre manifestant a été tué par les tirs d'un sniper non identifié alors qu'il tentait, avec d'autres, de se joindre au sit-in, selon l'opposition.

Les autorités ont affirmé que la police ne tentait pas de mettre fin au sit-in mais qu'elle voulait juste séparer des manifestants et des commerçants gênés par le sit-in de l'Université.

Des étudiants et écoliers sont descendus dans les rues d'autres villes du Yémen pour protester contre l'attaque de Sanaa. Plusieurs centaines d'entre eux ont été dispersés par la police à Aden, grande ville du sud, où la police a aussi été accusée d'avoir utilisé des gaz toxiques.

Dans cette ville à la pointe de la contestation, un manifestant a été tué en soirée par des tirs de la police lors de la dispersion de contestataires qui mettaient le feu à un poste pour protester contre la mort quelques heures plus tôt d'un autre manifestant dans la ville, a annoncé un responsable local.

De nombreuses marches réclamant la chute du régime ont eu lieu à Aden et les protestataires ont bloqué les rues de certains quartiers à l'aide de pneus enflammés.

A Moukalla, dans le sud-est, un écolier de 12 ans qui participait à une manifestation similaire a été tué par des tirs de la police, et cinq écoliers ont été blessés, a-t-on appris de sources médicales et auprès de témoins.

Vendredi, l'ONU a annoncé que 37 militants et au moins six agents de sécurité avaient été tués depuis le début des troubles fin janvier.

Jeudi, le président Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, s'était engagé à "continuer de protéger" les manifestants, qu'ils soient pour ou contre son régime.

Mais le dr Hassan al-Joshaai, membre du comité médical mis en place par les organisateurs du sit-in de Sanaa, a affirmé que les forces de sécurité employaient une forme de gaz

innervant contre les manifestants.

"Ce ne sont pas des gaz lacrymogènes, mais des gaz toxiques qui paralysent le système nerveux et l'appareil respiratoire et provoquent des évanouissements", a expliqué à l'AFP ce spécialiste du système nerveux.

Face à l'escalade, la Grande-Bretagne et les Pays-Bas ont appelé leurs ressortissants à quitter le Yémen. Londres a condamné des "violences inacceptables" et la Haye parle "d'un risque d'embrasement".

La chef de la diplomatie européenne, Catherine Ashton a aussi critiqué l'usage de la force contre les manifestants et appelé les autorités à répondre aux aspirations du peuple.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USTRE72B0SX20110312>

Escalating Yemen violence kills three, injures hundreds



Sat, Mar 12 2011

By Mohammed Ghobari and Mohamed Sudam

SANAA (Reuters) - Three people died and hundreds were injured on Saturday in some of the fiercest clashes between police and anti-government protesters since popular unrest started to batter faction-riven Yemen in January.

Two people were killed in the capital Sanaa and a boy of 12 died in the southern city of Mukalla, with fighting reported in at least two other cities as protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 32-year rule turning ever more violent.

The United States said it was dismayed by the growing fatalities and called for calm, warning that Yemen could suffer the same fate as Libya unless there was dialogue.

Hundreds of police fired volleys of tear gas and used water cannon in a pre-dawn operation apparently aimed at preventing a makeshift protester camp spreading any further in Sanaa.

The crowds responded with a hail of rocks and live ammunition was fired. Injured demonstrators were carried to a nearby mosque which was turned into a makeshift medical center.

A doctor said a young boy was fatally shot. Another source said the dead person was a man from eastern Yemen. Later, a man was shot dead as he watched clashes from his office window.

The Interior Ministry accused protesters of opening fire and said 161 police were injured.

Dozens of demonstrators were overcome by the teargas, with friends using torn pieces of cardboard to fan them as they lay stretched out on the ground, many of them barely conscious.

"The gas used by the police is strange. It causes cramps and a collapse of the nervous system," said Bashir al-Kahli, a doctor helping the injured.

The Interior Ministry denied using any sort of nerve gas.

By late afternoon occasional firing could be heard in the capital, but witnesses said a square by Sanaa university, which has become a focal point for protests, was calm.

U.S. CALLS FOR PEACEFUL TRANSITION

A wave of protests, inspired by popular revolts in Egypt and Tunisia, has weakened Saleh's grip on Yemen, but he has steadfastly refused calls for his resignation and the police response to the crisis has become increasingly tough.

Opposition to his rule also shows no sign of easing.

Clashes were reported in Mukalla, the port city of Aden and Taiz, 200 km (125 miles) south of Sanaa, where youths stormed the main government building, residents said.

The U.S. ambassador to Yemen called for talks between the two sides, telling the opposition that getting rid of Saleh would not resolve the problems afflicting the Arabian Peninsula's poorest nation.

"The only way to resolve these issues and to put Yemen on a path toward a positive future is through dialogue," envoy Gerald Feierstein told a small group of reporters.

"We want to see a peaceful transition. We want to see Yemen moving forward to a new reality," he added.

Washington has regarded Saleh as an important ally in its fight against al Qaeda, which has an active cell in Yemen.

Asked if the situation could degenerate as it had in Libya, Feierstein said: "Yes ... I think you have a heavily armed population, you have a history of violent conflict in the country and you have a number of people who are already talking about the possibility of using violence to achieve their goals."

As Yemen's water and oil resources dry up, it has become increasingly difficult for Saleh, 68, to fuel the patronage system that kept his tribal and political supporters loyal.

Protesters complain of rampant corruption and soaring unemployment and say change is needed to resolve their woes.

(Writing by Crispian Balmer; Additional reporting by Mohammed Mukhashaf in Aden; Editing by Matthew Jones)

13/03/11 10:26

Yémen

décès de deux manifestants blessés à Aden (médecins)

ADEN - Deux personnes blessées lors de la dispersion de manifestations à Aden (sud) sont décédées dimanche selon des médecins, portant à sept le nombre de tués dans les contestations de samedi contre le régime yéménite.

Dans cette ville à la pointe de la contestation, au total quatre manifestants ont été tués dans des émeutes nocturnes au cours desquelles un poste de police a été incendié par des centaines de personnes en colère, alors que d'autres bloquaient les rues de certains quartiers à l'aide de pneus enflammés.

Deux autres personnes avaient été tuées samedi à Sanaa lors de tirs de la police sur des manifestants qui campent depuis le 21 février sur la place de l'Université pour réclamer le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh.

Un écolier de 12 ans avait en outre été tué lors de la dispersion par la police d'une manifestation à Moukalla, dans le sud-est du pays.

Le secrétaire général des Nations unies Ban Ki-moon s'est déclaré "très inquiet" de la détérioration de la situation au Yémen et condamné "l'usage excessif de la force" contre "des manifestants pacifiques", avait indiqué samedi son porte-parole Martin Nesirky.

YÉMEN: Chronologie des manifestations de 2011



Photo: Obinna Anyadike/IRIN
Des manifestants de l'opposition à Sana'a

SANAA, 13 mars 2011 (IRIN) - Les manifestations organisées dans l'ensemble du pays qui réclament le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, en sont à leur

sixième semaine. Toutefois, le chef d'Etat yéménite n'a pas l'intention de lâcher les rênes du pouvoir avant 2013. Plus d'une trentaine de manifestants ont été tués et des centaines d'autres blessés lors d'affrontements avec les troupes du gouvernement et les partisans de M. Saleh. Ci-après figure une chronologie retraçant les événements phares qui ont eu lieu depuis le début des manifestations.

Le 2 février 2011 : Des milliers de partisans de l'opposition descendent dans les rues de Sana'a, d'Aden et de Taiz à l'occasion du « premier jour de la colère », afin de manifester contre l'amendement constitutionnel autorisant M. Saleh à briguer un autre mandat. Dans une allocution, ce dernier a soutenu qu'il n'allait pas se représenter à la fin de son mandat ou passer les rênes du pouvoir à son fils Ahmad, le commandant de la garde républicaine. M. Saleh appelle au dialogue et à l'engagement au sein d' « un gouvernement d'unité nationale ».

Le 3 février : Des dizaines de milliers de manifestants se sont réunis à Sana'a à l'occasion du « deuxième jour de la colère », afin de dénoncer la corruption du gouvernement et la main mise de M. Saleh sur le pouvoir et les ressources. M. Saleh a de nouveau appelé au dialogue avec l'opposition.

Le 10 février : Des centaines de partisans du Mouvement sudiste ont manifesté dans différentes régions du Sud afin de dénoncer le siège militaire imposé par le gouvernement. Ils réclament la mise en liberté de l'ensemble des prisonniers politiques détenus pour leur participation au sein du Mouvement sudiste. Le gouvernement accuse ce mouvement de promouvoir la sécession.

Le 11 février : Des milliers de partisans du Mouvement sudiste ont organisé des manifestations dans les villes d'Aden, Abyan, Dhalea et Shabwa, dans le sud du pays, afin de réclamer la démission du président. Selon l'organisation non gouvernementale (ONG) locale Yemen Human Rights Observatory (YHRO), le gouvernement aurait arrêté dix manifestants. Le président égyptien Hosni Moubarak démissionne.

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ay/cb – cd/amz

<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/actualite/les-revolutions-arabes/20110313.OBS9570/yemen-la-contestation-prend-une-tournure-plus-violente.html>

13/03/11 17:14 4 réactions

Yémen : la contestation prend une tournure plus violente

Un manifestant a été tué par des tirs de la police à Aden. Les Etats-Unis se disent "profondément préoccupés" par les violences au Yémen qui ont fait 8 morts et de nombreux blessés ces derniers jours.



L'opposition yéménite a appelé "tout le peuple à intensifier les sit-in et les manifestations dans toutes les régions, afin (que le chef de l'Etat) n'ait plus qu'une seule option, le départ" AFP

Les manifestants à **Sanaa** ont subi dimanche 13 mars une attaque en règle de partisans du régime, au lendemain de la journée la plus sanglante au Yémen depuis le début des marches exigeant le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh fin janvier.

Un manifestant a été **tué par des tirs** de la police anti-émeutes dimanche après une attaque menée par des protestataires contre un poste de police dans le quartier de Dar Saad à Aden, a-t-on appris de source médicale.

"Un manifestant, Nafee Ali Naji, 25 ans, a été mortellement touché par les tirs des unités anti-émeutes qui sont arrivées à Dar Saad après une attaque contre le poste de police du quartier", a déclaré un membre du personnel de l'hôpital Naqib, où le corps de la victime a été transporté.

Des témoins ont précisé que les policiers pourchassaient les manifestants dans les ruelles du quartier après l'attaque contre le poste de police durant laquelle **dix fusils d'assault AK-47** ont été pris et trois véhicules de la police incendiés.

Samedi, à travers le pays **sept manifestants**, dont un enfant de 12 ans, ont été tués par balles et des centaines de personnes ont été blessées par des gaz toxiques dans la violente dispersion par la police de protestataires. Les autorités ont nié l'utilisation de gaz autres que lacrymogènes.

Les **Etats-Unis** ont réagi dans un communiqué du département d'Etat affirmant : "Les Etats-Unis sont profondément préoccupés par les informations faisant état de morts et de blessés dans les manifestations qui ont eu lieu au Yémen au cours de la semaine écoulée", écrit le porte-parole de la diplomatie américaine, Philip Crowley, en présentant les condoléances des Etats-Unis aux proches des victimes.

"La violence doit cesser immédiatement"

"La violence doit cesser immédiatement. Nous appelons le gouvernement yéménite à enquêter rapidement sur ces incidents et à faire le nécessaire pour protéger le droit de tous ses citoyens, en accord avec les engagements du président (yéménite Ali Abdallah) Saleh", poursuit le communiqué du département d'Etat américain.

Le chef de l'**ONU**, Ban Ki-moon s'est déclaré "très inquiet" de la détérioration de la situation au Yémen et condamné "l'usage excessif de la force" contre "des manifestants pacifiques". Il a appelé à la plus grande retenue, exhortant le gouvernement et l'opposition à commencer un dialogue authentique et large".

<http://www.leparisien.fr/flash-actualite-monde/yemen-un-manifestant-tue-par-des-tirs-de-la-police-a-aden-13-03-2011-1356363.php>

Yémen: un manifestant tué par des tirs de la police à Aden

Publié le 13.03.2011, 16h36

Un manifestant a été tué par des tirs de la police anti-émeutes dimanche après une attaque menée par des protestataires contre un poste de police dans le quartier de Dar Saad à Aden (sud), a-t-on appris de source médicale. | **Ahmad Gharabli**

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Les manifestants, qui protestaient contre la violente répression dans la nuit de samedi à dimanche d'une marche dans le quartier, ont également mis le feu au poste de police.

Samedi, sept manifestants ont été tués au Yémen, dont quatre à Aden, lors de la dispersion de manifestations exigeant le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans.

AFP

<http://www.leparisien.fr/flash-actualite-monde/yemen-sept-morts-ces-dernieres-24-heures-dans-des-manifestations-hostiles-au-regime-13-03-2011-1356174.php>

Yémen: sept morts ces dernières 24 heures dans des manifestations hostiles au régime

Publié le 13.03.2011, 09h26



Deux personnes blessées lors de la dispersion de manifestations à Aden (sud) sont décédées dimanche selon des médecins, portant à sept le nombre de tués dans les contestations de samedi contre le régime yéménite. | **Ahmad Gharabli**

Deux personnes blessées lors de la dispersion de manifestations à Aden (sud) sont décédées dimanche selon des médecins, portant à sept le nombre de tués dans les contestations de samedi contre le régime yéménite.

A Aden, ville à la pointe de la contestation, quatre manifestants au total ont été tués dans des émeutes nocturnes au cours desquelles un poste de police a été incendié par des centaines de personnes en colère, alors que d'autres bloquaient les rues de certains quartiers à l'aide de pneus enflammés.

Les rues du quartier de Dar Saad ont notamment été le théâtre d'affrontements pendant la nuit entre les manifestants et les forces de sécurité.

Selon un témoin, des membres des forces de sécurité se sont postés sur les toits des immeubles proches d'un poste de police et ont tiré sur les manifestants.

Les deux blessés décédés dimanche avaient été atteints par balles à la tête, selon des médecins. Onze manifestants ont en outre été blessés, dont quatre grièvement par balles à la tête, selon eux.

Deux autres personnes avaient été tuées samedi à Sanaa lors de tirs de la police sur des manifestants qui campent depuis le 21 février sur la place de l'Université pour réclamer le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh.

Un écolier de 12 ans avait en outre été tué lors de la dispersion par la police d'une manifestation à Moukalla, dans le sud-est du pays.

Six manifestants ont été blessés par balles lors de la dispersion par la police de manifestations spontanées qui se sont produites après l'annonce de la mort de l'écolier, selon des témoins.

Le secrétaire général des Nations unies Ban Ki-moon s'est déclaré "très inquiet" de la détérioration de la situation au Yémen et condamné "l'usage excessif de la force" contre "des manifestants pacifiques", avait indiqué samedi son porte-parole Martin Nesirky.

M. Ban "appelle à la plus grande retenue. Il exhorte le gouvernement et l'opposition à commencer un dialogue authentique et large aboutissant à des résultats concrets pour éviter une nouvelle détérioration de la situation", avait ajouté son porte-parole.

Vendredi, l'ONU avait annoncé que 37 militants et au moins six agents de sécurité avaient été tués depuis le début des troubles fin janvier.

Face à l'escalade, la Grande-Bretagne et les Pays-Bas ont appelé leurs ressortissants à quitter le Yémen et Londres a condamné des "violences inacceptables".

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2011-03/14/c_13778111.htm

Yemeni governor stabbed in protest riots in Marib

English.news.cn 2011-03-14 18:19:21

SANAA, March 14 (Xinhua) -- Governor of Yemeni northeast province of Marib was stabbed in the chest while he was trying to break up a riot of anti-government protesters on Monday, a local security official told Xinhua.

The official, requesting anonymity, told Xinhua that "Marib governor Naji bin Ali al-Zaidi was stabbed by knives several times in his chest when the protesters stormed the governor office in Marib city, the provincial capital."

"Governor al-Zaidi was hospitalized as security forces drove the protesters, who kept shouting 'People want to topple the regime' away from the building and arrested scores of them," the official said.

Around 1,000 armed demonstrators surrounded the government compound since early Monday as governor al-Zaidi tried to appease it by promising to meet their demands, the official said.

But the armed demonstrators refused all offers made by the governor, and opened fire into air to disperse the security guards and stormed the building, stabbing the governor several times in his chest, he said.

Local reports said that almost all Yemeni families have ammunition, and the country's 23 million population own more than 60 million pieces of firearms, including heavy machine-guns and rocket launchers.

The impoverished Arab country has been rattling by protests demanding immediate end of the 33-year rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh since mid February.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USTRE72C0Y320110313>

Two dead as Yemen police fire on protesters



Sun, Mar 13 2011

By Mohamed Sudam

SANAA (Reuters) - Two people died and scores were hurt on Sunday when Yemeni police fired live rounds and tear gas at protesters in Sanaa and Aden demanding an end to President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 32-year rule, medical sources said.

Witnesses said most of the injured in the capital were suffering severe effects from tear gas but some were hit by bullets. Two were thought to be in serious condition in the clashes near Sanaa University, site of a weeks-long sit-in.

In the southern port of Aden one person died after being shot as protesters clashed with police, a hospital doctor said.

Al Jazeera television showed medics treating Yemenis, covered in blood and coughing from tear gas exposure in a makeshift hospital where protesters have set up an encampment by the university, the epicenter of protests in the capital.

Several thousand people gathered there early on Sunday, setting up barricades in an effort to separate themselves from riot police who used water cannon.

They carried banners branding Saleh "Chemical Ali" in reference to the police use of an apparent tear gas that doctors have said affects the nervous system. The Interior Ministry has denied the accusation.

Abdul-Malek al-Marwani, a Supreme Court judge, resigned and expressed support for protesters, saying the judiciary had lost its independence and corruption was rampant, news websites said.

WHITE HOUSE CRITICISM

The White House chided U.S. allies Yemen and Bahrain on Sunday for violence used against protesters and urged both to exercise restraint.

The United States sees Saleh as an important ally in its fight against a highly active regional wing of al Qaeda based in impoverished Yemen, but has grown increasingly alarmed by the escalating violence and has called for dialogue.

"We urge the governments of (Yemen and Bahrain) to show restraint, and to respect the universal rights of their people," the White House said in a statement.

The United States has called for a "peaceful transition" of power in Yemen and urged Sanaa to probe the deaths and injuries.

Seven protesters were wounded during protests in al-Maafir in Taiz province and a protester died from shots fired by police during protests in the southern port of Aden on Saturday.

Late on Sunday, Saleh named a new youth minister, and replaced the religious guidance and endowments minister, without giving a reason.

Abdelbari Dugheish, an Aden member of parliament from Saleh's ruling party, said he now supported the opposition. "The security forces are responsible for the loss of lives. They are firing at random and using excessive violence," he said.

Four people, including a 12-year-old boy, were killed in protests around Yemen on Saturday, bringing the total number of dead during two months of unrest to more than 30.

On Sunday, a soldier was killed and two wounded in an ambush on a patrol near Zinjibar in south Yemen, a security source said. He blamed the attack on militants linked to al Qaeda.

The wave of protests, inspired by popular revolts in Egypt and Tunisia, has weakened Saleh's grip on Yemen. But he has steadfastly refused calls for his resignation, offering instead to rewrite the constitution and transfer powers to parliament.

Protesters in the faction-riven country, complain of rampant corruption and soaring unemployment.

(For an analysis on Yemen click on)

(Reporting by Mohamed Sudam, and Khaled Abdullah in Sanaa and Mohammed Mukhashaf in Aden; Editing by Crispian Balmer and Matthew Jones)

YÉMEN: Chronologie des manifestations de 2011



Photo: Obinna Anyadike/IRIN
Des manifestants de l'opposition à Sana'a

SANAA, 13 mars 2011 (IRIN) - Les manifestations organisées dans l'ensemble du pays qui réclament le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, en sont à leur sixième semaine. Toutefois, le chef d'Etat yéménite n'a pas l'intention de lâcher les rênes du pouvoir avant 2013. Plus d'une trentaine de manifestants ont été tués et des centaines d'autres blessés lors d'affrontements avec les troupes du gouvernement et les partisans de M. Saleh. Ci-après figure une chronologie retraçant les événements phares qui ont eu lieu depuis le début des manifestations.

Le 2 février 2011 : Des milliers de partisans de l'opposition descendent dans les rues de Sana'a, d'Aden et de Taiz à l'occasion du « premier jour de la colère », afin de manifester contre l'amendement constitutionnel autorisant M. Saleh à briguer un autre mandat. Dans une allocution, ce dernier a soutenu qu'il n'allait pas se représenter à la fin de son mandat ou passer les rênes du pouvoir à son fils Ahmad, le commandant de la garde républicaine. M. Saleh appelle au dialogue et à l'engagement au sein d' « un gouvernement d'unité nationale ».

Le 3 février : Des dizaines de milliers de manifestants se sont réunis à Sana'a à l'occasion du « deuxième jour de la colère », afin de dénoncer la corruption du gouvernement et la main mise de M. Saleh sur le pouvoir et les ressources. M. Saleh a de nouveau appelé au dialogue avec l'opposition.

Le 10 février : Des centaines de partisans du Mouvement sudiste ont manifesté dans différentes régions du Sud afin de dénoncer le siège militaire imposé par le gouvernement. Ils réclament la mise en liberté de l'ensemble des prisonniers politiques détenus pour leur participation au sein du Mouvement sudiste. Le gouvernement accuse ce mouvement de promouvoir la sécession.

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ay/cb – cd/amz

Theme (s): Démocratie et gouvernance, Droits de l'homme, Sécurité,

[Cet article ne reflète pas nécessairement les vues des Nations Unies]

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2011/0314/1224292063230.html>

The Irish Times - Monday, March 14, 2011

Violence escalates as security 'thugs' clash with protesters

IONA CRAIG in Sana'a

IN AN escalation of violence over the weekend, at least eight demonstrators were left dead and more than 20 injured by gunfire in ongoing street battles across the country between security forces and protesters calling for an end to President Ali Abdullah Saleh's three-decade rule.

Confrontations yesterday evening between protesters and security forces continued despite the rising number of casualties and a growing government crackdown in the four major cities of Sana'a, Taiz, Aden and Mukalla.

In the capital, clashes with security forces and men labelled as *baltajiyah* (thugs) by protesters, left seven men with gunshot wounds. In similar scenes in the highland city of Taiz, 209km (130 miles) south of the capital, six men were shot, with two of them critically wounded.

Amid increasing lawlessness on the streets in the west of Sana'a, local home owners built 3m-high (10ft) breeze-block walls to block off residential streets and protect against the spreading violence.

"We don't want them near our families and homes," said an angry resident who did not want to be named for fear of reprisals.

"They only bring trouble," he said, waving towards a street full of protesters as they destroyed an SUV bearing pictures of the president.

The violence spiralled out of control following the largest ever gathering of up to 100,000 people during Friday prayer protests in the capital. Immediately after the traditional noon service, demonstrators erected yet more tents, expanding their month-old encampment to a major intersection and close to government ministry buildings. As dusk fell, security forces arrived on two sides of the camp aiming to push back the spreading tented village.

The line-up of hundreds of riot police, backed up by water-cannon trucks, led to a stand-off of more than 12 hours between the two sides. Before the sun rose and protesters knelt to pray, the waiting security men fired tear gas and water into the crowd.

A three-hour street battle ensued as demonstrators ripped up stretches of pavement to break and hurl at riot police. Sustained gunfire followed amid the billowing smoke of burning tyres. Two men were shot dead and more than a dozen were left wounded.

The deaths brought fears of tribal retribution as men spoke yesterday of sheiks leaving the city for their provincial homes to gather reinforcements.

"Yes, they have left," said one tribesman from Amran who declined to give his name, "and they will be back and bring hundreds with them."

Reports also circulated yesterday that controversial cleric Sheik Abdul Majid al-Zindani, listed as a terrorist by the United States, had similarly returned to his tribal homeland to gather men and possibly weapons.

Sheik al-Zindani, a previous supporter of the president, publicly attacked Mr Saleh during a speech to demonstrators.

Violent protests across Yemen, 3 soldiers dead



Mon, Mar 14 2011

By Mohammed Ghobari and Mohamed Sudam

SANAA (Reuters) - Scattered clashes broke out across Yemen on Monday, with three soldiers killed in the north, as military forces were deployed to check nationwide protests demanding the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The impoverished Arabian Peninsula state has been rocked by weeks of demonstrations that have undermined Saleh's 32-year grip on power, with both pro- and anti-government supporters appearing to resort increasingly to violence in the struggle.

Seven demonstrators and three soldiers have died in clashes since Saturday, raising the death toll from unrest above 30.

The United States, which has long seen Saleh as a bulwark against a dynamic al Qaeda wing based in Yemen, has condemned the bloodshed and backed the right for peaceful protest, but has insisted only dialogue can end the political crisis.

Two soldiers and an officer were killed as clashes broke out in the northern al-Jawf province, which borders oil giant Saudi Arabia, Yemen's state news agency Saba said.

Fighting intensified after protesters stormed a municipal building. Security forces fired on them, wounding 10, but could not stop them seizing the building, a local official said.

PIPELINE BLAST

In the central Maarib province, where several oil and gas fields operated by international companies are located, a blast damaged an oil pipeline late on Monday, a tribal official said.

The pipeline has been repeatedly blown up. Disgruntled tribesmen and al Qaeda militants have been suspected of carrying out the attacks.

Earlier a man stabbed Maarib's governor, critically wounding him as he and police tried to break up a crowd at a sit-in. A local official blamed the attack on an opposition supporter.

In the province of Shabwa, an official at Austrian oil firm OMV said the company had suspended its transports of crude by trucks from an oil field to the pumping station of a pipeline because of the unrest.

"The suspension is temporary and due to the current security instability," the official told Reuters, without saying how much oil was carried by trucks and what portion of it was for export.

Yemen is a small oil producer pumping about 300,000 barrels per day of crude.

As tensions in Yemen rose, three journalists and a researcher from Britain and the United States were abruptly deported on Monday. An airport official said they had all entered on tourist visas and were not entitled to work there.

Saleh has made promised to step down in 2013 and offered a new constitution giving more powers to parliament, but he has refused his critics' main demand to quit immediately.

Soldiers and armored vehicles tried to cut off an area in the capital, where around 20,000 have held a sit-in for weeks.

"We're expecting an attack at any minute, but we're not leaving until the regime falls, " said protester Taha Qayed.

Crowds chanted: "Leave, leave you murderer."

Police fired in the air to try to break up tens of thousands of protesters in Taiz, 200 km (125 miles) south of the capital Sanaa. Three were hurt, but protesters continued demonstrating.

A string of Saleh's allies have recently defected to the protesters, who are frustrated by rampant corruption and soaring unemployment. Some 40 percent of the population live on \$2 a day or less in Yemen, and a third face chronic hunger.

Activists said the former religious endowments minister, sacked a day earlier, joined protests in Sanaa on Monday.

"We call on all ministers and all noble people to resign and join the revolution in Sanaa," leading activist Mohammed al-Sharfi told Reuters.

Thousands were also protesting in al-Hawta, the regional capital of southern Lahej province, residents said.

"Al-Hawta is in a state of paralysis. The opposition has called for a general strike to protest at the repression of demonstrators," a resident told Reuters by phone.

Popular revolts in Egypt and Tunisia have inspired this latest wave of unrest in Yemen, but the country was already seething with intermittent rebellions in the north and south.

(Additional reporting by Mohammed Mukhashaf in Aden; Writing by Erika Solomon; Editing by Crispian Balmer and Ralph Boulton)

Yemen tribal leader killed at opposition protest

Tue, Mar 15 2011

SANAA (Reuters) - A Yemeni tribal leader was killed in clashes that broke out Tuesday between protesters demanding the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his supporters, a local official said.

Naji Nasm, who backed the Islamist opposition Islah (Reform) party, was shot dead during a demonstration in the northern al-Jawf province, the official told Reuters.

The impoverished Arabian Peninsula state has been rocked by weeks of demonstrations that have undermined Saleh's 32-year grip on power, with both pro- and anti-government factions appearing to resort increasingly to violence in the struggle.

At least eight demonstrators and three soldiers have died since Saturday, raising the death toll from unrest to almost 40.

The United States, which has long seen Saleh as a bulwark against a dynamic al Qaeda wing based in Yemen, has condemned the bloodshed and backed the right to peaceful protest. But it has also insisted only dialogue can end the political crisis.

In the province of Hudaida, gunmen torched the local headquarters of the main opposition Islah party and attacked its staff, injuring five people, two of them seriously, the party said on its website. It blamed Saleh loyalists for the incident.

In Sanaa, university officials postponed indefinitely the start of the second academic term, state media said.

Sanaa University has been the scene of bloody confrontations for weeks between protesters holding a sit-in outside the campus, police and Saleh loyalists.

The interior ministry sacked the commander of security forces in the restive southern port city of Aden, state media said, without giving a reason.

In the central province of Maarib, tribesmen prevented technicians from repairing an oil pipeline that was damaged in an attack Monday, officials told Reuters.

Austrian energy group OMV said it would not be able to transport oil through the export pipeline for the next few days. OMV usually gets 6,800 barrels of oil equivalent per day from the Haban oilfield in the center of the country.

Tribal sources said kinsmen of a Yemeni mediator, who was killed last year in an errant airstrike targeting al Qaeda, were behind the attack on the pipeline, which has been repeatedly targeted in recent months.

Jaber al-Shabwani, who had been trying to persuade members of al Qaeda to surrender, died when his car blew up in a strike blamed on a U.S. drone.

Several oil and gas fields operated by international companies are located in the mountainous province. Tribesmen have previously attacked pipelines that ferry crude from Maarib, east of the capital Sanaa, to the Red Sea coast.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USTRE72F5DW20110316>

One dead, 200 wounded in Yemen clashes



Wed, Mar 16 2011

By Mohamed Sudam and Mohammed Ghobari

SANAA (Reuters) - One person was killed and 200 wounded when Yemen security forces attacked protesters in the Red Sea city of Hudaida with live and rubber bullets, tear gas, clubs and daggers, a doctor who treated victims said.

The impoverished Arabian Peninsula state has been hit by weeks of protests against the 32-year rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Both pro and anti-government factions appear to have increasingly resorted to violence in the struggle.

A doctor treating protesters in Hudaida said hundreds of security forces and plainclothes police had attacked a sit-in.

"We received around 200 wounded, 10 were hit by gunfire and 40 suffered stab wounds. One died from his gunshot wounds after reaching the hospital," he said.

Demonstrators contacted by Reuters said they were calling on private hospitals to send ambulances and asked Yemenis to donate blood to help treat the wounded. The city's main hospital had been filled to capacity, they said.

Shouting over the rising clamor and chanting of protesters who regrouped after the attack, one demonstrator told Reuters by phone that security forces, most in civilian clothes, had surrounded the sit-in but later retreated.

"The thugs have left, the wounded are getting treatment and our sit-in continues," Abdulhafid al-Nihari said.

Two protesters told Reuters some of the wounded demonstrators had been chased down by security forces and then beaten in the hospital, but this could not be verified.

DONOR MEETING Canceled

The United States, which has long seen Saleh as a bulwark against an aggressive al Qaeda wing based in Yemen, has condemned the bloodshed and backed the right to peaceful protest. It says only dialogue can end the crisis.

Protesters, frustrated by rampant corruption and soaring unemployment, have been increasingly strident in their demand that Saleh step down. Some 40 percent of Yemen's 23 million people live on \$2 a day or less and a third face chronic hunger.

As widespread protests continue despite rising violence and Saleh's promises of reform, Yemen delayed a meeting with a group of Western and Gulf Arab donors, known as "Friends of Yemen," in Riyadh later this month, state news agency Saba said.

"Yemen proposed delaying the group's coming meeting to give a chance for more preparation and coordination and will announce a new date soon," Saba said.

In further violence on Wednesday, a leading activist in Taiz said plainclothes police targeted and beat women at a rally in the city, 200 km (125 miles) south of capital Sanaa, where tens of thousands have camped out for weeks. At least eleven there were wounded, Bushra al-Maqtari said.

Even before protests, Yemen had been teetering on the brink of failed statehood. Saleh's cash strapped government has been struggling to cement a truce with Shi'ite rebels in the north and quell a separatist rebellion in the once independent south.

(Writing by Erika Solomon; Editing by Peter Graff)

http://www.lepoint.fr/monde/nouveaux-affrontements-au-yemen-17-03-2011-1307781_24.php

Nouveaux affrontements au Yémen

Le Point.fr - Publié le 17/03/2011 à 12:58

Une dizaine de personnes auraient été blessées.

Source Reuters

Des affrontements ont fait une dizaine de blessés jeudi à Taïz, dans le sud du Yémen, où les forces de sécurité sont intervenues contre des manifestants réclamant le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, a-t-on appris auprès des contestataires. Selon plusieurs manifestants, les forces de l'ordre ont tiré à balles réelles et fait usage de gaz lacrymogènes. Quatorze manifestants au moins auraient été blessés.

La veille, 150 personnes avaient été blessées à Houdaïda, sur la mer Rouge, lors d'une intervention similaire des forces de sécurité contre un rassemblement anti-Saleh. Le président

yéménite, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, est confronté depuis des semaines à un mouvement de contestation inspiré des révolutions tunisienne et égyptienne.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USTRE72G2L220110317>

At least 84 wounded in new Yemen clashes: activists



Thu, Mar 17 2011

SANAA (Reuters) - Yemeni security forces used live fire and tear gas Thursday on protesters demanding an end to the rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, wounding at least 84, activists said.

Protesters in the southern city of Taiz said 80 people were wounded there and four were reported wounded in the capital Sanaa. State media made no mention of the incidents.

Government website September 26 said there were marches in many cities in support of Saleh and his offers of political reforms, including an offer not to run for reelection in 2013.

The Arabian Peninsula state, neighbor to oil giant Saudi Arabia, has been hit by weeks of protests trying to shake loose Saleh's 32-year grip on power.

The United States, which has long seen Saleh as a bulwark against an active al Qaeda wing based in Yemen, has condemned the bloodshed and backed the right to peaceful protest. But it has also insisted only dialogue can end the political crisis.

September 26 said three militants suspected of links to al Qaeda were killed when they tried to attack a military checkpoint Thursday in Marib province. Also Thursday, security forces said they had arrested two suspected al Qaeda members.

Both pro- and anti-government factions appeared to be increasingly resorting to violence, but activists said protesters had not used force in the latest demonstrations.

Some 150 people were wounded Wednesday when security forces tried to break up a rally in the Red Sea city of Hudaida.

Yemen's rial has fallen up to almost 8 percent against the dollar in the past week as unrest takes its toll on the poor Arab country's economy, traders said late Wednesday.

(Reporting by Mohamed Ghobari; Editing by Sonya Hepinstall)

Yémen: 20 manifestants blessés dans des heurts avec des partisans du régime

(AFP) – 17 mars 2011

SANAA — Au moins 20 manifestants ont été blessés jeudi lors de heurts avec des partisans du président Ali Abdallah Saleh, soutenus par la police, à Sanaa et au sud de la capitale, selon des sources médicales et des témoins.

L'opposition a par ailleurs appelé à des manifestations massives à travers le pays vendredi, a indiqué un communiqué.

A Taëz, à 270 km au sud-ouest de Sanaa, au moins 15 personnes ont été blessées dans des affrontements avec les forces de police et des partisans du parti au pouvoir, le Congrès populaire général (CPG) du président Saleh.

Les partisans du président yéménite se sont attaqués avec des bâtons et des pierres à des milliers de personnes qui réclamaient le départ du président, ont indiqué des témoins.

La police est intervenue en lançant des gaz lacrymogènes sur les manifestants et 200 d'entre eux souffraient de problèmes de respiration.

A Sanaa, cinq personnes ont été blessées à l'aube lorsque des partisans du régime se sont attaqués à un sit-in réclamant la chute du président yéménite, ont affirmé des témoins à l'AFP.

Selon ces témoins et des manifestants, des partisans du pouvoir ont tiré des coups de feu et attaqué à coups de bâton et de poignard les manifestants regroupés devant l'université de la capitale Sanaa.

Certains des assaillants étaient masqués, selon des protestataires qui ont accusé "les casseurs du régime" d'avoir mené cette attaque.

Des milliers de personnes campent depuis le 21 février sur la place de l'université à Sanaa, réclamant le départ de M. Saleh, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans.

Des dizaines de manifestants avaient été blessés dimanche sur cette place, épice de la contestation populaire, dans une attaque lancée par des policiers soutenus par des partisans du régime, au lendemain de la mort d'un manifestant victime de tirs de la police.

Une quarantaine de personnes ont été tuées dans les troubles au Yémen depuis le début du mouvement de contestation fin janvier.

Dans un communiqué, l'opposition parlementaire a accusé le régime de "crimes contre l'humanité" en raison de la répression sanglante des manifestations.

"Les attaques contre les manifestants, les tirs à balles réelles et l'usage de gaz toxiques prohibés internationalement sont des crimes contre l'humanité", affirme le communiqué.

"Le président Saleh, ses fils et ses neveux qui contrôlent la garde républicaine, les forces spéciales et les forces de sécurité nationales (sont) responsables de ces crimes".

L'opposition demande au président "de se soumettre à la volonté populaire et de remettre le pouvoir au peuple".

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USTRE72H2Z720110318>

Yemen in state of emergency after protest massacre



Fri, Mar 18 2011

By Mohamed Sudam and Mohammed Ghobari

SANAA (Reuters) - Gunmen on rooftops shot dead up to 42 protesters at an anti-government rally in Sanaa after Muslim prayers on Friday, enraging the opposition and prompting President Ali Abdullah Saleh to declare a state of emergency.

Medical sources and witnesses told Reuters that Yemeni security forces and plainclothes snipers, who protesters said were government security men, had opened fire on the crowds. The Interior Ministry put the death toll at 25, but doctors said 42 people had died and at least 300 were injured.

Saleh, struggling to maintain his 32-year grip on power in the impoverished Arabian Peninsula state, said the deaths had occurred in clashes between demonstrators and other citizens at a protest encampment at Sanaa University.

"I express my extreme sorrow for what happened today after Friday prayers in the university district," Saleh told a news conference in Sanaa, blaming gunmen among the protesters for the violence.

"The police were not present and did not open fire," he said. "It is clear there are armed elements inside these tents and they are the ones who opened fire."

He declared a 30-day state of emergency that gives wider powers to security forces and bars citizens from bearing arms in public. A curfew was being discussed.

Yemen, home to an active al Qaeda wing, is the second country in the region to announce emergency rule this week, after Bahrain's introduction of martial law on Tuesday, which was followed by a major crackdown on protesters.

It was not clear if Saleh had the military power to enforce such an order, with Yemen deeply divided and racked by weeks of civil disturbance in which over 70 people have been killed.

Witnesses said security forces at first fired into the air on Friday to prevent anti-government protesters from marching out of the Sanaa University camp, which has become the focal point of the protest movement.

After the initial gunfire, the shooting continued from other directions and the toll mounted. A news photographer was among the dead, the U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists said.

"After the prayers finished, some fires were started in the street leading to the presidential palace. A large group of people headed that way to see what was happening and were fired on from the rooftops," said Bashir Abdullah, a witness.

U.S., FRENCH CONDEMNATION

Washington and France both condemned the violence, and U.S. President Barack Obama urged authorities to protect peaceful protesters and said those responsible must be held accountable.

"It is more important than ever for all sides to participate in an open and transparent process that addresses the legitimate concerns of the Yemeni people, and provides a peaceful, orderly and democratic path to a stronger and more prosperous nation," he said in a written statement.

After the deaths, however, Yemen's opposition said there was no way they could negotiate with Saleh's government.

"There is no longer any possibility of mutual understanding with this regime and he (Saleh) has no choice but to surrender authority to the people," said Yassin Noman, rotating president of Yemen's umbrella opposition group.

Protesters said they had caught at least seven snipers who they said had fired on the crowds.

"We arrested some snipers and we found in their possession ID cards from the presidential guard and the special guard, and we will distribute pictures of these at the appropriate time," activist Mohamed al-Sharaby said.

Saleh, also trying to cement a northern truce and quell southern separatism, has rejected demands to resign immediately, promising instead to step down in 2013 and offering a new constitution giving more powers to parliament.

A string of his allies have recently defected to the protesters, who are frustrated by rampant corruption and soaring unemployment. Some 40 percent of the population live on \$2 a day or less in Yemen, and a third face chronic hunger.

After the shootings, Tourism Minister Nabil Hasan al-Faqih became the first cabinet member to defect, resigning his post and quitting the ruling party. The head of the party's foreign affairs committee also left, as did a former ambassador to Russia.

A member of the ruling party's central committee, Jalal Faqira, who heads the political science department at Sanaa University, also quit the party along with 50 other professors.

(Writing by Cynthia Johnston and Crispian Balmer; Editing by Kevin Liffey)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/21/world/middleeast/21yemen.html?ref=middleeast>

Yemen's President Said to Have Fired Cabinet



Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

Tens of thousands of people joined a funeral procession in Sanaa on Sunday for protesters killed by government gunmen last week.

By LAURA KASINOF

Published: March 20, 2011

SANA, Yemen — Yemen's president fired his cabinet on Sunday, while antigovernment demonstrations here in the capital grew in number and momentum two days after government-linked forces opened fire on protesters, killing at least 45 people and wounding more than 200.

Forces loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh killed at least 45 protesters on Friday.



The New York Times

“A new cabinet will be formed in the near future,” a government official said by phone, although he requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly.

When asked about the timing of the dismissals by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the official replied: “This government was supposed to change a while ago; it passed its deadline. This isn’t a big surprise.”

While the implications of his announcement were unclear, Mr. Saleh, who has ruled this country for 33 years, has come under increased pressure from the United States and from officials in his own government over his handling of the protests.

In a sign of the Obama administration’s growing alarm at the government’s response, President Obama’s top counterterrorism adviser, John O. Brennan, telephoned Mr. Saleh on Sunday to express the White House’s deep concern.

An administration official said Mr. Brennan told Mr. Saleh that “any Yemeni government, no matter what its composition, must refrain from violence against protesters and support the right of the people of Yemen to engage in peaceful assembly.”

“Any government must also support political change that meets the aspirations of the Yemeni people,” the official said.

The official, who was not authorized to speak for attribution, praised Mr. Saleh for ordering an investigation into the violence on Friday, and urged him “to follow through on that effort, and to ensure that anyone who has committed acts of violence is held accountable.”

Still, another, more senior administration official said that Friday’s violence “might have ruined any remaining chance of political dialogue between the Saleh government and the opposition.”

Nine Yemeni ambassadors to European and Arab countries sent a letter to Mr. Saleh on Sunday condemning “the massacre” on Friday. That letter followed the resignations by several high-ranking Yemeni officials, including the country’s envoy to the United Nations, its ambassador to Lebanon and its human rights minister.

Despite Friday’s violence against the protesters, a round-the-clock sit-in that branched out for more than a mile from Sana University’s main gate grew even larger Sunday with newly erected tents hung with photographs of the protesters who had been killed.

“The blood of the martyrs watered the tree of freedom,” said Abdullah Hamid, a protester, when asked about the reason behind the increase in the number of demonstrators. A student protest leader, Salah Sharafi, said, “They put the seeds of victory in us when they start to kill us.”

Tribes from across Yemen have historically been embroiled in conflicts, but so far few squabbles have taken place among them at the sit-in, their leaders and other protesters said.

“No one expected the tribes would act like this,” said Mr. Sharafi, the student leader. “They opened their arms” without weapons “to say that they are civilians, but they have determination for change.”

Abel Aziz al-Masbahy, an unemployed man who arrived Sunday from his home in Dhamar Province just south of Sana, stood in front of a poster with the photographs of two teenage boys and a young man from Dhamar who were killed on Friday. The words “Martyrs of the peaceful youth revolution” were written above them.

“Saleh lost his legitimacy in” our region, Mr. Masbahy said.

Two men from Khowlan, an area east of Sana known for kidnapping and a heavily armed population, were killed on Friday. One was shot as he sat in a green tent with a neighbor from Khowlan, Obad Dahamash, and about 20 other men. The bullet hole was still visible in the tent’s fabric. “At first our goal was to kick out Ali Saleh, his family and his gang,” Mr. Dahamash said. “Now we want to prosecute them.”

Tribal culture in Yemen has a strong tradition of violent retribution; however, members of the group swore they would remain peaceful.

“This revolution united us as tribes, and we are able to take our rights without using weapons, without using guns,” Mr. Dahamash said. “After this massacre killed people from Khowlan, it united us with other tribes, as all the tribes came and sympathized with us. They know that we don’t have our guns here and that we don’t want civil war.”

Eric Schmitt contributed reporting from Washington.

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/03/22/graphic-tensions-rise-in-yemen/>

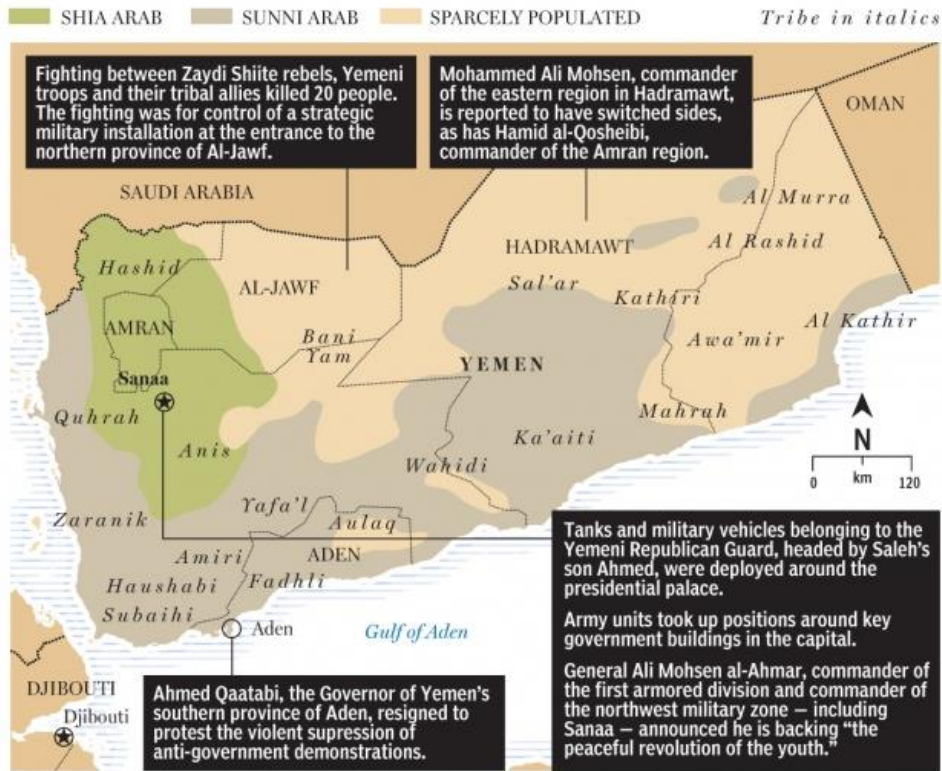
Graphic: Tensions rise in Yemen

Chris Boutet Mar 22, 2011 – 10:23 AM ET

Tanks and soldiers on the streets, defections from the army in support of protesters and changes in tribal affiliations are adding to the increasing unrest in Yemen. The National Post's Richard Johnson details below.

TENSIONS RISE IN YEMEN

Tanks and soldiers on the streets, defections from the army in support of protesters and changes in tribal affiliations are adding to increasing unrest in Yemen.



SOURCE: NEWS REPORTS

RICHARD JOHNSON / NATIONAL POST

<http://www.france24.com/en/20110321-military-defect-join-anti-government-protesters-ahmar-mohsen-qusaibi-saleh-yemen>

Latest update: 22/03/2011

Top military commanders join anti-regime protesters



A general and longtime adviser to Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Saleh joined other military leaders by defecting to support demonstrators who are calling for Saleh to step down.
By News Wires (text)

AP - Three army commanders, including a top general, defected Monday to the opposition calling for President Ali Abdallah Saleh to step down as army tanks and armored vehicles deployed in the streets of the Yemeni capital.

The most senior of the three officers is Maj. Gen. Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, a longtime confidante of Saleh and commander of the army's powerful 1st Armored Division. Units of the division deployed Monday in a major square in Sanaa where protesters have been camping out to call for Saleh to step down.

All three officers belong to Saleh's Hashid tribe, which called on Saleh to step down on Sunday – dealing his desperate attempts to cling on to power a serious blow.

The two others are Mohammed Ali Mohsen and Hameed al-Qusaibi, who both have the rank of brigadier.

News of the defections came one day after crowds flooded cities and towns across Yemen to mourn dozens of protesters killed Friday when Saleh's security forces opened fire from rooftops on a demonstration in Sanaa.

Al-Ahmar has been a close confidante to Saleh for most of the 32 years the Yemeni president has been in power. He is a veteran of the 1994 civil war that saw Saleh's army suppress an attempt by southern Yemen to secede four years after the two parts of the impoverished Arab nation united. The south had until then been a separate nation. Al-Ahmar also fought in recent years against Shiite rebels in the north of the country.

Al-Ahmar announced his defection in a message delivered by a close aide to the protest leaders at the Sanaa square that has for weeks been the epicenter of their movement.

<http://www.news.com.au/breaking-news/yemen-shuts-down-al-jazeera/story-e6frfku0-1226027119131#ixzz1N6QGTndy>

Yemen shuts down Al-Jazeera

From correspondents in Dubai

From: AFP

March 24, 2011 4:31AM

AUTHORITIES in Yemen, which has been hit by two months of anti-regime protests, overnight closed down the offices of Al-Jazeera, the Arab satellite news channel said.

The Doha-based television, in a strapline on screen, said its offices in Sanaa were closed and press accreditation withdrawn of its staff in Yemen, which has heavily criticised the channel's coverage of the unrest.

Yemen, which has also accused Al-Jazeera of bias in favour of the demonstrators, last Saturday ordered two Al-Jazeera correspondents to leave the country, saying they were working illegally and had acted unprofessionally.

The order came a day after loyalists of embattled President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime gunned down 52 pro-democracy protesters in Sanaa, provoking widespread international condemnation.

Among those shot dead was Yemeni photojournalist Jamal al-Sharaabi, who worked for independent weekly *Al-Masdar*, media rights groups said.

In March 2010, Saleh's ruling party warned the authorities could shut down Al-Jazeera, accusing the network of lack of objectivity in its coverage of an earlier round of unrest.

<http://www.france24.com/en/20110323-saleh-warns-civil-war-anti-government-protests-sanaa-yemen-al-qaeda-us->

Latest update: 23/03/2011

Saleh warns against civil war as protests continue



Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh warned on Tuesday his country would fall into civil war if anti-government protests succeed in dislodging him, as the US voiced worry over weeks of unrest that have gripped their strategic Arabian Peninsula ally.

By News Wires (text)

REUTERS - Yemen's president said on Tuesday his country would descend into civil war if he were forced to quit and Washington voiced concern about instability in the Arab state that has become an al Qaeda stronghold.

Seven weeks of unrelenting anti-government protests and defections among the ruling elite have piled pressure on Ali Abdullah Saleh, a U.S. ally against radical Islamist ambitions in the Arabian peninsula, to step down immediately after 32 years in power.

But an aide said he would leave office only after organising parliamentary polls and establishing democratic institutions, by January 2012 -- a declaration the opposition promptly rejected.

"Ali Abdullah Saleh does not seek power," Saleh's media secretary Ahmed al-Sufi told Reuters. "Ali Abdullah Saleh will not leave without knowing who he is handing over to."

The United States, grappling with the diplomatic fallout of uprisings and uncertainty across the Arab world, voiced rare public alarm about the situation in Yemen.

"We are obviously concerned about the instability in Yemen," U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said. His chief concern was to avoid "diversion of attention" from opposing al Qaeda there.

Opposition spokesman Mohammed al-Sabry, rejecting Saleh's offer to go by January 2012, said the coming hours would be decisive.

In speeches to army officers and tribal leaders in Sanaa, Saleh said Yemen faced a danger of civil war and disintegration because of efforts to stage a "coup" against his rule.

"You have an agenda to tear down the country, the country will be divided into three instead of two ... (parts). A southern part, northern part and a middle part. This is what is being sought by defectors against ... unity," he said, referring to northern Shi'ite rebels and al Qaeda militants.

"Those who want to climb up to power through coups should know that this is out of the question. The homeland will not be stable, there will be a civil war, a bloody war. They should carefully consider this," Saleh told army commanders.

Presidential guards loyal to Saleh surrounded an air force battalion in the coastal city of Hudaida after its commander said he supported the protesters. A presidential guard and a soldier died in clashes between the two forces in the southern coastal city of Mukalla late on Monday, medical sources said.

In southern Abyan province, troops clashed with al Qaeda militants, killing 12 and wounding five, state media said.

Liquefied natural gas producer Yemen LNG has told customers that unrest could lead to supply disruptions, leading stakeholder Total said.

Slide into failed state

Western countries fear the political crisis could hasten a slide into failed nation status for a country that borders the world's biggest oil exporter, Saudi Arabia, and major shipping routes. One scenario could see the country split into separate zones along tribal, military or regional lines.

Al Qaeda has already used Yemen to attempt attacks in Saudi Arabia and the United States in the past two years. The Shi'ite Houthi movement has staged a number of revolts against Saleh.

One opposition leader offered Saleh the prospect of secure retirement if, like Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, he would go quietly, unlike Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.

"He shouldn't follow the style of Gaddafi by destroying the country and killing people," Yassin Noman, rotating head of Yemen's opposition coalition said.

"After this long term of governing, he should say: Thank you my people, I leave you peacefully."

"I know the morality of Yemeni people. If he left peacefully, they will look at him as a real leader. He will be able to live wherever he likes," Noman told Reuters. "They will ensure him a very nice life. His dignity will be kept."

Several generals and officials have abandoned Saleh this week after a massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators on Friday

On Tuesday, Abdel-Malik Mansour, Yemen's envoy to the Arab League, told Al Arabiya television he was siding with protesters. Abdul-Rahman al-Iryani, whom Saleh sacked as environment minister on Sunday along with the rest of the cabinet, said on Facebook he was joining "the revolutionaries".

Protest massacre

Defections have included generals, tribal leaders, diplomats and ministers. They have gained momentum since gunmen loyal to Saleh opened fire on demonstrators in the capital Sanaa on Friday. Fifty-two people were killed.

A crowd of around 10,000 gathered outside Sanaa University in a rally that has been repeated for the past seven weeks, with youth playing a key role. Saleh offered dialogue with young people on Tuesday, and state media said he was sympathetic to their problems.

Protesters, however, have been uncompromising. Echoing demands that have been satisfied in Tunisia and Egypt and continue to be heard elsewhere across the region, they chanted: "The people want the fall of regime".

The body of one of those killed on Friday was brought to the protesters before burial. "The people want a trial for the butcher," they shouted, hurling abuse at Saleh.

France on Monday became the first Western power to call publicly for Saleh to stand down. Foreign Minister Alain Juppe described his departure as "unavoidable".

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abubakr al-Qirbi returned from Riyadh on Monday where Saleh sent him to seek Saudi-led Gulf Arab mediation. A diplomatic source said there had been no indication of success in the effort to involve those countries.

Tribal sources said tribal sheikhs had embarked on mediation efforts on Tuesday, focusing on a potential agreement that protests could continue, violence against protesters would be investigated and a smooth transition of power would take place.

No more details were available.

Poverty

On Tuesday, soldiers were preventing cars driving along roads close to Saleh's presidential palace in Sanaa. Late on Monday night residents heard explosions and shooting near a presidential place in Yemen's eastern port of Mukalla.

General Ali Mohsen, commander of the northwest military zone and Saleh's kinsman from the al-Ahmar clan, said on Monday he was backing the protesters and warned of civil war.

On Tuesday Mohsen -- seen by northern rebels as a ruthless military leader -- declared in a statement read out to the protesters camping out in Sanaa that the "era of military coups is over" and vowed to protect the "youth revolution".

Tanks were deployed outside the presidential palace in the southern port city of Aden, focal point of a separatist movement hoping to escape Yemen's myriad problems by recreating the former South Yemen that feels cheated by unity under Saleh.

Opponents complain that Yemen under Saleh has failed to meet the basic needs of the country's 23 million people. Unemployment is around 35 percent and 50 percent for young people. Oil wealth is dwindling and water is running out.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportID=92269>

YEMEN: Forty killed in clashes in northern governorate of Al-Jawf



Photo: Adel Yahya/IRIN

Too many guns in private hands

SANAA, 23 March 2011 (IRIN) - The anti-government uprising, backed by opposition parties, has sparked clashes between pro- and anti-government tribesmen in the northern Yemeni governorate of Al-Jawf where at least 40 people have been killed in the past few days, said Sheikh Abdulhamid Amer, chairman of local NGO Social Development and Peace Association.

"The clashes broke out five days ago when government-paid thugs opened fire on peaceful protesters supporting the 'Youth Revolution' in front of the governorate administrative buildings in Al-Jawf city," he told IRIN.

The governorate administrative buildings and the locally-based 115th Infantry Division are both controlled by anti-government tribesmen. Amer expected further casualties in the ongoing clashes with pro-government forces.

Anti-government tribesmen took over control of the 115th Infantry Division after its commander, Brig Abdurabu Hussein, refused to hand over to Brig Ali Haidara al-Henshi, appointed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh to replace Hussein, local independent news website barakish.net reported on 22 March.

According to the website, Hussein, who declared his support for the "Youth Revolution", handed over control of the division and its equipment to the tribesmen.

The website said Hussein was dismissed by Saleh a day after Houthi gunmen on 20 March seized two tanks, eight vehicles and four artillery pieces from a contingent of the 115th Infantry Division deployed in the governorate's Al-Safraa area. Houthi rebels have waged an on-off war with the government since 2004, demanding greater autonomy for the northern region of Sa'dah.

The tribes in the Al-Jawf area are part of the Bakil confederation, many of whose senior sheikhs are now opposed to Saleh.

"Strategic military positions in the governorate are now controlled by anti-government tribesmen and Houthi gunmen," NGO chairman Amer told IRIN. "About 20 troops and Houthi gunmen were killed in the latter's attack on the contingent."

Military defections

During a meeting with members of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces on 22 March, Saleh urged military commanders who had defected to return to what he called "constitutional legitimacy".

"The era of coups has ended. He who wants to come to power must get there through the ballot box. All of us know that the Yemeni people possess arms. Those who defected from the government's armed forces want to drag the country into a civil war," Saleh warned.

"Military defections will have a negative impact on the homeland. The homeland will divide into several parts. Those dissidents must have thought well before taking such emotional decisions," he said.

Fears of more widespread fighting have grown following the defection of Gen Ali Mohsen Saleh, commander of the Northwestern Military Zone (NWMZ), and Gen Mohamed Ali Mohsen, commander of the Eastern Military Zone (EMZ), plus several other division commanders in northern and eastern governorates.

They announced their support for the ongoing "Youth Revolution" after the 18 March attack on protesters in front of Sanaa University, which left some 52 people dead and more than 250 injured.

Hadhramaut clashes

Accusations have been traded between Saleh and his opponents in the army following clashes between EMZ troops, supporting the uprising, and Republican Guard forces in Hadhramaut. Three soldiers and an officer were killed in these clashes, eyewitnesses told IRIN from Hadhramaut on 22 March. They said EMZ tanks are now deployed on the streets of Mukalla, capital of Hadhramaut Governorate.

The Republican Guard, which has divisions in most Yemeni governorates, is led by Brig Ahmad Ali Abdullah Saleh, one of Saleh's sons.

On the same day, Aljazeera TV reported that Republican Guard forces were besieging the Aerial Defence Division in the western governorate of Hodeidah, after its commander declared his support for the "Youth

“ The era of civil wars has ended. It is Saleh himself who is provoking civil war rumours ”

Revolution”.

The opposition has rejected Saleh’s offer of a peaceful transfer of power after parliamentary elections in early 2012, and demanded his ouster.

"Saleh must quit as soon as possible," said Mohammed Qahtan, spokesperson for Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), an opposition coalition of six major parties. "The era of civil wars has ended. It is Saleh himself who is provoking civil war rumours."

Qahtan said next Friday would be the "Friday of Advancing", with protesters advancing towards the presidential palace.

JMP Chairman Yasin Saeed Numan said Saleh's offers should have been made before the Yemeni people took to the streets, "not now".

"Now, we are led by people in the street. We don't have the capacity to persuade protesters to accept such offers."

Even before the current political troubles, Yemen was ranked 140 out of 182 countries on the UN Development Programme’s Human Development Index. The country is grappling with poverty, water scarcity, internal conflicts, terrorism, and decreasing oil production. Humanitarian access to beneficiaries is limited due to banditry, the presence of armed groups, and Al-Qaeda influence in some areas. It is the poorest country in the Middle East.

ay/cb

Theme (s): Conflict, Early Warning, Governance,

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/0/8447/World/0/Yemen-MPs-pass-emergency-law-despite-youth-appeal.aspx>

Yemen MPs pass emergency law despite youth appeal Parliament in Yemen approved the state of emergency proposed by president Ali Abdullah Saleh

AFP , Wednesday 23 Mar 2011

Parliament on Wednesday approved a state of emergency declared by the president despite an appeal from young Yemenis that it could trigger a new "massacre" aimed at quelling their anti-regime protests.

The opposition swiftly rejected the vote as "illegal" and based on fraud. "What they had done to pass the state of emergency is fraud and we reject it," Abdul Razaq al-Hajri of the powerful Islamist opposition Al-Islah (Reform) party told AFP.

Parliamentary officials said more than 160 MPs out of 164 who attended a special session voted for the step, which the president announced on Friday, hours after regime loyalists gunned down 52 protesters near the university.

But Hajri said the turnout figure was fudged and that only 133 members attended. To take effect, the bill needed the approval of a majority in parliament and a quorum of more than 50 percent to validate the vote.

The parliamentary opposition, independent MPs and members of embattled President Ali Abdullah Saleh's own General People's Congress who have resigned boycotted the session of Yemen's 301-seat parliament. Before the vote, the two-month-old protest movement warned of dire consequences.

"A vote in favour is equivalent to approving the massacre of the innocent," demonstrators camped at a square near Sanaa University since February 21 said in an appeal to the deputies.

Saleh has ruled for more than three decades but now faces an escalating campaign for his removal. The opposition has turned down an offer from Saleh to step down early, after he earlier insisted on holding office until his current term as president ends in September and not to run again.

On Wednesday, the offer was formalised in a document received by the opposition camp, its spokesman, Mohammed Gahtan, told AFP. The proposal is for the formation of a unity government, a new electoral law with voting based on proportional representation, a referendum on a new constitution, and a legislative election.

The poll would be followed by the nomination by the end of 2011 of a successor to Saleh by the newly elected MPs, rather than next January.

His regime has been hit by a wave of defections in the ranks of the military, among influential tribal chiefs, Muslim clerics and senior diplomats as well as within Saleh's party, especially since Friday's massacre.

Late on Tuesday, the president invited Yemen's youths spearheading the protests to take part in an "open, truthful and transparent dialogue away from narrow partisan interests, prioritising the country's interests."

Saleh said he "sympathises" with the youths' demands and their "legitimate aspirations," the state news agency Saba reported, quoting an official in the president's office.

The demonstrators, for whom the impact of the state of emergency vote on their vigil outside the university was not immediately clear, have called for fresh demonstrations after Muslim weekly prayers on Friday.

Some of them have proposed a march on the presidential palace, although such attempts in the past have resulted in bloodshed, a correspondent at their camp said.

While elements of the regular army, which has tanks posted around key installations in Sanaa, have vowed to protect the demonstrators, the elite Republican Guard loyal to Saleh has deployed tanks around the palace.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/24/yemeni-presidential-guards-clash-army>

Yemeni presidential guards clash with army

Guards clash with army units backing opposition groups in Mukalla, as anti-Saleh movement plans 'day of departure'

- Reuters
- guardian.co.uk, Thursday 24 March 2011 11.50 GMT



A Yemeni soldier is kissed by a protester during a demonstration against the president in Sana'a. Photograph: Ahmad Gharabli/AFP/Getty Images

Presidential guards loyal to Yemen's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, clashed in the town of Mukalla on Thursday with army units backing opposition groups who are demanding his removal.

The clash wounded one person and highlighted the tension in Yemen, where top generals, diplomats and tribal chiefs defected this week to the side of democracy protesters who have been camped out in central Sana'a for six weeks.

Army and presidential guards – a force headed by Saleh's son Ahmed – clashed earlier this week in Mukalla, a coastal city in the Hadramout region, leaving one dead on each side.

Saleh and opposition groups have both made proposals for reform. On Wednesday Saleh offered new presidential elections by January 2012 instead of when his term ends in September 2013.

An umbrella group of civil society organisations called for a transitional council of nine figures "not involved with the corruption of the old regime" to draw up a new constitution over a six-month period ahead of elections.

But the issue of what would happen to Saleh, who outlasted a civil war in 1994, a recent rebellion by northern Shias and separatist discontent in the south, was left untouched in the proposal from the group, called the Civil Bloc.

Opposition parties said on Thursday they were tired of the drip-feed of concessions. "This talk is aimed at delaying the announcement of the death of the regime. The opposition does not need to respond," said spokesman Muhammad al-Sabry.

Saleh, in power since 1978, made the offer in a letter sent not only to the opposition but also to General Ali Mohsen, commander of the north-western zone.

Mohsen said this week he was now supporting protesters in a blow to Saleh that has helped turn the tide against him. Mohsen and others defectors made their move after 52 protesters were shot dead in Sana'a last week.

"The political tide in Yemen has turned decisively against President Ali Abdullah Saleh," the International Crisis Group (ICG) said in a report. "His choices are limited: he can fight his own military or negotiate a rapid and dignified transfer of power."

Saleh reacted to the loss of his ally Mohsen, seen as Yemen's second most powerful figure, with a series of meetings with military and tribal leaders where he warned against a "coup" that would lead to civil war.

Saleh also has intelligence services on his side and security sources say he has beefed up his personal security for fear of an assassination attempt.

Western countries and Arab allies, such as Saudi Arabia, are still worried about a power vacuum if Saleh goes that could embolden al-Qaida, which has entrenched itself in the mountainous Arabian Peninsula state.

"We've had a good working relationship with President Saleh. He's been an important ally in the counter-terrorism arena," the US defence secretary, Robert Gates, said on Wednesday. "I think we will basically just continue to watch the situation. We haven't done any post-Saleh planning," he said.

Protesters who have been encamped in their thousands outside Sana'a University for six weeks have hardened in their attitude towards Saleh, rejecting any idea of his remaining.

They are planning a "day of departure" this Friday after prayers that could bring hundreds of thousands on to the streets.

Around 10,000 people gathered on Thursday morning, chanting slogans such as "Go, go, you coward; you are an American agent."

Authorities have withdrawn the licences of al-Jazeera correspondents and ordered them to stop work, the Qatari channel said. Yemeni state media accuse the network of bias.

Protesters are divided over what they think of Mohsen, an Islamist from the same Hashed tribal confederation as Saleh who was popularly regarded as the second most powerful man in the country before he abandoned his old comrade.

"The country risks replacing the current regime with one bearing striking similarities, dominated by tribal elites from Hashed and powerful Islamists," the ICG report said.

Some protesters display the general's picture on their tents in the protest encampment in Sana'a, but opposition leaders regard his motives with suspicion, and few would want him to have a role in any future transitional government.

In Yemen, a day of rival demonstrations

By the CNN Wire Staff

March 25, 2011 -- Updated 1627 GMT (0027 HKT)



A Yemeni protester demonstrates against President Ali Abdullah Saleh on Thursday, March 24 in Sanaa.

(CNN) -- Yemen's president, speaking to thousands of people at a pro-government demonstration on Friday, underscored his intentions to have a dialogue with protesters and make concessions in order to avoid bloodshed.

This comes amid a report of discussions between President Ali Abdullah Saleh and a pro-opposition general over guidelines for a peaceful transition of power.

Saleh told the throng that while he's ready to hand over authority systematically, he said he won't do so to "gangs," "drug dealers" or the Houthi rebels fighting the government.

"We are against chaos and coups and against shooting one single bullet on our people," Saleh said. "We will hand over the authority to you great people."

As he spoke in Al-Sabeen Square, anti-government demonstrators gathered in another part of the capital in University Square.

The rival gatherings reflected the gulf in opinion throughout restive Yemen, a key U.S. ally and central battleground against al Qaeda that has been wracked by protests since the beginning of the year.

The turnouts come after Saleh this week accepted opposition demands for constitutional reforms and holding parliamentary elections by the end of the year, steps that would "end the current state of political turmoil facing the nation" and usher in "a smooth, peaceful and democratic transition," he has said.

He has accepted five points submitted by the opposition JMP, including formation of a government of national unity and a national committee to draft a new constitution, drafting a new electoral law, and holding a constitutional referendum, parliamentary elections and a presidential vote by the end of the year.

In his remarks on Friday, he addressed these moves, saying he salutes the people's "support for constitutional legitimacy" and a "referendum on unity, freedom, democracy and legitimacy."

"We are with you," he said.

As for security, Saleh said to the crowd that "you are the military and security of the nation" but stressed that the government "will challenge" those who "challenge Yemen."

Ibrahim Mothana, a human rights activist, told CNN the security presence on the streets has been extensive, and he described the anti-government protest as huge.

At the protest demonstration, he said, a funeral prayer took place for two of the people who died last week in Sanaa.

"I think it is the biggest crowd since the protest started but everything seems under control so far. It seems there will be no clashes today and hopefully there will be no casualties."

Eyewitnesses said a statement was read to protesters from the spokesman of Gen. Ali Muhsen Al-Ahmar, one of the several officials who defected to the opposition.

"I vow to never go against you and will stand with you until your demands are met," the statement said. "We are very close to victory and need to be patient during the final step."

Human rights groups raised concerns that violence could break out on Friday. At least 52 demonstrators were gunned down last Friday by regime loyalists.

Amnesty International urged authorities to stop security forces from using "unwarranted deadly force and heavy-handed tactics."

"The government cannot just shoot its way out of this crisis," said Philip Luther, Amnesty International's deputy director for the Middle East and North Africa. "Whether in uniform or in plain clothes, security forces must be immediately stopped from using live ammunition on unarmed protesters."

Yemen's parliament this week approved a 30-day extension of emergency powers Saleh declared last week in response to protests. The emergency law expands the government's powers of arrest, detention and censorship.

"The emergency law appears to be a desperate attempt to reinforce mechanisms to stamp out dissent and shut out witnesses to human rights abuses," Luther said on Thursday. "The Yemeni government needs to uphold its people's right to express genuine grievances and ensure justice for those killed unlawfully."

A Yemeni government official, who asked not to be named because of the sensitivity of the situation, told CNN that Saleh and Muhsen, as well as other government and opposition leaders, have held discussions over the last two days on guidelines for the departure of Saleh and his relatives from government. U.S. and British officials in Sanaa have been briefed about the talks, he said.

Officials are seriously discussing the creation of a federalist structure for Yemen, dividing it up into autonomous regions akin to those in the United Arab Emirates.

Meanwhile, the official said, "the situation is getting dangerous" and there is concern that tribes are taking control of districts in Mareb, Jawf, Saada.

The official said Saleh is attempting to gain favor from the grass-roots youth movement that is supported by the opposition.

"The country is starting to disintegrate and I think today, from watching President Saleh's remarks -- he's now taking his message to the people, to the youth. They are the group that is orchestrating the (anti-government) demonstrations in Sanaa."

CNN's Mohammed Jamjoom, Joe Sterling and Hamdi Alkhshali contributed to this report.

<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/374025>

Yemen's Saleh says willing to quit under conditions

Reuters

Fri, 25/03/2011 - 13:00



Photographed by AFP

Sanaa -- Embattled President Ali Abdullah Saleh said on Friday he was ready to cede power to prevent more bloodshed in Yemen but only to what he called "safe hands" as a massive "Day of Departure" street protest against him began.

Western countries are alarmed that al Al-Qaeda militants entrenched in the Arabian Peninsula country could exploit any chaos arising from a messy transition of power if Saleh, a pivotal US and Saudi ally fighting for his political life, finally steps down after 32 years in power.

"We don't want power, but we need to hand power over to safe hands, not to sick, resentful or corrupt hands," Saleh said in a rousing speech to supporters shown on state television as tens of thousands of his foes rallied elsewhere in the capital Sanaa.

Thousands of Saleh supporters in Sanaa were also out early on the streets for what they dubbed the "Friday of Tolerance."

"We are ready to leave power but only for safe hands," Saleh said. "We are against firing a single bullet and when we give concessions this is to ensure there is no bloodshed. We will remain steadfast and challenge them with all power we have."

Protesters encamped in their thousands outside Sanaa University for six weeks declared Friday a "Day of Departure" when they hoped to bring hundreds of thousands onto the streets in a further attempt to oust Saleh, a serial survivor of civil war, separatist movements and militant attacks.

Similar mass protests on 18 March left 52 people dead, apparently gunned down by plainclothes snipers. That bloodshed prompted a string of generals, diplomats and tribal leaders to abandon Saleh, severely weakening his position.

"The government cannot just shoot its way out of this crisis," Philip Luther, Amnesty's Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa, said in a statement. "Whether in uniform or in plainclothes, security forces must be immediately stopped from using live ammunition on unarmed protesters."

RIVAL GATHERINGS IN SANAA

Some Saleh loyalists were carrying guns and waving traditional Yemeni daggers and Al-Arabiya satellite television said Saleh might address them later.

Some were riding motorbikes with large posters of Saleh affixed to them, waving flags and playing patriotic music. "No to chaos, yes to security and stability," their banners said.

In another district of town near the university thousands of anti-Saleh protesters were walking with their prayer rugs toward Friday prayers, their mood hardened since the deaths of protests the Friday before.

"I came here to get rid of this butcher because he killed our comrades," said Abdullah Jabali, 33, a student, who said he did not believe Saleh's promises to stand down within a year.

"I just want this president and his family to leave peacefully, not to leave the country but to step down," said Mahdi Mohammed, 36, a translator from Aden.

Security was tight, as the army conducted five separate checks on people entering the protest zone.

Saleh, who oversaw the 1990 unification of north and south Yemen and emerged victorious from a civil war four years later, has shown no signs publicly of being prepared to quit now.

He has offered a string of concessions, all rejected by opposition parties, including this week to hold presidential elections by January 2012. He has also warned military officers who have turned against him not to plot a coup.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday that Saleh and top general Ali Mohsen -- the most significant of this week's defectors -- were hashing out a deal whereby both men resign within days to allow a civilian transitional government.

But Saleh was defiant in a speech on Thursday, offering only an amnesty to defecting troops at a meeting with commanders.

Army units have clashed twice this week with presidential guards headed by Saleh's son Ahmed in the southern town of Mukalla on the Arabian Sea. Saleh also has the intelligence services, run by close allies, on this side.

ANTI-QAEDA BULWARK

Washington and Riyadh, Yemen's main financial backer, have long seen Saleh as a bulwark against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which has tried to stage attacks beyond Yemeni soil since 2009 in both Saudi Arabia and United States.

"The chaos of a post-Saleh Yemen in which there is no managed transition may lead to conditions that could allow AQAP and other extremist elements to flourish," analyst Christopher Boucek said in a forthcoming issue of the militant affairs periodical CTC Sentinel.

Yemen lies on key shipping routes and borders the world's leading oil exporter Saudi Arabia. It has often seemed to be on the brink of disintegration: Northern Shias often taken up arms against Saleh and southerners dream of a separate state.

With no clear successor in line and with conflicts gripping northern and southern Yemen, the country of 23 million faces the risk of a breakup, in addition to poverty, a water shortage, dwindling oil reserves and lack of central government control.

<http://dna-algerie.com/international/1531-direct-yemen-le-president-saleh-se-dit-pret-a-quitter-le-pouvoir-dans-les-heures-qui-viennent.html>

Yémen : Le président Saleh se dit prêt à quitter le pouvoir dans les heures qui viennent

Samedi, 26 Mars 2011, 08:27 | DNA avec agences



Libye, Syrie, Yémen, Jordanie, Bahrein... De l'Afrique du Nord au Moyen Orient, les peuples se soulèvent contre tyrans, monarques, rois et autres présidents à vie qui ont confisqué pouvoir et richesses. Depuis trois mois, le monde arabe vit au rythme des révolutions de rue. Certains despotes, à l'exemple du tunisien Ben Ali et de l'égyptien Moubarak sont déjà tombés, d'autres sont en sursis.

Samedi 26 mars

23 h 10. Libye : 5 avions libyens détruits. Des avions français ont détruit samedi cinq avions et deux hélicoptères libyens sur l'aéroport de Misrata, rapporte l'AFP citant des sources auprès de l'état-major des armées.

« Les premières observations permettent de constater la destruction au sol à Misrata d'au moins cinq avions de combat Galeb et d'au moins deux hélicoptères de combat MI-35 qui se préparaient à mener des opérations dans la région », indique un communiqué du ministère français de la Défense.

21 h 40. Libye : Frappes britanniques. L'armée de l'air britannique a participé vendredi à des bombardements contre des positions des forces pro-Kadhafi, a annoncé samedi le ministère de la Défense à Londres.

Un chasseur Tornado « a participé à des tirs coordonnés de missiles contre des unités des forces militaires du colonel Kadhafi », a expliqué le ministère dans un communiqué. « L'appareil a lancé des missiles Brimstone, détruisant trois véhicules blindés à Misrata et deux autres à Adjabiya », a ajouté le ministère.

18 h 20. Yémen : Saleh se dit prêt à quitter le pouvoir. Le président yéménite Ali Abdallah Saleh s'est dit prêt à quitter le pouvoir « dignement », peut-être même dans les heures qui viennent, rapporte aujourd'hui la chaîne de télévision Al Arabia.

Le chef de l'Etat a toutefois démenti l'imminence d'un accord sur une transition pacifique du pouvoir, ajoute la chaîne à laquelle il a accordé une interview.

L'opposition, a-t-il ajouté, a revu ses exigences à la hausse après l'ouverture de négociations.

Le président du Yémen Abdallah Ali Saleh ainsi que le général major Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar pourraient annoncer leurs départs respectifs dans les prochains jours, indiquait vendredi le journal The Wall Street Journal.

Citant des sources familières du sérail yéménite, le quotidien indique que « les deux parties se sont mises d'accord sur les principaux points de ce retrait, et samedi devrait être la journée où Saleh et le général Ahmar partiront ».

Alo Saleh est arrivé au pouvoir en juillet 1978.

12 h 50. Libye : Obama parle de mission réussie. « Ne vous y trompez pas : parce que nous avons agi rapidement, une catastrophe humanitaire a été évitée et les vies d'innombrables civils innocents, hommes, femmes et enfants, ont été sauvées », a déclaré le président américain lors de son intervention hebdomadaire.

« Notre mission en Libye est claire et ciblée », a-t-il ajouté, rappelant que le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU avait décidé d'imposer une zone d'exclusion aérienne pour protéger les Libyens contre « davantage d'atrocités ».

« Nous sommes en train de réussir notre mission. Nous avons anéanti les défenses anti-aériennes de la Libye. Les forces de Kadhafi ne progressent plus en Libye », a-t-il d



it, estimant que « chaque Américain peut être fier des vies que nous avons sauvées ».

09 h 24. Libye : Ajdabiya reprise par les rebelles. La ville stratégique d'Ajdabiya, dans l'est de la Libye, est tombée samedi matin aux mains des rebelles, selon des journalistes de l'AFP sur place.

Les positions de défense des pro-Kadhafi à la porte Est de la ville, visée vendredi par des bombardements aériens, étaient désertées. Il ne restait plus que des chars calcinés.

Des bombardements aériens avaient visé vendredi après-midi les positions des forces loyalistes dans cette ville côtière où étaient retranchés des soldats pro-Kadhafi. Des soldats fidèles à ce dernier ont été fait prisonniers.

Les rebelles ont repris l'offensive et pénétré dans ce gros bourg stratégique à 160 km au sud de Benghazi, le fief de l'opposition.

Les pro-Kadhafi avaient repris Ajdabiya la semaine dernière au cours de leur offensive contre la rébellion qui tenait l'Est depuis un mois, avant d'attaquer Benghazi. Mais l'intervention militaire de la coalition internationale, lancée le 19 mars, a freiné leur avancée.

09h 10. Libye : des armes pour les insurgés. Les États-Unis et leurs alliés étudient la fourniture d'armes à l'opposition libyenne, a rapporté le Washington Post.

L'administration du président Barack Obama estime que la résolution de l'ONU qui a autorisé l'intervention internationale contre la Libye est assez « souple » pour permettre une telle aide en matériel, ajoute le journal qui cite des responsables américains et européens non identifiés.

La France, pour sa part, s'est prononcée pour entraîner et armer les insurgés, selon le Washington Post. L'Égypte, de son côté, fournirait des armes aux rebelles libyens pour combattre les forces de Kadhafi malgré l'embargo sur les armes décrété le 26 février par les Nations unies, avait affirmé hier le Wall Street Journal.



Vendredi 25 mars

19 h 37. Libye : Kadhafi arme des volontaires. Le colonel Mouammar Kadhafi fournit des armes à des « volontaires » civils pour aller combattre les rebelles, a déclaré un haut responsable du Pentagone, le vice-amiral Bill Gortney, signe selon lui de l'affaiblissement des forces libyennes.

18 h 48. Syrie : répression féroce et sanglante. Les forces de sécurité ont ouvert le feu sur les manifestants dans plusieurs villes du pays, alors que des affrontements opposaient, pour la première fois, dans les rues de Damas, opposants et partisans du régime.

A Deraa même, l'armée a ouvert le feu après que la foule a incendié une statue de feu Hafez el-Assad, père du « raïs » actuel, Bachar el-Assad, indique Associated Press (AP).

Des tirs nourris continuaient de retentir dans le centre-ville, selon des habitants s'exprimant sous le couvert de l'anonymat, qui rapportaient des témoignages faisant état de plusieurs victimes.

Des journalistes qui tentaient de se rendre dans la Vieille ville se sont fait refouler hors de Deraa par l'armée, cette dernière leur affirmant que le calme était rétabli.

Selon un militant de l'opposition à Damas, en contact avec des militants sur place, il y aurait également eu des tirs à Sanamein, village situé à une quarantaine de km de Deraa, qui selon des témoins auraient coûté la vie à 20 personnes. Ce bilan était impossible à vérifier de sources indépendantes.

Dans la ville côtière de Lattaquieh, où les contestataires étaient un millier, au moins un manifestant aurait été tué et plusieurs autres hospitalisés. Une personne est morte à Homs, où des centaines d'habitants ont défilé en soutien aux martyrs de Deraa, rapportaient plusieurs militants.

A Damas, devant la célèbre mosquée des Omayyades, un des principaux monuments de la vieille ville, des affrontements ont opposé partisans du régime et manifestants criant leur soutien à ceux de Deraa, se frappant à coups de ceintures de cuir.

A Alep, la grande ville du nord, des centaines de fidèles sont quant à eux sortis des mosquées après la grande prière, scandant des slogans favorables au régime, comme Dieu, la Syrie, Bachar!.

On faisait également état de manifestations en faveur des réformes et d'arrestations à Raqqah (nord), ainsi qu'à Zabadani (ouest), près de la frontière libanaise.

A Deraa, la répression, impossible à quantifier indépendamment, a fait 34 morts selon le régime, mais peut-être jusqu'à 100 selon l'opposition.

18 h 41. Jordanie : décès d'un manifestant. Khairy Jamil Saad, un manifestant jordanien âgé de 55 ans, est décédé aujourd'hui à l'Hôpital Hamzeh d'Amman, selon des sources médicales, sans préciser les causes du décès.

17 h 50. Jordanie : heurts sanglants. Plus de 100 personnes ont été blessées vendredi au cours d'affrontements entre manifestants campant sur une place d'Amman pour réclamer des réformes, et des loyalistes, selon des sources médicales.

« La police anti-émeute a été déployée pour tenter de contrôler la situation », a déclaré à l'AFP une source sécuritaire. La gendarmerie était auparavant entrée en action pour disperser les manifestants des deux bords, en utilisant des canons à eau. « Il y a plus de cent blessés dont des policiers », a indiqué à l'AFP une source médicale sur place.

« La police tentait de contrôler le groupe de partisans du pouvoir qui se trouvait sur un pont qui surplombe la place, a constaté l'AFP. Certains d'entre eux ont réussi à entrer sur la place où se trouvent les manifestants, jetant de grosses pierres en leur direction.

« Par l'âme et par le sang nous nous sacrifierons pour toi Abou Hussein » (le roi Abdallah) scandaient les loyalistes en lançant des pierres, alors que des jeunes munis de haut parleurs répliquaient « samedine, samedine » (inébranlables).

La police anti-émeutes aurait fini par démonter le camp des jeunes manifestants arrêter plusieurs d'entre eux, a annoncé à l'AFP une source de la sécurité.

16 h 20. Libye : Cadavres mutilés et rites barbares. L'envoyé spécial du journal Le Monde à Benghazi, Rémy Ourdan, rapporte le récit de deux rebelles libyens, Nasser Idriss, 34 ans, Youssef Queri a 20 ans, qui ont vu des cadavres d'insurgés réduits en charpie par les bombardements des forces de Kadhafi ainsi que d'autres cadavres mutilés, découpés.



Leur récit corrobore les témoignages faisant état de la présence de mercenaires africains au sein des troupes loyales au guide libyen. Extraits :

« Nous avons marché jusqu'à 2 km après le château d'eau. Nous marchions à l'écart de la route, dans le désert, raconte Youssef Queri. Nous avons d'abord vu un cadavre, puis d'autres cadavres. Il y avait huit voitures de rebelles sur le bord de la route, et une cinquantaine de corps éparpillés. »

« Il y avait aussi, au bord de la route, un pick-up Toyota blanc avec deux types qui écoutaient de la musique à la radio. Nous avons d'abord eu peur qu'ils soient des soldats de Kadhafi... Puis, croyant que c'était des rebelles, nous leur avons fait des signes avec nos foulards. Ils

n'ont pas bougé, pas répondu... Puis nous nous sommes approchés. Et là, nous avons vu que les deux corps avaient été sectionnés au niveau du bassin, et qu'ils avaient les oreilles coupées. Leurs blessures étaient récentes, ils saignaient encore. J'ai commencé à pleurer. »

(...)

« Nous avons vu environ vingt mercenaires noirs africains, armés de longs couteaux et de machettes, à trente mètres de nous », raconte Nasser. « Ils parlaient une langue que nous ne comprenions pas. Nous avons eu peur, mais eux ont eu peur de nous, car ils n'avaient pas d'armes à feu. Ils ont couru environ 300 m pour se réfugier derrière des tanks de l'armée libyenne. » Pour lire le reportage du Monde.

16 h 09. Syrie : au moins 20 personnes à Sanamein, à 40 km au nord de Deraa, rapporte un témoin cité par Al Jazeera.

15 h 37. Syrie : plusieurs morts à Deraa. Plusieurs manifestants ont été tués vendredi par des tirs contre leur rassemblement qui se dirigeait vers la ville de Deraa, au sud de Damas, a affirmé à l'AFP un militant syrien des droits de l'Homme.

Plusieurs manifestants ont été tués par des tirs à Sanamein alors qu'ils se dirigeaient vers Deraa », a-t-il affirmé.

Cette localité se trouve à 40 km au nord de Deraa. Cette information n'a pas pu être confirmée dans l'immédiat de source indépendante, ni par des sources hospitalières.



15 h 33. Syrie : tirs nourris. Reuters rapporte que des tirs de feu nourris ont été entendus dans un square à Deraa où la vieille plus de 100 personnes ont été tuées. Les manifestants avaient dénoncé le frère du président Bachar Al Assad, Maher, chef de la garde républicain. "Maher, le lâche, envoie tes troupes libérer le Golan" scandaient les manifestants.

15 h 29. Libye : Contre-offensive des rebelles. Les rebelles s'appêtent à lancer une offensive à Ajdabiah, à 160 km de Benghazi, après le refus des forces de Kadhafi qui contrôlent la ville de déposer les armes.

En s'approchant de la ligne de front, vendredi, un correspondant de Reuters a vu passer quatre véhicules chargés de lance-roquettes et de nombreux pick-up lourdement armés.

C'était quelques heures après une offensive aérienne britannique contre des véhicules militaires de l'armée libyenne, dans la nuit de jeudi à vendredi à Ajdabiah.

D'une route située à l'est de la ville, les insurgés ont procédé à des tirs d'artillerie nourris et les forces de Kadhafi ont répliqué en lançant deux ou trois obus qui ont explosé dans le désert, de part et d'autre de la route.

Des chefs de tribus locales ont demandé aux forces du dirigeant libyen de se rendre, lors de pourparlers tenus dans la matinée de vendredi, a raconté à Reuters Ibrahim Faradj, membre du Conseil militaire des rebelles.

15 h 10. Jordanie : Manifestants attaqués. Les jeunes Jordaniens qui campent sur une place d'Amman pour réclamer des réformes ont été de nouveau attaqués vendredi par un groupe de loyalistes qui ont lancé de grosses pierres, faisant 57 blessés.

15 h 10. Yémen : tirs. L'armée yéménite a tiré en l'air à Sanaa pour tenir à distance des partisans et des opposants au président Ali Abdallah Saleh, qui manifestaient en masse dans les rues de la capitale yéménite, selon un journaliste de l'AFP.

11 h 37. Yémen : Le président Saleh affirme qu'il accepterait de partir d'ici la fin de l'année mais qu'il doit remettre le pouvoir « entre de bonnes mains ». Il affirme que les manifestations anti-gouvernement n'aident pas le pays.

10 h 53. Yémen : Ali Saleh quitterait le pouvoir samedi 26 mars. Le président du Yémen Abdallah Ali Saleh ainsi que le général major Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar pourraient annoncer leurs départs respectifs dans les prochains jours, indique le journal The Wall Street Journal.



Citant des sources familières du sérail yéménite, le quotidien indique que «les deux parties se sont mises d'accord sur les principaux points de ce retrait, et samedi devrait être la journée où Saleh et le général Ahmar partiront ». Lire l'article du Wall Street.

10 h 48. Libye : Reportage exceptionnel de France 24 avec les insurgés. Une équipe d'envoyés spéciaux de la chaîne France 24 ont se sont embarqués avec les insurgés libyens pour suivre l'avancée des rebelles face aux troupes du régime du colonel Kadhafi à Brega, avant la contre-offensive des forces loyales au Guide libyen et les frappes aériennes de la

coalition.



Le reportage dans sa version longue de 26 minutes sera diffusé dimanche 27 mars à 21 h 10. Vous pouvez suivre un extrait de ce reportage sur ce lien.

10 h 00. Yémen : la manif de la grande peur. D'importantes forces de la police et de l'armée ont été déployées aujourd'hui à Sanaa où l'opposition organise une journée de mobilisation pour réclamer le départ du président Ali Abdallah Saleh.

Des dizaines de milliers de manifestants se sont massés sur la place du Changement, près de l'université de Sanaa.

L'armée, dont plusieurs officiers et soldats ont fait défection pour se rallier aux protestataires, et des militants de l'opposition ont dressé des points de contrôle autour de la place du Changement.

Les forces de sécurité, fidèles au chef de l'Etat, ont érigé des points de contrôle tout au long des quelque trois kilomètres qui séparent la place du Changement de celle des Al-Sabiine, près du palais présidentiel, où les partisans de M. Saleh ont convergé par milliers.

Les manifestants anti-régime, qui avaient appelé à une vaste mobilisation vendredi, avaient indiqué qu'ils attendraient le 1er avril, pour marcher sur le palais présidentiel. Le chef de l'Etat, au pouvoir depuis 32 ans, mais de plus en plus isolé, après le désaveu de dignitaires religieux et de chefs tribaux, a baptisé cette journée « le vendredi de la tolérance ».

09 h 41 : Libye : artillerie attaquée. Un avion de chasse français a détruit une batterie d'artillerie de l'armée libyenne dans la nuit aux abords de la ville d'Ajdabiya, a annoncé sur France Info l'amiral Edouard Guillaud, chef d'état-major des armées.

Il a également déclaré qu'il « pensait » que les opérations alliées en Libye se prolongeraient pendant des « semaines » et « espérait » qu'elles ne dureraient pas des « mois ».

Jeudi 24 mars

21 h 37 : Libye. Les Etats-Unis appellent les militaires libyens à « cesser de combattre » contre leurs propres compatriotes et à ne pas obéir aux ordres du colonel Kadhafi, a indiqué un haut responsable du Pentagone, le vice-amiral Bill Gortney

21 h 34 : Yémen. Le président Ali Abdallah Saleh, de plus en plus isolé face à la contestation populaire, a annoncé jeudi qu'il se défendrait par « tous les moyens possibles » et a invité les militaires ayant fait défection à « revenir à la raison ».

21 h 25 : Libye. « Plus de 350 avions » de la coalition sont impliqués dans les opérations aériennes en Libye, dont un peu plus de la moitié sont américains, a annoncé un haut-responsable du Pentagone, le vice-amiral Bill Gortney.

21 h 23 : Syrie. Tous les militants arrêtés lors des « récents évènements » sont libérés, a affirmé jeudi soir la télévision d'Etat, peu après l'annonce par les autorités d'une série de mesures en réponse aux manifestations.

« D'après une directive du président Bachar al-Assad, toutes les personnes détenues lors des récents évènements ont été libérées », a rapporté la télévision d'Etat.

Cette annonce survient quelques heures après qu'une conseillère du président Assad, Boussaina Chaabane, eut déclaré lors d'une conférence de presse à Damas que les demandes de la population étaient « légitimes » et que le régime envisageait d' « étudier l'annulation de la loi sur l'état d'urgence » décrété à l'arrivée au pouvoir du parti Baas en 1963.

19 h 12. Libye: 109 morts à Misrata. Les forces loyales au colonel Kadhafi ont tué 109 personnes et en ont blessé plus de 1.300 dans leur offensive contre les rebelles à Misrata, à l'est de Tripoli, à indiqué à l'AFP un médecin de l'hôpital de la ville.

Depuis vendredi dernier, les attaques des forces de Kadhafi ont fait 109 martyrs et 1.300 blessés, dont 81 graves, a ajouté ce médecin sous couvert de l'anonymat.

Jeudi, « quatre martyrs sont tombés sous les tirs de snipers », a-t-il précisé.

18 h 40 : Syrien. Le président Bachar al-Assad a promulgué aujourd'hui un décret stipulant une augmentation des salaires immédiate pour les employés de la fonction publique, a annoncé l'agence officielle Sana.

18 h 38 : Libye. Les raids de la coalition internationale ont fait « environ 100 morts » parmi les civils en Libye depuis le début de son offensive contre des positions des forces du colonel Mouammar Kadhafi, selon un bilan provisoire donné jeudi par Moussa Ibrahim, un porte-parole du régime.

17 h 46 : Libye. Le Parlement turc a approuvé jeudi le principe d'une participation turque aux opérations internationales en Libye après une demande du gouvernement pour l'envoi de navires de guerre au large de ce pays, dans le cadre de l'Otan, ont affirmé des sources parlementaires à l'AFP.

Les députés d'opposition ont aussi apporté leur soutien à cette motion, lors d'un vote qui s'est tenu à huis clos et à main levée, ont indiqué ces sources.

Le gouvernement, issu de la mouvance islamiste, a obtenu une autorisation valable pour un an de déployer des unités militaires turques dans le cadre de « contributions multidimensionnelles aux efforts internationaux visant à rétablir la stabilité et la sécurité en Libye », selon le texte de la motion.

15 h 22 : Yémen. Le ministère yéménite de l'Information a justifié aujourd'hui la fermeture du bureau d'al-Jazeera à Sanaa par la diffusion par la chaîne du Qatar de « fausses nouvelles » sur les troubles au Yémen.

La fermeture du bureau d'al-Jezira et le retrait des accréditations de ses journalistes font suite à « la diffusion de fausses nouvelles et de la présentation d'une image erronée (...) sur la situation au Yémen », a déclaré un porte-parole du ministère, cité par l'agence officielle Saba.

Il a en outre accusé la chaîne qatarie de « manquer de crédibilité, de professionnalisme et d'impartialité dans sa couverture des événements au Yémen », affirmant que la chaîne avait diffusé hier des images de torture sur des prisonniers dans une prison en Irak, en les présentant comme ayant été tournées au Yémen.

14 h 43. Libye. Un avion de chasse français a abattu un avion militaire libyen qui n'a pas respecté la zone d'exclusion au-dessus de la Libye, rapporte jeudi la chaîne de télévision américaine ABC News sur son site internet.

08 h 56 : Kadhafi est « dictateur fou ». Le ministre français des Affaires étrangères Alain Juppé a qualifié aujourd'hui le dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi de « dictateur fou » et s'est dit convaincu que « certains dans son entourage commencent à poser des questions ».



« Je suis convaincu qu'à Tripoli certains commencent à se poser des questions (...) est-ce qu'on peut continuer avec un dictateur, je ne vais pas utiliser des termes excessifs, mais fou ? », a-t-il déclaré sur RTL.

« Je n'imagine pas, après ce qui s'est passé et ce qui se passe dans le monde arabe, qu'un régime incarné par une telle personne puisse perdurer, mais nous voulons que ce soient les Libyens qui le décident », a-t-il ajouté, en soulignant que les frappes aériennes avaient aussi pour objectif de « mettre les opposants de Kadhafi en situation de reprendre l'avantage ».

« La phase suivante sera une initiative de paix. Il faut penser maintenant à organiser la paix, réunir les conditions d'un dialogue national entre le Conseil national de transition, peut-être d'autres forces politiques, il y a beaucoup d'autorités traditionnelles en Libye », a-t-il noté.

Mercredi 23 mars :

20 h 56 : Nouveaux raids aériens sur Tripoli. La coalition occidentale a mené ce soir de nouvelles attaques aériennes contre des objectifs civils et militaires à Tripoli, rapporte la télévision publique libyenne sans donner de précisions.

Des habitants de la capitale libyenne ont fait état de huit explosions dans l'est de la ville, d'où s'élèvent des colonnes de fumée.

« Nous avons entendu quatre explosions, puis quatre autres cinq minutes plus tard », a dit un habitant du quartier de Tadjoura. « Nous voyons de la fumée et des flammes. »

20 h 21 : Des pays arabes se rallient. Hillary Clinton, la chef de la diplomatie américaine, a dit s'attendre à « de nouvelles annonces dans les jours à venir » de pays arabes participant aux opérations militaires en Libye.

« Je suis satisfaite de la participation arabe. Il y aura de nouvelles annonces dans les jours qui viennent », a promis la secrétaire d'Etat

Le premier ministre britannique David Cameron avait annoncé plus tôt que le Koweït et la Jordanie apporteraient un « soutien logistique » à l'opération.

20 h 19 : Misrata bombardée. Les forces gouvernementales bombardaient ce soir le principal hôpital de Misrata, troisième ville du pays située à 200 km à l'est de Tripoli, a déclaré à l'AFP un témoin joint par téléphone. (AFP)

19 h 47 : Un dépôt d'armes bombardé. Des avions de chasse canadiens ont bombardé dans la nuit un dépôt de munitions des forces du colonel MoKadhafi dans le nord de la Libye, a annoncé mercredi le chef d'état-major adjoint de la Force aérienne du Canada, le général Tom Lawson. L'attaque a eu lieu près de Misrata, la troisième ville du pays. Il s'agit de la première offensive réalisée par les forces canadiennes participant aux opérations contre le régime de Tripoli.

Lors d'une mission précédente, les pilotes canadiens ont renoncé à bombarder un aéroport pour ne pas risquer de toucher des civils.

« La mission de la nuit dernière a abouti à la destruction d'un dépôt de munitions dans le nord de la Libye », a dit le général Lawson, avant de souligner que des « munitions guidées avec précision » ont été utilisées, pour réduire les « risques collatéraux ». Une autre sortie de chasseurs CF-18 canadiens a eu lieu mercredi matin. Aucun détail n'a été donné sur son déroulement.

18 h 10 : Pas de victimes civiles. Il n'y a pas eu de victimes civiles signalées après les frappes aériennes de la coalition contre les forces et installations militaires du colonel libyen Mouammar Kadhafi, a affirmé aujourd'hui le contre-amiral américain Gerard Hueber.

17 h 10 : l'aviation libyenne n'est plus une force. L'aviation libyenne « n'existe plus comme force de combat » après l'intervention de la coalition internationale en Libye, a affirmé aujourd'hui un haut responsable de la Royal Air Force, Greg Bagwell, cité par des médias britanniques. (AFP)

17 h 00 : Pas de date pour la fin des opérations. Il n'y a pas « de calendrier » pour la fin des opérations de la coalition internationale en Libye, a déclaré aujourd'hui au Caire le secrétaire à la Défense américain Robert Gates. (AFP)

16 h 05 : Reprise des combats à Ajdabiya. Les combats faisaient rage aujourd'hui près d'Ajdabiya. Les habitants, effrayés, fuient cette ville clé de l'Est libyen.



L'un des résidents, Faraj, 25 ans, a affirmé à l'AFP que les combats l'ont empêché de revenir dans sa ville, située à 160 km au sud de Benghazi, fief de l'insurrection contre le régime du colonel Kadhafi.

« Nous avons fait demi-tour à cause des bombardements », a-t-il dit, accompagné d'autres personnes à bord d'une voiture qui repartait sur la route de Benghazi. « Il y avait des bombardements et nous avons vu des maisons en feu », a-t-il ajouté.

Une colonne de fumée s'élevait au-dessus de la ville et des bombardements et des tirs intermittents étaient entendus, a constaté un journaliste de l'AFP.

Selon Hamed al-Qabaili, fuyant également Ajdabiya, la situation était « très mauvaise ». « Ils sont en train de tirer des missiles Grad sur les maisons », a-t-il dit.

Les forces de Kadhafi avaient repris Ajdabiya la semaine dernière au cours de leur offensive contre la rébellion qui tenait l'est du pays depuis un mois, avant d'attaquer Benghazi, le bastion des insurgés. Mais elles ont été stoppées devant Benghazi par des frappes aériennes de la chasse française.

15 h 46 : Nomination. Mohamed Jibril a été nommé chef du gouvernement de l'opposition libyenne, a indiqué un porte-parole des rebelles au quotidien The Guardian.

Mohamd Jibril avait rencontré la Secrétaire d'Etat américain Hillary Clinton

15 h 27 : Raids sur Misrata. Des avions de la coalition internationale ont bombardé mercredi des positions tenues par les forces loyales à Kadhafi dans la ville libyenne de Misrata, a indiqué à Reuters un habitant contacté par téléphone.

Ces raids aériens, ajoute-t-on de même source, ont entraîné un arrêt des tirs de l'artillerie et des blindés de Kadhafi sur Misrata.

Mais ce même habitant a indiqué par la suite que des tireurs embusqués des forces loyales à Kadhafi avaient ouvert le feu sur un hôpital, faisant au moins trois morts et trois blessés graves.

« Cela a commencé il y a une demi-heure », a dit Saadoun, de nouveau contacté par téléphone par Reuters vers 12h00 GMT. « Les snipers tirent sur l'hôpital dont les deux entrées principales sont soumises à une véritable attaque. Personne ne peut entrer ni sortir », a-t-il dit.

D'autres tireurs embusqués auraient tué deux personnes dans le centre de la ville.

Ses informations n'ont pu être vérifiées.

La troisième ville de Libye, située à 200 km à l'est de Tripoli, est aux mains des insurgés mais est le théâtre de violentes attaques des forces régulières qui auraient fait des dizaines de morts.

Selon Saadoun, les raids ont visé une base aérienne située au sud de la ville, où sont regroupées les forces régulières. « Ils n'ont pas tiré un seul obus d'artillerie depuis cette frappe aérienne », a-t-il ajouté.

10 h 10 : Boucliers humains. Le dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi était montré mardi soir à la télévision nationale en train de s'adresser à une petite foule de partisans, depuis un des bâtiments de sa résidence de Bab el-Aziziya à Tripoli, touché dimanche par un missile.

Défiant la coalition, Mouammar Kadhafi a affirmé que son pays était « prêt pour la bataille, qu'elle soit longue ou courte ». « Nous allons gagner cette bataille », a-t-il lancé, avant d'affirmer, dans une brève allocution, que « les masses étaient les plus fortes des défenses anti-aériennes ».

Dans une interview à CNN, Barack Obama a estimé que Kadhafi « pourrait essayer de se terrer et d'attendre, même face à une zone d'exclusion aérienne ».

Le président américain a souligné que Washington avait d'autres cartes que l'option militaire.



De son côté, la secrétaire d'Etat Hillary Clinton a déclaré de son côté que des proches du colonel Kadhafi ont pris des contacts dans le monde entier pour trouver une porte de sortie au conflit, ajoutant qu'elle « encourageait » cette attitude.

Elle a également déclaré avoir eu connaissance d'informations selon lesquelles un des fils du colonel Kadhafi, Khamis, aurait été tué par une frappe aérienne, mais « les preuves ne sont pas suffisantes », a-t-elle ajouté.

Mardi 22 mars :

23 h 14 : Exil ? La secrétaire d'Etat américain, Hillary Clinton, croit que le colonel Kadhafi chercherait des voies pour un exil. (Reuters).

Dans une déclaration faite à la chaîne ABC news, Mme Clinton s'interroge sur le sérieux de ces informations.

23 h 01 : Kadhafi réapparaît. Le dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi a fait ce soir une apparition en public dans sa résidence de Bab el-Aziziya à Tripoli, cible dimanche d'un missile de la coalition, rapporte la télévision nationale libyenne.

20 h 14 : Sanctions américaines. Le département du Trésor américain a indiqué mardi que les sanctions économiques des États-Unis contre le régime libyen s'étendaient à quatorze sociétés qu'il a identifiées comme des filiales de la compagnie pétrolière nationale libyenne (NOC). Info AFP

20 h 10 : Accord sur l'Otan. Les Etats-Unis, la France et la Grande-Bretagne sont tombés d'accord pour que l'Otan puisse jouer un rôle clef dans le commandement de l'opération militaire de la coalition internationale en Libye, a annoncé la Maison blanche.

20 h 03. Tirs de la DCA à Tripoli. Des tirs de la défense anti-aérienne précédés et suivis d'explosions lointaines ont été entendus ce soir à Tripoli, selon un journaliste de l'AFP.

15 h 45 : Affrontements violents au sud-ouest de Tripoli. Des « affrontements violents » ont eu lieu hier et aujourd'hui dans la région de Yefren, au sud-ouest de Tripoli, entre les rebelles qui contrôlent la région et les forces du régime libyen, faisant au moins 9 morts, ont indiqué à l'AFP des habitants de cette région.

15 h 40 : Contact de l'ONU avec les rebelles. L'envoyé spécial de l'ONU pour la Libye, le Jordanien Abdel Ilah Khatib, a eu un premier entretien tard hier soir avec la direction des

forces rebelles libyennes à Tobrouk, a annoncé un communiqué diffusé aujourd'hui par l'ONU à Tunis, où se trouve Ban Ki-moon.

15 h 35 : La journaliste tunisienne en vie. Fatma Ben Dhaou, envoyée spéciale en Libye du journal tunisien Le Quotidien et dont on était sans nouvelle depuis vendredi, a contacté son mari aujourd'hui a annoncé ce dernier.

« Dieu merci, elle est saine et sauve. Elle est à Benghazi et a réussi à me contacter par internet », a-t-il raconté.

14 h 58 : Les marines chargés de l'embargo. Les pays de l'Otan ont décidé aujourd'hui de confier à leurs marines la mission de faire respecter l'embargo sur les armes à destination de la Libye décidé par l'ONU, a annoncé un diplomate allié.

Les ambassadeurs des 28 pays de l'Otan réunis au sein du Conseil de l'Atlantique-Nord « sont tombés d'accord pour imposer un embargo sur les armes qui seraient acheminées par mer », a-t-il déclaré sous réserve de l'anonymat.

14 h 22 : Une journaliste tunisienne portée disparue. Fatma Ben Dhaou, envoyée spéciale en Libye du journal tunisien Le Quotidien, n'a donné aucune nouvelle depuis vendredi, a annoncé aujourd'hui son journal et son mari.

« Elle allait rentrer de Benghazi à Tobrouk avec Olfa Sallami, une autre journaliste tunisienne qui travaille pour la TV tunisienne et est ordinairement basée au Caire », a raconté l'époux de Fatma Ben Dhaou. « J'ai essayé de l'appeler sur son portable et de contacter l'hôtel Al Massira à Tobrouk mais en vain », a-t-il poursuivi.

Le rédacteur en chef adjoint du journal Le Quotidien, Lotfi Touati, a confirmé la disparition de la journaliste qui « n'a rien envoyé depuis vendredi ». Selon une consœur qui travaille dans le même journal, Fatma Ben Dhaou était dans l'est de la Libye depuis environ une semaine. (AFP)

14 h 20 : l'Otan soutiendra la coalition. L'Otan soutiendra la coalition de pays qui mène l'opération militaire en Libye quand les Etats-Unis réduiront leur engagement, a déclaré aujourd'hui une porte-parole du ministère français des Affaires étrangères.

« Quand les Américains voudront prendre un peu de recul, l'Otan pourrait intervenir en soutien, ça me semble assez clair », a dit Christine Fages lors d'un point de presse.

Les batteries antiaériennes libyennes sont de nouveau entrées en action aujourd'hui à Tripoli mais le commandant américain de l'opération internationale a laissé entendre que le rythme des raids pourrait bientôt ralentir. (Reuters)

14 h 5 : Alger juge les « bombardements disproportionnés ». Les bombardements aériens de la coalition internationale contre la Libye sont disproportionnés par rapport à l'objectif fixé par la résolution 1973 de l'ONU et ont aggravé la crise, a estimé aujourd'hui le ministre algérien des Affaires étrangères, Mourad Medelci.

12 h 06 : Crash d'un avion américain. Un avion de chasse américain F-15 s'est écrasé dans la nuit en Libye, a annoncé mardi le commandement américain Africom à Stuttgart, en Allemagne.

« Les deux membres d'équipage se sont éjectés. L'opération pour récupérer le deuxième membre d'équipage est en cours », a précisé Karin Burzynski, port



e-parole de l'US Africa Command, qui assure la coordination des opérations depuis Stuttgart.

Il s'agit de la première perte officiellement reconnue d'un appareil de la coalition en Libye. Aucune précision n'a été donnée sur les raisons du crash, ni sur l'endroit où il s'est produit. (AFP)

12 h 05 : Tuerie à Misrata. Cinq personnes, dont quatre enfants, ont été tuées aujourd'hui par des tirs des forces fidèles au dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi à Misrata, a affirmé un porte-parole des rebelles dans cette ville située à l'est de Tripoli.

11 h 33 : Des milliers de Libyens déplacés. Les combats en Libye ont poussé des milliers de personnes à fuir leur domicile et se réfugier dans l'est du pays, a indiqué le Haut commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés (HCR) se fondant sur les témoignages de réfugiés arrivés en Egypte. (AFP)

11 h 31 : Photographe retrouvé. Stéphane Lehr, photographe travaillant pour l'agence Polaris Images et qui n'avait plus donné de nouvelles depuis dimanche alors qu'il se trouvait dans la région de Benghazi en Libye, a repris contact avec son agence hier soir, a indiqué Reporters sans frontières (RSF).

« Jean-Pierre Pappis, directeur de l'agence, a confirmé avoir reçu des nouvelles de son collaborateur, parti couvrir les combats sur le front, dans la région d'Ajdabiya, ville située sur la côte au sud de Benghazi », précise RSF.

09 h 17 : Journalistes en danger. Depuis le début de l'insurrection en Libye, les journalistes sont devenus les cibles des forces pro-Kadhafi.

Stéphane Lehr, photographe français travaillant en freelance pour l'agence Polaris Images qui se trouvait dans la région de Benghazi, n'a plus donné de nouvelles depuis dimanche en début d'après-midi, a indiqué mardi Reporters sans frontières.

Trois journalistes occidentaux, deux de l'Agence France-Presse et un photographe de l'agence Getty Images, ont été arrêtés le 19 mars dans la région de Tobrouk (Est) par l'armée libyenne, selon le témoignage de leur chauffeur.

Quatre journalistes d'Al Jazeera sont toujours détenus par les forces de Kadhafi alors que six journalistes libyens sont toujours portés disparus.

Lundi ce sont 4 journalistes du New York Times qui ont été libérés après une semaine de détention.

22 h 17 : Une base de la marine bombardée. Une base de la marine libyenne située à 10 km à l'est de Tripoli a été touchée par des bombardements ce soir, ont indiqué des témoins qui ont vu des flammes s'échapper de la base.

La base navale de Boussetta a été touchée peu après 19H00 GMT, selon plusieurs témoins.

La télévision d'Etat libyenne a annoncé lundi soir que la coalition internationale bombardait Tripoli.

Des tirs de la défense anti-aérienne suivis d'explosions avaient été entendus dans la soirée dans le secteur de la résidence du dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi à Tripoli.

21 h 46 : Réunion à l'ONU. Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU tiendra jeudi une réunion à la demande de la Libye, a indiqué aujourd'hui un diplomate des Nations unies.

Le Conseil de sécurité a reçu au cours du week-end une lettre du ministre des Affaires étrangères libyen Moussa Koussa demandant une réunion d'urgence du Conseil.

Cette demande a été étudiée lundi par les membres du Conseil lors d'une réunion à huis clos, selon un diplomate à l'ONU.

« La Libye demande une réunion d'urgence du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU après l'agression franco-américano-britannique contre la Libye, un Etat indépendant et membre des Nations unies », avait déclaré le ministère des Affaires étrangères libyen dans un communiqué publié dans la nuit de samedi à dimanche.

Le Conseil de sécurité a adopté jeudi une résolution prévoyant de prendre « toutes les mesures nécessaires » pour protéger les civils en Libye.

20 h 34 : La résidence de Kadhafi visée. Des tirs de la défense anti-aérienne suivis d'explosions ont été entendus lundi soir à Tripoli dans le secteur de la résidence du dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi, selon un journaliste de l'AFP.

La DCA est entrée en action peu après 19H00 GMT et des explosions ont ensuite retenti.

"Ces attaques ne vont pas effrayer le peuple libyen", a ajouté la télévision.

Au même moment, un journaliste de Reuters faisait état d'une explosion entendue dans la capitale libyenne, suivie de tirs de DCA.

Dans la nuit de dimanche à lundi, des missiles ont détruit un bâtiment administratif au sein de la résidence-caserne de Bab el-Aziziya dans le sud de la capitale libyenne. Selon la



coalition, il abritait un centre « de commandement et de contrôle ».

20 h 23 : Obama : Kadhafi doit partir. Le président des Etats-Unis Barack Obama a affirmé à Santiago que les Etats-Unis s'en « tiendront au mandat de la résolution 1973 » du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU, autorisant le recours à la force en Libye.

« La position américaine est que (le numéro un libyen Mouammar) Kadhafi doit partir », a rappelé le président américain.

20 h 00 : 40 morts à Misrata. Les forces pro-Kadhafi ont mené une attaque aujourd'hui à Misrata, la troisième ville du pays, faisant au moins 40 morts et 300 blessés, selon les rebelles.

18 h 32 : Peu d'informations sur la tanière de Kadhafi. Les militaires américains disposent de peu d'informations sur l'endroit où se trouve le colonel Kadhafi, après que le complexe où il réside a été la cible de frappes aériennes de la coalition, a déclaré aujourd'hui un haut gradé américain, le général Carter Ham.

17 h 13 : Aucune négociation. Abed al Hafiz Ghoga, porte-parole du du Conseil national libyen (CNL) a exclu lundi toute négociation avec Kadhafi. « Nous sommes engagés dans une guerre d'usure à laquelle nous a contraint le dictateur », a déclaré Abed al Hafiz Ghoga lors d'une conférence de presse à Benghazi, le fief de l'insurrection.

« Pour cette raison, nous refusons de négocier avec lui. Nous préférons assister à sa fin plutôt que de négocier. Il est recherché comme criminel de guerre par la communauté internationale. Il sera jugé pour ses actes de génocide contre son propre peuple ».

16 h 27 : Soutien de l'Otan. L'intervention de la coalition internationale en Libye est pour le moment un « succès » et l'Otan est « disposée à venir en soutien » dans « quelques jours », a annoncé aujourd'hui à Bruxelles le chef de la diplomatie française, Alain Juppé.

« Le premier succès de notre intervention est clair », a estimé Alain Juppé, en marge d'une réunion avec ses homologues européens, car « si nous n'avions rien fait, Benghazi », le fief de la rébellion libyenne dans l'est du pays, « serait un bain de sang ».

« Nous avons sauvé les civils de Benghazi », a-t-il assuré. (AFP)

16 h 18 : Tirs sur la foule. Des forces loyales au colonel Kadhafi ont ouvert le feu sur une foule dans la ville de Misrata, contrôlée par les opposants au régime. Neuf personnes auraient été tuées selon un témoin cité par l'agence Reuters.

16 19 : Medvedev contredit Poutine. Le président russe, Dmitri Medvedev, a jugé inacceptable le terme « croisade » employé par Vladimir Poutine pour qualifier l'intervention militaire occidentale en Libye.

« Il est inadmissible d'employer des termes qui mènent au choc des civilisations, des expressions du genre « croisade » ou autres. C'est inacceptable. Dans le cas contraire, tout peut se terminer d'une manière encore pire que la situation actuelle. Chacun doit garder ça en tête », a-t-il déclaré, selon les agences russes.

« Il faut être de la plus grande prudence concernant les déclarations sur la Libye », a-t-il ajouté. « Je considère que la résolution (de l'Onu) reflète notre interprétation de ce qui se passe en Libye, mais pas totalement. C'est pourquoi nous n'avons pas utilisé notre veto », a-t-il renchéri.

Vladimir Poutine a dénoncé lundi la résolution 1973 de l'ONU autorisant le recours à la force pour protéger les civils en Libye, qui ressemble selon lui à un « appel aux croisades ».

15 h 22 : Réunion du Conseil de Sécurité. Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU tiendra une réunion à huis clos sur la Libye aujourd'hui, ont annoncé des diplomates sous couvert de l'anonymat.

Cette annonce intervient alors que la Russie a critiqué la résolution adoptée jeudi et l'Allemagne a refusé de participer aux opérations militaires.

La réunion, très technique, fera suite à la demande de la Libye d'une réunion d'urgence du Conseil de sécurité et donnera une réponse à cette demande, a indiqué un diplomate.

Le Conseil de sécurité avait adopté jeudi une résolution prévoyant de prendre « toutes les mesures nécessaires » pour protéger les civils en Libye. La Russie et l'Allemagne, toutes deux membres du Conseil, s'étaient abstenues lors du vote.

13 h 56 : Journalistes libérés. Les quatre journalistes du quotidien américain New York Times arrêtés en Libye par les forces fidèles au régime Kadhafi ont été libérés et se trouvent à l'ambassade de Turquie à Tripoli.

« Suite à une demande américaine hier (dimanche), nous avons entrepris des démarches et obtenu il y a peu la libération des journalistes grâce à une coopération des autorités libyennes », affirme un responsable turc.

Les journalistes ont été remis à l'ambassade de Turquie, à Tripoli, et devaient quitter le pays « dans les prochaines heures », a ajouté le ministre.

13 h 29 : Position clarifiée. Le secrétaire général de la Ligue arabe, Amr Moussa, a déclaré lundi qu'il soutenait la résolution de l'Onu autorisant l'intervention militaire en Libye. Toutefois, il a insisté sur la protection des civils.

Lors d'une conférence de presse tenue au Caire avec Ban Ki-Moon, Amr Moussa a clarifié sa position après avoir dénoncé dimanche les bombardements ayant « provoqué la mort et les blessures de nombreux civils libyens ».

« La position de la Ligue arabe sur la Libye a été décisive et dès le début nous avons suspendu la Libye (...) Ensuite, nous avons demandé aux Nations unies de mettre en place une zone d'exclusion aérienne et nous respectons la résolution de l'ONU, et il n'y a aucun désaccord », a affirmé Moussa.

« Elle vise à protéger les civils et c'est cela qui nous intéresse. »

13 h 00 : Des croisades selon Poutine. Le Premier ministre russe Vladimir Poutine a estimé aujourd'hui que les attaques de la coalition internationale en Libye ressemble à des " appels médiévaux aux croisades".

La Russie s'est abstenue de voter la résolution du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU instaurant une zone d'exclusion aérienne en Libye.

11 h 32 : Le colonel Kadhafi peut-il être la cible directe de frappes aériennes ? La chaîne Skynews rapporte qu'un haut responsable militaire britannique estime que Kadhafi est une « cible militaire légitime ».

Le secrétaire d'Etat à la Défense britannique, Liam Fox, affirme que le colonel est une cible ce qui contredit les propos tenus la veille par l'amiral américain William Gortney.

Celui-ci avait indiqué que le leader libyen n'est pas une cible.

« Nous ne courrons pas derrière Kadhafi. Je peu vous garantir qu'en ce moment, il n'est pas sur la liste des cibles », a-t-il affirmé dimanche aux journalistes

10 h 56 : Nouvelles frappes des avions français. Les opérations aériennes françaises ont repris ce matin, a indiqué le porte-parole de l'état-major, le colonel Thierry Burkhard.

Les avions français n'ont pas survolé la Libye durant la nuit, mais ont repris leurs missions dans la matinée, a-t-il précisé.

Les appareils qui partent des bases sur le territoire français, notamment de Solenzara en Corse et de Saint-Dizier (Haute-Marne), ont environ trois heures de vol pour arriver sur la zone des opérations.

Le renforcement de la coalition, avec la participation d'avions d'autres pays, entraîne « un partage des responsabilités » dans la conduite des opérations, souligne l'état-major.

10 h 38 : Les forces de Kadhafi reculent. Les forces pro-Kadhafi, qui avaient attaqué Benghazi samedi matin, ont reculé aujourd'hui jusqu'à Ajdabiya, à 160 km au sud.

Des dizaines de chars détruits par des frappes aériennes gisaient le long de la route entre les deux villes. Des centaines de rebelles se rassemblaient dans la matinée à quelques kilomètres d'Ajdabiya, où toutes les communications ainsi que l'alimentation en eau étaient coupées. Une épaisse fumée noire s'élevait au-dessus d'un bâtiment de la ville.

Les rebelles, qui ont essuyé quelques tirs des forces gouvernementales depuis l'intérieur de la ville, étaient armés de batteries antiaériennes et de quelques roquettes Katioucha, mais ne

savaient pas quelle stratégie adopter, dans la mesure où des tirs sur la ville risquaient de toucher des civils.

"Nous demandons plus de frappes aériennes. Nous voulons qu'ils bombardent ses aéroports et ses chars. Même si nous devons mourir, nous allons entrer à Ajdabiya aujourd'hui, si Dieu le veut », a déclaré Salman Maghrabi, un combattant rebelle. (AFP)

Cartographie : Le quotidien Le Figaro publie sur son site une cartographie des forces internationale qui interviennent actuellement en Libye en vertu de la résolution du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU.



Pour consulter la cartographie ainsi que les explications du Figaro.

10 h 19 : Le navire italien porté disparu. Le ministre italien de la Défense affirme ignorer où se rendait le navire remorqueur italien qui avait été retenu au port de Tripoli avant de repartir hier avec à son bord des hommes affirmant être des militaires libyens.

« Le navire se dirige vers l'ouest mais nous ne savons pas où exactement parce qu'ils font des zigzags et à bord il y a des militaires libyens armés », a déclaré le ministre, Ignazio La Russa.

Les huit italiens membres de l'équipage de l'Asso 22 « se trouvent encore à bord du remorqueur, qui n'a pas accosté, et ils n'ont pu débarquer à Tripoli comme ils devaient le faire », a-t-il rappelé.

Quelques hommes armés, dont l'un s'était présenté comme le commandant du port, avaient arrêté l'équipage, empêchant le navire de repartir. L'équipage se serait alors trouvé consigné à bord.

Dimanche, le ministre italien des Affaires étrangères, Franco Frattini, n'avait pas exclu qu'il puisse s'agir d'un enlèvement: « Nous ne savons pas quelles sont les intentions » de ces hommes mais "nous ne pouvons pas exclure un enlèvement », avait-il dit. (AFP)

10 h 10 : Nouvelles frappes. Le quotidien britannique The Guardian évoque des frappes aériennes sur ou autour de la ville Ajdabiya contrôlée par les troupes du colonel Kadhafi

- Une deuxième vague d'attaque a été lancée dans la nuit de dimanche à lundi sur la Libye. Un tir de missile a détruit un bâtiment administratif dans la caserne de Bab Al Azizia qui abritait un centre de commandement des forces libyennes, à Tripoli.
- La coalition internationale assure avoir endommagé leurs défenses antiaériennes.
- Le gouvernement libyen a annoncé un cessez-le-feu unilatéral à partir de dimanche 20 heures mais Les Etats-Unis et le Royaume-Uni n'en ont pas pris compte.
- Benghazi, fief de l'insurrection dans l'est du pays, reste sous la menace des forces fidèles à Kadhafi, mais celles-ci "souffrent d'isolement et de confusion", indique un responsable militaire américain

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/03/201132511732578174.html>

Middle East Thousands in Yemen march against Saleh Crowds on the streets for protests dubbed a "day of departure" but president delivers a defiant speech to supporters.

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Tens of thousands of protesters are on the streets of Sanaa, Yemen's capital, to call for an end to Ali Abdullah Saleh's 32-year rule, as the embattled president said he would only hand over power "to capable, responsible hands".

Addressing a large rally of his own supporters in a speech carried on state TV earlier on Friday, Saleh said he was ready to meet with protesters, but warned that those demanding his resignation had been influenced by the Houthis - an armed Shia Zaidi group demanding autonomy in the country's north - and "drug dealers".

Saleh was president of North Yemen until its 1990 unification with the south - and has ruled the country since.

But Al Jazeera's special correspondent, reporting from the capital's Change (Taghyir) Square - where 52 protesters were killed last Friday - said little new was offered in the speech; on one hand, warning and threatening those standing against him, and on the other, promising reforms and saying he would listen to the demands of the people.

Soldiers who have abandoned the president and were deployed to protect protesters in the square shot in the air to disperse groups of Saleh supporters who were attempting to reach the protest after the president's speech.

Our correspondent added that protesters said a sniper had shot and injured one of the soldiers guarding the square.

'Peace, stability and security'

Saleh said the gathered crowds before him came "under no orders from any political party or any leader, you came of your own free will, based on your patriotic responsibility, from all corners of the country, on this great day – the Friday of peace, stability and security".

He continued: "Yes to stability and security, no to chaos and vandalism, no to creating chaos, no to pillage and assault on government institutions. No to pillage of the country's riches. To those who are protesting – you did not contribute to the country's achievements".

Criticising the media, the Houthis and other political parties, Saleh said protest organisers were "adventurous conspirators" who were "acting out of malice".

But he added to those taking part in demonstrations: "My fellow citizens, those holding the sit-ins, I am prepared to sit with you and to respond to each one of your demands. You should not be a vehicle for the malicious to ruin every great aspect of life ... the country is a trust and responsibility for you.

"We need to hand over the banner of rule to honest hands, capable hands - not malicious hands. We are prepared to give up power, but only to good people, after elections. We are against chaos and mayhem. The demonstrators in [Change] Square are targeted by the Houthis and drug traffickers."

Protesters undeterred

But, at the protesters' rally across the city, where tens of thousands of people gathered for Friday prayers in front of Sanaa university, the positive mood remained unchanged, said our correspondent.

"In some way, he is playing to some peoples' fears, that, after Saleh leaves, there will be some kind of military rule and that there are political aspirations behind the defections from the army - despite the fact that Ali Mohsen, the key general who defected earlier this week, has said very clearly that if he wanted to take power, he would have done so decades ago - and that he has no political aspirations," said Al Jazeera's reporter in Sanaa.

"What the people really want to see is for a five-man presidential council to take control in the interim period, until elections can be held - because they simply don't believe that if elections are held under the current regime that they will be free and fair."

Earlier in the day, the city had split, with water cannon reportedly mounted on the side of the dividing line that holds the presidential palace - itself surrounded by Saleh's republican guard. It threatened to be a flashpoint for violence if protesters attempted to march, as many expected they would, the 5km to the palace.

Defecting general

General Ali Mohsen has thrown his weight behind the protesters and sent troops to protect pro-democracy protesters in Sanaa. He said the options before Saleh were now few, and criticised what he described as Saleh's "stubbornness", but said the armed forces were committed to protecting protesters.

He also said military rule in Arab countries was outdated and that the people would decide who would govern them in the framework of a modern, civilian state.

Mohsen, commander of the northwest military zone and Saleh's kinsman from the al-Ahmar clan, is the most senior military officer to back the protests, and his move on Monday triggered a stream of defections in the military and government, adding momentum to the opposition movement.

Previous offer rejected

On Thursday night, opposition groups dismissed Saleh's offer to stand down after a presidential election at the end of the year, stepping up efforts to remove him from power.

Yassin Noman, head of Yemen's opposition coalition, dismissed Saleh's earlier offer as "empty words" and a spokesman said the umbrella coalition would not respond.

"No dialogue and no initiatives for this dead regime," opposition spokesman Mohammed al-Sabry said on Thursday.

Protesters are demanding a new constitution and the dissolution of parliament, local councils and the notorious state security agencies - as well as the immediate resignation of President Saleh.

Saleh offered amnesty to defecting troops, calling their decisions "foolish acts", taken in reaction to last Friday's deaths.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703784004576220712562139244.html?mod=WSJEurope_hpp_LEFTTopStories#printMode

MIDDLE EAST NEWS
MARCH 25, 2011

Yemeni President Nears Deal to Resign

Agreement Being Forged With Opposing General Would Have Both Yield Power to Transition Council Within Days

By MARGARET COKER in Abu Dhabi and HAKIM ALMASMARI in San'a, Yemen

WSJ's Margaret Coker reports Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh is close to reaching an agreement under which he and the nation's top general would step down. The News Hub also covers violence flaring in Syria and bombings in Jerusalem.

Yemen's president and the country's top general are hashing out a settlement in which both men would resign within days, people familiar with the situation said, raising crucial questions of who will end up leading a key, though embattled, U.S. counterterrorism ally.

The outlines of a peaceful transition, to a civilian-led transitional government, emerged amid rising tension over the standoff between Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and pro-

democracy protesters backed by Gen. Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar. The general this week broke ranks and declared his support for protesters demanding that the president resign immediately.



Protesters continue to take to the streets of Sanaa but appear divided over demands. Video courtesy of Reuters.

Opposing tanks from units loyal to Mr. Saleh and to Gen. Ahmar have faced off in the streets of San'a all week and tens of thousands of antigovernment demonstrators vowed to continue their protest Friday in the capital's Change Square.



Associated Press

A Yemeni army officer was lifted by antigovernment protesters as he joined them in a demonstration in San'a on Thursday.

The U.S. and governments in the region have worried that the weeks-long political crisis in the fractious Arab nation would disrupt counterterrorism operations and allow the al Qaeda affiliate in Yemen to expand.

Mr. Saleh and Gen. Ahmar were intent on preventing bloodshed and preserving stability, the people familiar with the negotiations said. Aides to both men said they understood that Mr. Saleh's continued rule is untenable. But the two men also agreed that his resignation can't happen until the details of a transitional governing council that would take his place have been worked out.

"Both sides have agreed on the main points of departure, and Saturday is expected to be the day that Saleh and Gen. Ahmar both step down," a senior official familiar with the negotiations said.

It couldn't be determined who would lead the transitional council—or who would run counterterrorism operations should Mr. Saleh resign. Most of America's top counterterrorism

partners in Yemen are Mr. Saleh's relatives, including his eldest son and two nephews who head elite units funded and trained by the U.S. The fate of those officials or their security forces in a post-Saleh Yemen was unclear.

Yemen has been a top national security concern for Washington for years, but jumped higher still after 2009 when al Qaeda said it had organized a new affiliate based in Yemen and failed in two bomb attacks against airliners. Yemen also is home to radical cleric Anwar al-Awlaqi, who U.S. officials believe had a role in inspiring the Fort Hood, Texas, shootings.

Anti-government protesters in Yemen gather to demand President Ali Abdullah Saleh steps down immediately, not by the end of the year as he has offered.

The prospects for the U.S. would be dicey even with an orderly transition of power. With Mr. Saleh's departure, so goes a 10-year counterterrorism relationship.

"If we see leadership changes, we'd be starting from scratch to build relationships. And personal relationships are the key to counter terrorism," said Katherine Zimmerman, a Yemen specialist at the American Enterprise Institute's Critical Threats Project. Yet if a leader with domestic legitimacy emerged who was willing to work with the U.S., "that could be a game changer" because Mr. Saleh's cooperation has been mixed at best over the years, she said.

The U.S. has kept comments on Yemen close to the vest. "We do not build our policy in any country around a single person, and we obviously will look forward to having a solid relationship to the leader of Yemen," White House spokesman Jay Carney told reporters.

On Thursday evening, political negotiations widened from talks between Mr. Saleh and Gen. Ahmar to include meetings between their aides, Yemeni Vice President Abdo Rabu Hadi, U.S. Ambassador to Yemen Gerald Feierstein and the leaders of two opposition parties, the Socialist Party and the Islah Party. The U.S. Embassy didn't respond to requests for comment, and the other participants couldn't be reached.

Though pipelines that ship roughly 55,000 to 75,000 barrels of oil a day have been closed following rebel or tribal attacks, oil continued to flow from Yemen. The country accounts for 260,000 barrels a day, well under 1% of world output.

Mr. Saleh has ruled Yemen throughout its modern history, so nationally respected leaders are hard to find. The support for mainstream opposition party leaders is unclear across the rugged and largely conservative country. Meanwhile, tribal leaders who have great social standing would face problems exerting authority over rival tribes.

Mr. Saleh and Gen. Ahmar, who hail from the same tribe, have controlled Yemen for the last 32 years, steering it out of a civil war, the threat of domestic armed insurgents and al Qaeda networks. More recently, the men's relations turned frosty, according to diplomats. Mr. Saleh, 66 years old, sees the general as a rival for power, and the president has sought to sideline the commander while advancing Mr. Saleh's eldest son as a possible successor, according to diplomats.

Earlier this week opposition forces deputized Gen. Ahmar to press their demands with the president, who had flatly refused to step down before next year.

Talks took a significant step forward early Thursday.

The apparent breakthrough came after a marathon round of acrimonious telephone discussions, via aides, that started around 9 p.m. Wednesday between the president at his official residence and the general, who was at his home in downtown San'a, the people said.

They said President Saleh and Gen. Ahmar agreed to the central demand of the protest movement: that a civilian council should rule in place of Mr. Saleh, instead of an Egyptian-style military council.

By the start of the dawn prayer Thursday morning, the men hadn't worked out the structure or the composition of such an authority.

After a brief rest, discussions continued Thursday, after the two sides briefed the U.S. and British ambassadors to Yemen about their progress, according to the people familiar with the negotiations.

—*Keith Johnson in Washington contributed to this article.*

Write to Margaret Coker at margaret.coker@wsj.com

<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/376355>

Special from Yemen: Youth anticipate Saleh's departure, draft plan for the future

Benjamin Wiacek

Sun, 27/03/2011 - 14:21



Photographed by Benjamin Wiacek

Sanaa -- Green, yellow, red and blue tents pepper the scene at Sanaa University's "Square of Change." Socialists, Islamists, liberals, men, women, children, judges, academics, artists and the unemployed share one space, eat together, chew qat together, and mull the future of their country. Some paint or draw new signs against Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Saleh -- in

power for more than 32 years -- and his corrupt regime, while others watch Al-Jazeera to monitor the latest developments in the country. Some give speeches on the stage. Others administer awareness seminars to youth. Artists play music.

For many Yemenis the widespread protests sweeping the nation are changing their world.

“Welcome to the Land of Liberty!” reads the banners scattered throughout the area.
“Welcome to the first mile of dignity!”

Started by the youth and university students after events in Tunisia and Egypt, the uprising in Yemen has now been underway for more than two months. Friday 25 March, dubbed the “Friday of Departure,” witnessed the largest protest turnout thus far. Hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated at Sanaa University, including many women, despite the fear of violence following the killing of 52 people the previous Friday. Protesters held red cards with *irhal* or “leave” written on them, symbolizing red cards in a football match.

Dozens of thousands of people on the “Friday of Departure” also went to Tahrir and Saba’een squares in support of Saleh. The president gave a speech in front of the large crowd, urging “stability and security in Yemen.” While he announced he would be ready to “peacefully transfer power to safe and capable hands,” he also said he would “stand firm in face of those wishing to remove us from power” while describing the protesters as “problem-makers, conspirators and drug dealers.”

For many, his speech sounded like a threat. Saleh has repeatedly said the protest movement could turn into a “civil war, a bloody one.” Addressing the crowd in front of him as “the army of the nation,” many people fear this could push Saleh supporters to fight against the university protesters. Accordingly, one hour after the end of the speech, some thugs tried to enter the “Square of Change,” but were prevented by the army who shot into the air to scare them.

The fear of chaos and instability in Yemen is also clearly shared by the United States government. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is a main concern of the Obama administration, which sees Saleh as a key ally in the war against Islamic extremism. They worry that if the Yemeni president leaves, it could be an opportunity for AQAP to seize more power and influence.

The country’s youth, however, do not see the situation in the same light. For many, the departure of Saleh could be a solution.

“Saleh used Al-Qaeda to blackmail the West to get a lot of money,” said member of the General Union of Yemeni Youth Revolution (GUYR) Kais Ahmed. “If he leaves, Al-Qaeda would lose support and the few people helping them because of the regime would stop. Yemenis would also be able to fight them and prevent them to act. We are not Afghanistan!”

With an unemployment rate above 30 percent, Yemen’s youth, who represent almost half of the country’s population, are asking for more job opportunities and a better future. They feel that the regime is too corrupt to help them, and, they say, they have lost trust in President Saleh.

And the youth feel the world is ignoring them by only focusing on two blocs: opposition parties and the current government. In response, they decided to organize themselves and work together in order to become a strong third force that cannot be ignored. In recent days and weeks, they have drafted a transitional plan for the future of Yemen. The youth want to show they are also deeply concerned about the situation and are aware of the challenges they will have to face following Saleh's departure. Members of the movement, they allege, do not aspire to seize leadership positions in the future, but demand participation in negotiations.

According to this plan -- made by more than 33 different groups who worked together for the past three weeks -- an Interim Presidential Council, comprised of five people including one from the military, would be created for a six-month transition period.

"This time will be used to organize presidential and parliamentary elections, but none of the council's members will be authorized to run for it," said Amen Dabwan, leader of the Yemen Free Youth Coalition (YFYC). The people in the council will be chosen from all over the country, and recognized "for their experience, their morals and their honesty."

An Interim National Council should also be set up to represent youth, national leaders and political forces, according to the draft. It will work on a new constitution for a civil state, based on democratic citizenship and equal rights, and an electoral system based on proportional representation. The role of the youth will be to make the new government accountable by monitoring their activities and safeguarding transparency.

The document also requests the immediate release of all political prisoners, and the prosecution of individuals in the past government "who were the symbols of corruption" and of those "who caused or incited the killings or injuries of peaceful protesters."

Many doubted the capacity of the youth to organize themselves and are still sceptical about their expectations. Gabool al-Mutawakel, member of the group Al-Watan for All, explains how the movement grew to its current robust state.

"Things started with a small group of activists, who knew the youth, and were working with them for a long time," al-Mutawakel. "They all had the idea of a network, and then it spread. We also received help from academics who joined us today."

Many among the youth criticize the lack of coverage from the media about their activities.

"They don't trust us, because people don't see us. No international media is coming to see what we're doing," added GUYR's Kais Ahmed. "That's why no one knows about our work. If people were talking with us, they would see that we are ready."

But many within the ranks of the youth movement also fear some domestic forces could hijack their revolution. That sentiment is echoed by the US and some Western governments. Yemen's youths, however, appear determined to not let that happen.

"We have a plan, and we will not leave until our requirements are fulfilled and until we know that our rights will be ensured," said Gabool al-Mutawakel.

The youth know the transition to a transparent and representative government will be a difficult process but many, such as supervisor of the GUYR Shafiq al-Shadady, are full of hope.

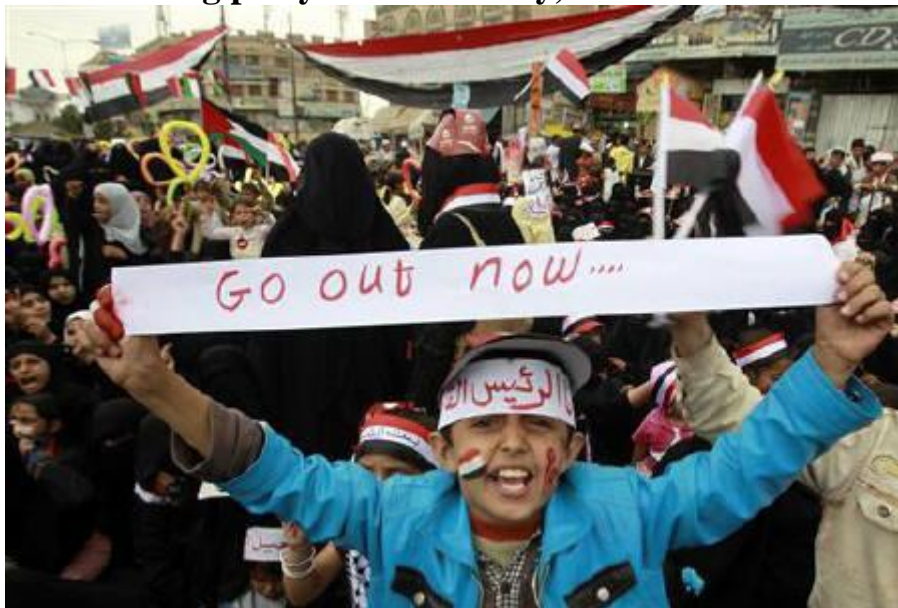
“Yemen is a wealthy country. If there is a better management with the new government, then situation will start improving step by step,”

Others contend the unrest on Sanaa’s streets is geared more toward improving the lives of future generations.

“This revolution is not for us,” people commonly say, “but for our children.”

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/03/27/idINIndia-55909320110327>

Yemen ruling party meets as army, militants clash



By Cynthia Johnston

SANAA | Sun Mar 27, 2011 8:05pm IST

(Reuters) - Militants clashed with the Yemeni army in a southern town on Sunday, heightening fears that the Arabian Peninsula state could collapse under protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh and an Islamist threat.

The army tried to dislodge a coalition of Islamists from Jaar in Abyan province after they seized buildings on Saturday and security forces appeared to have deserted the town of several hundred thousand. One soldier was killed on Sunday.

Abyan is seen as a stronghold of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the Yemeni wing of the network which Western countries and neighbour Saudi Arabia fear could take advantage of any power vacuum if protesters succeed in ousting Saleh.

Five soldiers were killed on Saturday in an ambush in Lowdar, also in Abyan, which the government attributed to al Qaeda militants. Militants fired rockets at government buildings in Zinjibar on Sunday.

Saleh, under pressure from tens of thousands of Yemenis protesting in the streets to demand his departure after 32 years in power, convened a meeting of his ruling party on Sunday.

A party source said the party's central committee, which contains thousands of members, had asked Saleh to stay in power until 2013, when his presidential term expires. One of Saleh's first concessions when protests began in February was to say he would not seek another period in office beyond that date.

In an interview shown on Al Arabiya on Sunday, Saleh said he was prepared for a dignified departure at any stage but that opposition parties were hijacking the protests to demand he quit without organising a democratic handover.

"I could leave power ... even in a few hours, on condition of maintaining respect and prestige," Saleh said. "I have to take the country to safe shores ... I'm holding on to power in order to hand it over peaceably."

But he seemed to suggest he would stay at least for the short term, littering the interview with warnings that Yemen would slide into civil war and would fragment along regional and tribal lines if he left power immediately.

"Yemen is a time bomb and if we and our friendly countries don't have a return to dialogue, there will be a destructive civil war," he said, warning protesters against mounting a coup against him.

Washington and leading oil producer Saudi Arabia have backed Saleh as their man to keep al Qaeda from expanding its foothold in a country many political analysts say is close to collapse.

AQAP claimed responsibility for the foiled attempt in late 2009 to blow up a jetliner bound for Detroit and for U.S.-bound cargo bombs sent in October 2010.

With central government control weak, Saleh's government has relied on tribal allies to maintain order, but has faced in recent years rebellions from Zaidi Shi'ites in the north and a separatist movement hoping to recreate the South Yemeni state that united with the north under Saleh's rule in 1990.

More than 80 people have been killed since protests started in January, inspired by popular revolts in Tunisia and Egypt, to demand the departure of Saleh, who has outlasted civil war as well as separatist, rebel and militant campaigns since 1978.

CONCESSIONS

Opposition parties have been talking to Saleh about a transition but have so far rebuffed any of his concessions. Last week he offered to step down within a year after organising a new constitution, parliamentary then presidential elections.

"We still have a very big gap," said Yassin Noman, the rotating head of Yemen's opposition coalition. "I think he is manoeuvring."

The tide appeared to turn against Saleh after March 18 when plainclothes snipers loyal to the president fired into an anti-government crowd, killing 52 people.

The violence led to defections including military commanders such as General Ali Mohsen, ambassadors, lawmakers, provincial governors and tribal leaders, some from his own tribe.

Saleh said the defections were mainly by Islamists and that some had returned to him. He said Mohsen had been acting emotionally because of Friday's bloodshed but that security forces were not behind the deaths.

A source close to Mohsen, who has supported the protesters, said he and Saleh had weighed a deal in which both would leave the country, taking their sons and relatives with them to pave the way for a civilian transitional government.

"I'm not looking for a home in Jeddah or Paris," Saleh said on Saturday, vowing to stay in Yemen.

The country of 23 million, with an acute water shortage and dwindling oil reserves, is widely viewed as the next country in the region to see a change in leadership.

A revolt in Bahrain has been quieted by an army show of force on the streets after a state of emergency was declared. Syria has erupted with protests in recent days.

(Reporting by Cynthia Johnston; Writing by Reed Stevenson and Andrew Hammond; Editing by Elizabeth Piper)

<http://abcnews.go.com/m/story?id=13233425&sid=76&p=2>

International

Blast at Yemen Explosives Factory Kills 78

By AHMED AL-HAJ Associated Press

3/28/2011, 9:26 AM EDT

On Sunday, militants took over the factory and the nearby town of Jaar, taking advantage of the country's deteriorating security as an unprecedented wave of anti-government protests threatens the president who has ruled the impoverished and divided nation for 32 years.

The fighters took what they wanted and left. Later, locals entered the facility to loot it, said resident Walid Mohammed Muqbil. The factory makes munitions, Kalashnikov weapons and explosives used in road construction in the mountainous area.

Among the wounded, 27 people were in critical condition. Officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the press.

Scores killed in Yemen arms factory blasts

Multiple blasts at ammunition factory kill at least 100 and injure dozens in southern province of Abyan.

Last Modified: 28 Mar 2011 11:22

A series of blasts at an ammunition factory has left at least 100 people dead and injured dozens more near the southern Yemeni town of Jaar, a day after the plant was looted by masked gunmen.

Funerals are expected to take place on Tuesday for the victims of Monday's blasts which witnesses said were possibly triggered by a cigarette, causing a massive fire in the factory, located in the Khanfar area near Jaar city.

The plant produces ammunition and Kalashnikov rifles.

Local residents told Al Jazeera that more than 100 men, women and children were looting the left-overs in the factory when the first explosion occurred.

"This accident is a true catastrophe, the first of its kind in Abyan," a doctor at the state-run hospital said.

"There are so many burned bodies. I can't even describe the situation."

Doctors said that the charred remains were difficult to count. They said some victims, including women and children, would be buried in a mass grave.

Scores were wounded, many suffering from burns, doctors said, and many bodies remained inside the factory, which also contained stores of gunpowder.

One resident said the blasts were heard as far as 15km from the factory in the southern province of Abyan.

Clashes broke out in Jaar on Sunday between armed groups operating in the area, feeding Western and Saudi fears that chaos in Yemen would benefit al-Qaeda's Yemen-based arm.

On Sunday, around 30 armed and hooded gunmen stormed three sites in and near Jaar, including the ammunition factory, and made off in four vehicles with cases of weapons, witnesses said.

The incident came as a security official said that suspected al-Qaeda fighters had seized control of Jaar, a known al-Qaeda stronghold where police presence has been weak for many months.

Salem Mansour, a local member of the Yemeni parliament, told Al Jazeera that the fire in the factory is still burning and that the armed men, who are now in control of the town, are "just local people".

He said that the Yemeni government troops could have protected the ammunition factory "because there are military brigades and central security forces in Abyan".

Mansour blamed the government for not guarding the factory "although it had the capabilities to do so".

<http://www.sabanews.net/en/news238567.htm>

Separatists involved in Mukala riots arrested :Security source

[28/March/2011]

MUKALA, March 28 (Saba)- A security source in Hadramout province said that outlaws and separatists perpetrated on Sunday acts of riots and chaos in Mukala city, and chanted slogans calling for hatred among Yemeni people.

The source told Saba that those elements made use of a funeral ceremony to evoke riots, and attacked demonstrators at the corniche of Mukala.

They ruined and looted some public property, including the branch the National Bank of Yemen, which they set fire to its two upper floors and caused the burning of some of its contents and old records, the source added.

The security services arrested a number of these elements to investigate them and take all legal proceedings against them.

The source added that the security services will carry out their duty to stand up to those who seek to upset the security, stability and public order and attack on the public property.

For his part, an official source at the branch of the National Bank in Hadramout reassured the bank's customers that all assets of the bank in safety, confirming that the work in the bank is going on normally.

He refuted the rumors of some media about the looting and theft of funds and assets of the bank branch during the riots and chaos witnessed by Mukala city on Sunday evening.

A number of political and social figures and civil society organizations have condemned those acts of rioting and chaos in the city, and called upon all to compliance with laws and maintain the public order and express their opinions peacefully in accordance with laws and the constitution.

BA / Saba

<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/378848>

Yemen protests continue as security deteriorates

Reuters

Tue, 29/03/2011 - 14:52



Photographed by AFP

Sanaa -- Yemeni protesters demanding the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh said on Tuesday they would insist he leave power soon, blaming him for violence that has raised US fears of chaos that could benefit militants.

Explosions at an arms factory on Monday killed more than 100 people in a southern town where Islamists seemed to have driven out government forces, a reminder of instability that Saleh's Western allies fear in the poorest Arab state.

Al-Arabiya TV said the death toll could rise to around 150.

The main coalition of opposition groups said Saleh was to blame for the presence of militant groups including Al-Qaeda in Abyan province, where the blast took place.

"We condemn this ugly crime and accuse the president and his people of involvement with Al-Qaeda and armed groups to whom handed over government institutions in Abyan. The chaos was planned in advance," it said in a statement.

"Saleh's continuation in power is a danger to Yemen, its people and international interests," the group added.

Abyan residents said in recent days that security forces had deserted the town of Jaar, scene of the blast. The governors of Jawf and Saada provinces in the north have also left, perhaps fearing confrontations with tribes opposed to the president.

In central Yemen, the governor of Maarib was stabbed after trying to disperse a protest earlier this month.

Saleh, who has been alternately conciliatory and defiant, has vowed in public to make no more concessions to opponents demanding he step down after 32 years of authoritarian rule.

A perennial survivor of civil wars and militancy, he has said Yemen could slide into armed conflict and fragment along regional and tribal lines if he leaves office immediately.

But protesters who have been camped out around Sanaa University since early February also said they found the withdrawal of security and officials in some areas suspicious and accused Saleh of fomenting strife to political reasons.

"Saleh wants to scare us and the world with chaos, which he has started causing in some areas," said Ali Abdelghani, 31, a civil servant among thousands of protesters in Sanaa.

"But we are capable of exposing this game. There are popular committees in all provinces to bring security as the president has removed security in some places for chaos to spread."

Dozens of policemen and soldiers from different units joined the protests on Tuesday, milling around and chanting slogans such as "The people want the fall of the regime" and "The police and army are partners in providing daily needs."

"We are optimistic about the success of our revolution. It is just a question of time," said Marwan Hussein, 18, a student.

SALEH THE BULWARK

Washington and neighboring US ally Saudi Arabia have long seen Saleh as a strongman to keep Al-Qaeda from extending its foothold in a country many see as close to disintegration.

Yemen's Al-Qaeda wing claimed responsibility for a foiled attempt in late 2009 to blow up an airliner bound for Detroit, and for US-bound cargo bombs sent in October 2010.

Direct talks to broker a transition from Saleh to his opponents appeared to have stalled in a public game of brinkmanship. His ruling General People's Congress party has recommended forming a new government to draft a constitution ahead of early parliamentary and presidential elections.

"Those who are hungry for power...they should turn to elections instead of chaos, and they will get to power if they have the trust of the people," Saleh told supporters on Monday.

An opposition spokesman said that talks had been halted but another figure, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a deal was still possible and that Saleh was looking to ease conditions the opposition wanted to set on his family's future activities.

"We are on the path to completing a deal," the opposition figure said on Monday. "The president is trying to improve the negotiating conditions, especially relating to the situation of his sons and relatives."

OUTLINE DEAL

The deal, if reached, probably would involve the resignation of Saleh and General Ali Mohsen, a kinsman and former ally who defected then sent troops to protect the protesters.

The sons and close relatives of the president also would leave their positions in a deal, but Saleh's side wants guarantees they would not be pursued legally. It was not clear if they would stay in Yemen, but that was an option.

An opposition source said Saleh was likely to hand over to a vice-president, in line with the constitution. An opposition official said the current vice-president did not want the job and a new figure would probably be chosen.

A new government would be formed to amend the constitution and draft laws for parliamentary and presidential elections, political sources said.

However, as in Egypt, where the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak last month after 30 years in power was an inspiration to Saleh's opponents, the focus would be on amendments to the current basic law, rather than on drafting a new constitution from scratch.

The transition was likely to proceed faster than Saleh said last week he was ready to offer -- power could be transferred well before the end-of-the-year deadline Saleh proposed. There has been talk of switching to a parliamentary system based on proportional representation, political sources said.

<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/380375>

Yemen's Saleh makes new offer to protesters

Reuters

Wed, 30/03/2011 - 13:56



Photographed by Benjamin Wiacek

Sanaa -- Yemen's president has made a new offer to protesters demanding he steps down, proposing he stays in his post until elections are held but transferring his powers to a caretaker government, an opposition source said on Wednesday.

Ali Abdullah Saleh made his offer at a meeting on Tuesday night with Mohammed al-Yadoumi, head of the Islamist Islah party. It was the first time Saleh had dealt with Islah, once a partner in his government, an opposition spokesman said.

"The opposition could pick a head of government of its own choosing and there would be parliamentary elections by the end of the year," an opposition source said of Saleh's offer.

He said the opposition was still considering its response.

Weeks of protests by thousands of Yemenis in Sanaa and other cities have brought Saleh's 32-year to the brink of collapse, but the United States and top oil producer Saudi Arabia, a key Yemen financier, are worried over who could succeed their ally.

They have long seen Saleh as a bulwark of stability who can keep Al-Qaeda from extending its foothold in a country that many see as close to disintegration.

Yemen's Al-Qaeda wing claimed responsibility for a foiled attempt in late 2009 to blow up an airliner bound for Detroit, and for US-bound cargo bombs sent in October 2010.

US officials have said openly they like working with Saleh -- who has allowed unpopular US military operations in Yemen against Al-Qaeda -- and Saleh has said the US ambassador is involved in talks to find a solution.

ISLAH LURES WASHINGTON

Sheikh Hamid al-Ahmar, a key tribal figure who belongs to the Islah party, told Reuters on Tuesday Islah and the opposition could handle the militant issue better than Saleh, whose government he said was not serious in confronting them.

"I think Yemenis would be capable to free Yemen of terror within months," Ahmar said, adding the United States and European countries should call directly for Saleh's departure.

"They should do what they did in Egypt. We don't need what is going on in Libya. We don't need that much support. But support like what was done in Egypt would be enough to finish things," he said.

Protesters and opposition parties suspect incidents of lax security over the past week are government ploys to demonstrate to foreign powers that Saleh is the strongman who can hold the impoverished Arabian Peninsula state together.

Islamists took control of a town in central Abyan province after government security deserted it, and the governors of the northern Saada and Jawf provinces also quit, leading "popular committees" who back the protest movement to step in.

The opposition says Saleh is to blame for the presence of militants, including Al-Qaeda, in Abyan's city of Jaar, where an explosion at a bullet factory killed 140 people on Monday.

A perennial survivor of civil wars and militancy, Saleh has said Yemen could slide into armed conflict and fragment along regional and tribal lines if he leaves office immediately.

Saleh, who has been alternately conciliatory and defiant, has vowed in public to make no more concessions to opponents.

But talks have been going on behind the scenes for days.

This week Saleh's ruling General People's Congress proposed a new government to activate Saleh's earlier offers of a new constitution ahead of early parliamentary and presidential elections. He said in February he would not run for reelection when his term expires in 2013.

The opposition says it believes Saleh is maneuvering to avoid limits on his family's future political activities and secure a guarantee they would not be prosecuted for corruption.

Some ideas that were floated included both Saleh and General Mohsen, a kinsman and former ally seen as Yemen's second most powerful man, stepping down together as well as Saleh handing over power to a new vice-president.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/03/31/idINIndia-56025020110331>

Yemen protesters remember dead, talks stall



By Mohammed Ghobari

SANAA | Thu Mar 31, 2011 6:43pm IST

(Reuters) - Yemenis on Thursday commemorated dozens of people killed in weeks of street protests demanding President Ali Abdullah Saleh resign, as efforts continued to negotiate his exit from power within the next year.

Weeks of protests in Sanaa and elsewhere have brought Saleh's 32-year-old rule to the brink of collapse but the United States and Saudi Arabia, an important financial backer of its poverty-stricken neighbour, are worried over who might succeed their ally.

A senior Western diplomat said Saleh, whose comments have at times sounded like he was preparing to leave office soon and at others as if he intends to see out his term, was torn between the options.

"My guess is that he is very torn about all of these things and that what you hear from him is functions of inner turmoil," he told Reuters.

On Tuesday, Saleh held talks with Mohammed al-Yadoumi, head of the Islamist Islah party, once a partner in his government. Saleh was looking for avenues to stay on as president while new parliamentary and presidential elections are organised by the end of the year, an opposition source said.

The talks have stalled and it was not clear how they could restart. Saudi Arabia has resisted Yemeni government efforts to involve them in mediation.

Protesters camped outside Sanaa University since early February are insisting Saleh, who has said he will not run for re-election in 2013, leave soon.

Groups calling themselves the Youth Revolution said on Wednesday they wanted corruption trials, the return of "stolen public and private property", the release of political detainees, the dissolution of the security forces and the closure of the Information Ministry -- steps taken in Tunisia and Egypt after similar uprisings removed entrenched leaders.

On Thursday, the protest swelled to tens of thousands who came to remember about 82 protesters killed so far, including 52 shot by snipers on March 18. "The people want the butcher to face trial," they chanted.

Some wore white tunics with the words "future martyr" written on them to stress their resolve to wait Saleh out.

"The best scenario would be that there is an agreement and that the two parties go into the parliament and begin the implementation of their agreement," the diplomat said.

The opposition says it believes Saleh is manoeuvring to avoid curbs on his family's future political activities and secure a guarantee they will not be prosecuted for corruption.

BULWARK OF STABILITY

Washington has long regarded Saleh as a bulwark of stability who can keep al Qaeda from extending its foothold in the Arabian Peninsula country which many see as close to disintegration.

Yemen's al Qaeda wing claimed responsibility for a foiled attempt in late 2009 to blow up an airliner bound for Detroit, and for U.S.-bound explosive packages sent in October 2010.

On Wednesday, al Qaeda preacher Anwar al-Awlaki, a senior figure in the group's wing in Yemen, welcomed revolts across the Arab world which he said would give Islamists greater scope to speak out.

U.S. officials have said they like working with Saleh, who has allowed unpopular U.S. air strikes in Yemen against al Qaeda, and Saleh, in power since 1978, has said the U.S. ambassador in Sanaa was involved in talks to find a solution.

Saleh has talked of civil war if he steps down without ensuring that power passes to "safe hands". He has warned against a coup after senior generals were among allies to turn against him in the past week.

Opposition parties say they can handle the militant issue better than Saleh, who they say has made deals with militants in the past to avoid provoking Yemen's Islamists.

"I think Yemenis would be capable of freeing Yemen of terror within months," Sheikh Hamid al-Ahmar, a key tribal figure who belongs to the Islah party, told Reuters this week.

Al-Ahmar said Western powers were effectively prolonging Saleh's time in office through their public comments expressing concern over who could succeed him.

"We don't need that much support. But support like what was done in Egypt would be enough to finish things," he said, referring to U.S. comments in favour of protesters shortly before Hosni Mubarak stepped down in February.

(Additional reporting by Cynthia Johnston; writing by Andrew Hammond; editing by Nick Macfie)

<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en/node/382471>

Yemenis hold largest protest yet against leader

AP

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Photographed by AFP

Sanaa -- Hundreds of thousands of Yemenis packed a square in the capital and marched in villages and cities across the nation on Friday in what appeared to be the largest demonstrations in more than a month of demands the country's longtime ruler step down.

Many mosques in the capital shut down as worshippers and clerics streamed to the square outside Sanaa University.

Protesters filled the plaza and spilled out along three adjoining streets. Previous demonstrations have taken up the square and at most two of the streets that feed into it.

The demonstrators set up tents and hung up posters of young men who were fatally shot by government forces during previous protests.

The opposition said it hoped to have 1 million people on the streets on Friday to press for President Ali Abdullah Saleh's ouster after 32 years in power.

There were anti-Saleh protests in at least 14 other provinces around the country. Witnesses said hundreds of thousands of people attended demonstrations in the provinces of Aden, Taaz, and Hadramout.

The Sanaa crowd was supported by soldiers who have joined the protesters in the month of Yemen's turmoil. The soldiers have set up half a dozen checkpoints around the square to prevent intrusions by president's loyalists.

Protesters, who have called for a "Friday of Salvation," raised black cards while chanting "Ali Leave!" Women and children, their faces painted in the colors of the Yemeni flag, or the word "Leave," joined the protests.

Cleric Taha al-Moutawkel told the crowd during afternoon prayers that Saleh's regime was already collapsing, and he vowed that the protests will remain peaceful.

"Whenever they threaten us, we will face their tanks with our bare chests," he said. "Saleh is over and he knows that, but he is betting that people will eventually run out of patience."

He said that even if the West backs Saleh, the people will keep pushing for his ouster.

"If the president's popular legitimacy plunges, no any power in the West or the East can bring him back," he said.

The demonstrators blame Saleh for mismanagement, repression and the fatal shootings of protesters. They say they will not relent until he goes.

In a parallel demonstration, some 10,000 government supporters rallied to al-Sabaeen Square outside the presidential palace, where Saleh made a brief speech, telling them, "With my blood and soul, I redeem you."