

The realities of the stampede in Yemen

Carilyn Pointer

05/01/2023



Yemen, Sana'a

Carilyn Pointer - In Yemen, 78 people died in a [stampede](#) while gathering charitable donations from local merchants. Eight years of civil war has made the people desperate, as poverty and hunger run rampant. The stampede occurred in the capital city Sana, which is controlled by an Iranian backed militia group called Houthis. By learning about the institutions and identity of Sana, the context behind this tragedy can be more fully understood.

[Places](#) are the settings of an individual's experiences, or where they live their day-to-day lives. There are three aspects that create a sense of place: location, locale, and identity. The Location is the role a place plays in the world, and often involves major industries or sources of employment in the area. For the capital city Sana, agriculture and oil are the major sources of employment. The civil war has affected all parts of the economy and has led to many people being unemployed. Even if food is available, many are not able to afford it, which influenced the urgency many felt when local businessmen were offering donations of \$10 in celebration of the upcoming holiday, Eid al-Fitr. The locale refers to institutions that help to organize people, such as clubs, societies, or religious groups. The majority of the population adhere to the religious beliefs of Islam. The religious beliefs are a great unifier of this area, and account for why many people were desperate to receive monetary assistance before the holiday. The Houthis militia is another institution that affected this event. There are reports that "Houthi militia members had fired guns into the air, hitting an electrical wire and causing the crowd to panic." While the religious institution certainly has the power to unite, the institution

of the militia spread panic creating a frenzy that led to the stampede.

While it is location and locale that help to explain context of an event, the [identity](#) of a place is what gives meaning to this concept. How people view the place in which they live, or their sense of attachment, is described as identity. Yemenis in Sana say they have suffered under the new regime, their experience giving us an insight to how their identity around where they live might've changed under the new leadership. Looking at the global scale is helpful, but we cannot understand the true impacts of a conflict until we look at the individual's daily life and sense of security.

Photo Credit: Yarinya, [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0](#).