

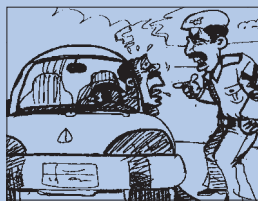


## Eid Mubarak وكل عام وانتم بخير

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# US citizen faces death penalty in Yemen

By: Shadha Al-Harazy

SANA'A, Nov. 11 — Sharif Mobley, the American citizen facing the death penalty for killing a Yemeni soldier, was interrogated and tortured by US secret service personnel, according to his wife and his US lawyer.

Mobley came to Yemen in 2008 with his wife and daughter to learn Arabic and study Islam. In January the American was arrested for suspected links to Al-Qaeda. During his arrest he was shot in the leg and spent several weeks detained in one of the capital's hospitals. In a March escape attempt, Mobley shot and killed a Yemeni security guard and wounded another.

"After three weeks in the hospital they took out a reed from his genitals which had been used to torture him. He bled heavily," Mobley's lawyer, Khalid Al-Ansi told the Yemen Times. "He couldn't walk into the detention centre. They started to beat him and kick him until he passed out. When he woke up he found his cloths full of blood and they took him to the Jomhory Hospital."

The National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedom (HOOD), representing Mobley, claims the American embassy wanted to recruit Mobley



Sharif Mobley, 26, the American citizen charged with murder after shooting dead a security guard. Mobley was arrested for alleged links with Al-Qaeda.

to spy on the Muslim community in the US. Many Muslim Yemeni-Americans, who come to visit Yemen, have been investigated by agents at the US Embassy, according to HOOD. Some have been prevented from returning to the US when they refused to co-operate.

Mobley is not the only foreigner to have been arrested by political security. Several foreign nationals have been detained since the failed attempt to blow up a US bound flight, by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, on Christmas Day 2009. Sixteen Nigerians have been imprisoned, nine French citizens, seven Bengalis, two Malaysians and two British nationals, all for supposed links to Al-Qaeda. The list of foreign detainees also includes two women, one of whom was arrested after her phone number was found on the cell phone of Mobley's wife, according to HOOD.

"It's clear now that whoever comes to Yemen to learn about Islam, is under the observation of the FBI which runs its political security from their office in the

American Embassy," said Mohammed Alaw, one of Mobley's lawyers. "Yemen has no sovereignty in its land as long as there is the American guard."

Reprieve, a British human rights organization, is HOOD's partner in defending Mobley. "We all know that the US Department of Defense is targeting Yemen now and we do our best to reveal these kinds of cases," said Cori Crider, the Reprieve lawyer. "If this happens to an American citizen, then what could happen to the rest of us?"

Shaba, Mobley's wife, never imagined that learning about Islam would make her husband an Al-Qaeda suspect. "We came to Yemen because we knew what the Prophet Mohammad said about it as a country of faith and wisdom," said Shaba, who lived peacefully in Yemen for two years before her husband's arrest. "We enjoyed our time. Until our first visit to the embassy, then everything changed. It was after that visit to the embassy our troubles started and we felt we were being watched," Shaba

added. The family wanted to return to the US because of the security situation in Yemen, and so that their family could meet their newly born son Yahia. Mobley visited the US Embassy regularly in the process of applying for passports for his children. There the 26 year old was interrogated. "They targeted him because he has a beard," Shaba said.

On Jan. 24, Mobley visited the embassy for the last time. Two days later he was kidnapped. "On Jan. 26, he went to buy food for our daughter Jouiri and he didn't come back," explained Shaba. "Later that day we discovered that 10 men kidnapped him and he was shot in the leg in front of a shop in Al-Asbahi Street."

Shaba Mobley, who can't speak Arabic, hesitated to call the family in the US. Instead she contacted the US Embassy. "They didn't even ask for his description so I knew they were not going to help. They told me to go to a local police station and they refused to send an Arabic speaker with me," she added. "We've had no response from the police since I reported it." The night following her husband's arrest more than 10 men in civilian clothes arrived at her house and took her and the children who were sleeping. Shaba was put through a full-body search and they took off and searched her daughter's diaper, and checked the two month-year old baby. A Yemeni officer then told her that her husband was in hospital.

Sharif was being held on the third floor of the Police Hospital, which is affiliated to the Interior Ministry. Mobley later described to his lawyers how his eyes were kept closed and he was chained to the bed unable to move, and only allowed to open his eye when they fed him. After four days in hospital, two Americans came and questioned him about Anwar Al-Awlaki, the American cleric now on the US 'kill or capture list' for acts of terrorism, including links to the 9/11 attacks. Mobley admitted to having spoken to him a few times, to seek his advice as a fellow English speaking Muslim-American, about which hospital was best for his pregnant wife. Crider described how

two American men assaulted Mobley and threatened him. "They told him that he would not see his family again, and they threatened to rape him and his wife," the lawyer said. "They also told him that he has no constitutional rights here [in Yemen]."

"If Sharif or Al-Awlaki are this dangerous, why didn't the Americans detain them there [in the US]? They want Yemen to do the American's job in murder and torture. This means that as long as they are away from the US the constitution does not apply," explained Khalid Al-Ansi, one of Mobley's lawyers.

"Every day I went to the embassy," said Shaba, "I saw one of the men who came to search my house at the embassy and pointed him out, but they denied it." When she asked for an emergency passport for her son the embassy refused. "The FBI questioned me about Sharif's friends and what he was doing in Ye-

men, and threatened me saying they would torture Sharif in jail if I didn't give them information." When Shaba finally traveled back to the US she was stopped at New York airport and held for questioning.

Mobley's mother, father, wife and two children travelled 7,000 miles to attend his trial on Nov. 10 in Sana'a. The charges of links to Al-Qaeda have since been dropped. The trial was postponed for the second time after deliberations over a translator for the non-Arabic speaking Mobley. "I will ask for his execution. He killed a Muslim man," said the prosecution's lawyer.

Crider said Mobley's safety can't be guaranteed, but believes that whatever happens to him now in the Central Prison, where he was transferred after his attempted escape, will not be as bad as what he went through in Political Security detention.

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## Piracy costs Yemen's fishery sector USD 150 million



Yemen's coasts guard authority has arrested more than 60 pirates, six of them are already sentenced to death.

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, Nov. 14 – Yemen has lost around USD 150 million from the fishery sector in 2009 alone due to regional piracy in the Gulf of Aden and around the Horn of Africa, according to the Yemen's Prime Minister, Ali Mujawar.

The prime minister spoke during the opening of a regional conference on piracy held in Sana'a last week. He explained that several Yemeni fishermen and crews are still being held hostage by Somali pirates, in addition to at least 813 sailors of different nationalities.

"Piracy is an international problem that harms the trading interests of many countries around the world, but Yemen's economic interests have been badly hurt by piracy," said the prime minister.

Due to the lack of a functioning state in Somalia, piracy is increasing everyday and at present, Somali pirates are detaining 23 ships and oil tankers, according to Mujawar.

He indicated that piracy has weak-

ened Yemen's fishing activity. This is the main source of income for the majority of the population who live along Yemen's 1500 km coast on the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Despite human and material losses resulting from confrontations between Yemen's coast guard and pirates, the coast guard have been able to arrest a number of pirates. Currently 62 alleged pirates have gone to trial, of which six have already been sentenced to death, the prime minister added.

The directors of nine maritime authorities participated in the two day conference representing Egypt, Eritrea, Djibouti, Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, UAE and the host country Yemen.

The conference also was attended by monitoring countries including France, Japan, Kenya, South Korea, Tanzania, The Netherlands and as well as the EU delegation to Yemen and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Participants in the conference discussed arrangements for establishing

a regional center for information exchange on piracy, that is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2011.

A circular released by the IMO in April 2009 stated that during 2008, "most reported acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the waters off the coast of Somalia... occurred in the Gulf of Aden." However, the same circular went on to say that for 2009: "The successful efforts of navies in patrolling and disrupting pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden may also have been a contributory factor in the increase in pirate activity in the Somali Basin and the Western Indian Ocean."

The IMO reported that pirates often use two or more small high-speed (up to 25 knots) open boats in their organized attacks against ships and fishing boats. They also often use a 'mother ship' – a large ship carrying personnel, equipment, supplies and smaller attack craft – that have enabled pirates to carry out successful attacks at a greater range from shore.

## New security arrangements in airports and for Eid



The special security plan for Eid Al-Adha this year will designate security patrols to secure mosques and places where the Eid prayer will be done.

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, Nov. 13 – The Ministry of Interior this week issued a decree to create a new specialized security unit for securing airports, the mouthpiece of the ruling party almotamar.net reported.

This measure by Yemen's Interior Ministry comes after explosive-packed parcels were sent to the US at the end of October originating from Yemen.

This new unit will be responsible for training and qualifications of security personnel to provide advanced levels of security to protect airports and flights in Yemen against sabotage and acts of terrorism, sources from the Ministry of Interior told almotamar.net.

The unit also will develop and upgrade the search and customs facilities at Yemeni airports, the source added.

The Ministry of Interior also reported on its website that it has distributed a special security plan for Eid Al-Adha to police stations across the country. This is to enable people to enjoy their

Eid entertainment and activities in a secure atmosphere.

Yemen, like other Arab or Islamic countries, officially celebrates Eid Al-Adha on the tenth of Thu Al-Hijja in the Hijri calendar. This year Eid Al-Adha will begin on Nov. 16.

During Eid, all public and private departments' activities are suspended for the Eid holiday which continues for five to six days, starting the day before Eid day on Nov. 15 and continuing until Nov. 20.

The special security plan for Eid Al-Adha this year will send security patrols to secure mosques and places where the Eid prayer is performed. Security will also be enhanced at sites of entertainment, such as parks and gardens, as these areas are extremely popular during the holiday, the ministry explained on its website.

The plan also entitles policemen across the country to control and seize the private use of fireworks. Retailers, vendors and unauthorized users of fireworks face arrest in an attempt

to maintain tranquility during the Eid holiday.

The plan recommended policemen nationwide to take precautions to prevent any acts of sabotage or burglary against public and private properties. During the Eid holiday many families in the city prefer to spend vacation in their villages in rural areas, so many houses are vulnerable to burglary whilst empty.

The ministry confirmed that the traffic service will be on duty to reduce traffic accidents which often rise during the Eid period, as many workers and families travel from the cities to villages and back making roads and highways congested.

The ministry added that the anti-weapons carrying campaign will continue during Eid to maintain security and stability, and that customs involving firearms in cities are banned.

The ministry has called on all citizens to cooperate with the police and security forces to keep the Eid holiday free of any sad and tragic incidents.

## IOM training in immigration challenges

By: Yasser Alariqi  
For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Nov. 13 – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) held a training course to help illegal immigrants voluntarily return to their countries and provide them with assistance.

The program on 'Essentials of Migration Management' ran from Nov. 6 to 8 in Sana'a, as part of IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRAR) project, funded by the Swiss Government.

The aim of AVRAR is to assist the return and reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in Yemen. Part of the training program is aimed to provide pre-departure guidance, transportation and post-arrival assistance to unsuccessful asylum seekers and migrants.

Yemeni authorities were represented at the conference by the Ministry of Interior, the Immigration Passports and Nationality Authority, the Ministry of Human Rights, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Immigrants' Affairs. The training covered issues such as the rights and obligations of migrants, authorities and responsibility of the state, irregular migration – an introduction to trafficking and smuggling, developing migration legislation, border management systems and refugee protection.

"This session is very important because we discussed many relevant issues," said Vice Manager of the Anti-Counterfeit Department in the Immigration Authority, Mohammed Al-Mahfadi. "The importance is when immigrants come with counterfeit documents through the port and how we should deal with them, particularly if they come from a war torn country like



Trainees in the presence of Deputy Minister of Immigration Affairs and IOM Officer in Charge, Fawzi Alzioud.

Somalia."

Al-Mahfadi stressed the importance of coordinating various organizations' work with the relevant Yemeni authorities, and how the authorities need to work together to aid and assist immigrants.

Illegal immigration is a growing problem in Yemen. "Yemen is suffering from an escalating number of illegal migrants from the Horn of Africa, which has now reached 800,000 refugees according to international organization estimates," said Minister of Expatriate Affairs, Ahmed Hussein before a similar IOM conference in February. "The economic and social burdens of illegal immigration makes it worse," he added.

UNHCR registered 77,802 new arrivals from the Horn of Africa in 2009,

a 55 percent increase from 2008, and for the first time Somalis were not the largest group. The number of Ethiopians making the dangerous journey by boat across the Gulf of Aden more than doubled to 44,814.

IOM, a leading inter-governmental organization dealing with migration with offices in over 100 countries, has worked in Sana'a since 2007, with sub-offices in Aden governorate. The organization established a presence in Sana'a to reinforce and consolidate assistance to the Yemeni government in key migration issues including: the prevention of child trafficking, assisting the voluntary return of Ethiopian migrants stranded in Somalia en route to Yemen, and reinforcing the existing capacity of local authorities in migration management.

## Tax Authority to ban traders for failure to pay taxes

By: Malak Shaher

SANA'A, Nov. 13 – Traders face a ban from importing and exporting goods if they fail to pay their taxes, a source at the Tax Authority told the Yemen Times.

All traders are issued with one tax number used to import and export goods. Tax numbers of those traders who have not paid their taxes will be cancelled, preventing them from being able to trade. Goods will also be confiscated, according to the source who requested anonymity.

"If the trader does not pay the taxes imposed on him, a letter is sent to customs officials at the airports and harbors to stop the validity of the number,"

said the source. "In this case, they cannot import or export until the taxes are paid."

Import and export duties account for 20 percent of the national budget, the source told the Yemen Times. Income lost from traders failing to pay taxes places development projects, government employee salaries and schools at risk.

The government started applying the General Sales Tax Law in 2009, imposing a 5 percent duty on sales. The Tax Authority demanded the delivery of a tax disclosure for July 2010 in Sept. 2010, as per Law No. 19 for 2001.

According to research by Professor Mohammad Jubran from the Faculty of Commerce and Economics at Sana'a

University, about 40 percent of traders are not even registered with the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

"They do free business, do not have tax numbers and thus do not pay taxes at all," said Jubran.

If traders fail to comply with the law and present a tax declaration, a delay penalty of two percent of the unpaid tax is imposed for each month of non-payment. Evasion from paying taxes can involve a penalty of 50 percent of sales, according to the law.

Tax evasion crimes involve acts such as selling taxable commodities without declaration, not paying the entitled tax, presenting false documents and records, and neglecting invoicing and accounting records.

## Poor performance by the Yemeni parliament

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, Nov. 13 – A recent report conducted by the Yemen Parliament Watch (YPW) criticized the 'poor' performance of the parliament over May-August 2010, indicating that the parliament discussed only 7.3 percent of questions listed on their agenda.

The YPW was funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and implemented by the Yemeni Polling Center in Dec. 2009. It was setup to conduct opinion polls, release parliamentary performance reports, and run training workshops for parliamentarians, civil society organizations and journalists.

The report issued last week said that many MPs were absent during sessions, and that some of them come to the parliament only to quickly leave again.

Moreover, the parliament went into recess on three consecutive days due to lack of a quorum. The parliament approved only seven bills out of 27 during this period.

The report said that there were divisions among MPs about some issues and laws such as determining the safe age for marriage bill, and loan agreements. The parliamentary blocs did not present or suggest any new bills during the period. The report said that some essential issues were absent from the parliament's agenda altogether, like the Southern Movement and the war in Sa'ada governorate.

**Boring and inefficient sessions**

Parliamentarian Fuad Dahaba told the Yemen Times that this poor performance was due to the postponement of elections. "We confess that there is

a big decline in our performance," he said.

"Most MPs hate to come to the parliament these days. They feel bored due to an absence of serious debate inside the parliament. Actually, I'm one of those MPs," he added.

According to Dahaba, most MPs have lost hope in the parliament and the government. He said that if the elections were postponed again, the parliament will be like 'dead body'. "I urge the government to allow urgent, free and fair elections," he said.

Dahaba indicated that the absence rate among MPs has been increasing, pointing out that many bills and important decisions have been postponed indefinitely.

"MPs have no strategy and their legal period has ended. The parliament has no role now," he explained.

## Aid workers say children have reached IDP camps malnourished

SANAA, Nov. 2 (IRIN) — A new survey reports very high levels of child malnutrition in Yemen's conflict-hit northern governorate of Saada, particularly in districts that have seen the worst of the fighting. The rate of malnutrition equals that of a survey in Southern Sudan earlier this year which attracted media attention as discovering "the hungriest place on Earth".

A UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)-supported survey carried out by the Ministry of Public Health and Population showed that 45 percent of the 26,246 children aged 6-59 months who were screened in five districts in western Saada (the governorate has 15 districts in all) were suffering from acute malnutrition.

"In one area, the proportion was as high as three out of four children. Overall, 17 percent of the children screened suffer from severe acute malnutrition [SAM] and 28 percent from moderate acute malnutrition [MAM]," a UNICEF statement said.



Aid workers say children have reached IDP camps malnourished

## Multiple earthquakes off Yemen coast

By: Iona Craig

SANAA, Nov. 14 — A flurry of earthquakes, up to 5.0 magnitude, were reported off the coast of Yemen, Djibouti and Eritrea on Sunday, according to seismologists.

The first quake was reported at 07:34 AM, 120km north east of the Djibouti coast on Sunday morning. An unusual series of aftershocks followed including a 4.5 magnitude quake in an unpopulated area of Lahij governorate, according to The Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System.

In total up to 17 quakes were registered off the coast of Yemen by the United States Geological Survey. According to the US government's scientific agency depths ranged from 9.9 km to 13.2 km.

The surface of the Earth is broken into six or seven major plates. The Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden were formed as the Arabian plate separated from Africa, a process, which began 56 to 34 million years ago. Across both the Gulf of Aden mid-ocean ridge system and the southernmost part of the Red Sea the plates are moving, not only apart but also sliding past each other. Geologists believe the Red Sea is still widening and in time will become an ocean.

The East African Rift System, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden form what's known as the 'Afar triple junction' the centre of Sunday's swarm of earthquakes.

Adding the MAM and SAM together gives a global acute malnutrition (GAM) figure of 45 percent for those children screened. This is the same figure as a survey done by NGOs Save the Children and Medair in Akobo, Southern Sudan, earlier this year which led to media reports calling it "the hungriest place on Earth".

GAM and SAM are the principal indicators used in nutrition surveys. Prevalences of GAM and SAM are based on the proportion of children aged 6-59 months whose body measurements categorize them as acutely malnourished according to various statistical guidelines and benchmarks.

The survey covered only a third of one of Yemen's 21 governorates, but other recent assessments and surveys from the camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the host communities affected by the Saada conflict also show very high levels

of acute malnutrition, according to Wisam Al-Timimi, a UNICEF nutrition and child survival specialist. The Saada survey used the Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) methodology, UNICEF told IRIN.

"Malnutrition is the main underlying cause of death for young children in Yemen, and therefore this grim situation could spell disaster for the children of Saada," said Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF representative in Yemen. "As winter approaches, thousands of children are at serious risk if we are not able to act immediately."

Al-Timimi told IRIN the community-based surveyors for the July 2010 Saada survey were trained by UNICEF nutrition consultants and master trainers from Saada Governorate health office (part of the Ministry of Health).

### "Food assistance not enough"

Intermittent fighting since 2004 is not the sole cause of the problem. In

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rural Yemen as a whole, there is lack of awareness about proper nutrition; bread and tea is a typical breakfast and dinner meal for both adults and children.

A projection based on 2003-2008 national data using weight, height and age indicators suggests that across Yemen, 15 percent of children aged under five suffer from GAM - that percentage already at the level the World Health Organization defines as constituting an emergency situation. But the protracted conflict in Saada between government forces and Houthi-led Shia rebels seems to have worsened the situation in the north.

"Several children come to us in an advanced state of malnutrition, and therefore their treatment becomes costly and takes several months. Parents don't give their ailing children the right food to remain healthy, nor do they take them to hospitals early enough," Shihab Mohammed, a doctor at the government-run al-Salam Hospital in Saada city, told IRIN.

Samia Mohammed, a former health awareness campaigner at al-Mazra'a I

IDP camp whose population mostly came from western Saada, said hundreds of children were already malnourished on arrival at the camp. "Their mothers were malnourished too," she said.

"Food assistance alone is not enough to address malnutrition," said UNICEF's Cappelaere, adding that major efforts are needed to support household food security, change existing feeding customs and ensure safe water, sanitation and hygiene for populations affected by the conflict.

Despite a ceasefire in February 2010, the extremely volatile security situation has impeded access, and limited the reach of humanitarian agencies.

"UNICEF therefore calls upon all parties to the conflict in Saada as well as the international community, including the Qatari mediation delegation currently visiting Yemen, to ensure that immediate access for humanitarian actors is granted to the entire governorate of Saada to ensure children can receive necessary life-saving assistance," Cappelaere said.

## In Brief

### WORLD

#### Yemen partakes in workshop on human rights in Geneva

Yemen is participating in a training workshop on International Law for Human Rights organized by the Geneva Institute for Human Rights (GIHR), in Switzerland on Nov. 9-14.

Ambassador to the World Federation of Childhood Protection for Yemen, Abdal-Hafez Mo'ajeb, Yemen's representative at the workshop, said he would give a presentation and follow-up the

recommendations from the Arab region's presentation. The workshop will also include field visits to the United Nations and a number of international organizations concerned with human rights in the Swiss city of Geneva.

The World Federation of Childhood Protection is based in Palestine, and selected journalist and human rights activist Mo'ajeb as its ambassador for Yemen, in addition to five other ambassadors from Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Austria and the US.

#### SANA'A GTZ projects supporting agriculture in Yemen reviewed

Yemen and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) reviewed on Wednesday GTZ projects and activities supporting agriculture in Yemen.

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, Mansour Al-Hawshabi, and a team from the GTZ sustainable food security program, discussed issues pertaining to projects GTZ carries out in Yemen. These include projects supporting Yemen's food security, palm trees and increased cereal production as well as its support of the National Anti-qat Center.

Al-Hawshabi praised the role the sustainable food security program plays in enhancing the government's efforts to upgrade the country's agricultural sector. The GTZ sustainable food security program supports a number of projects to help achieve food security in Yemen via assisting in the preparation of the National Food Security Strategy jointly with other donors. It also focuses on spreading awareness of the negative impacts of qat tree cultivation on food security in the country.

#### Yemen, Egypt conclude strategic dialogue session

Yemen and Egypt concluded on Thursday a strategic dialogue session co-chaired by Deputy Foreign Minister, Ali Muthana, and the Egyptian Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs, Mohammed Qasim.

The session addressed preparations

for the coming strategic dialogue between Yemen and Egypt's foreign ministers that will be held soon in Sana'a. It also dealt with common regional and international issues of concern, joint coordination between both countries in issues raised by international events, as well as bilateral relations and means of developing them.

A joint press statement affirmed full support of Egypt and its solidarity with Yemen in order to preserve its security, stability and unity, and praised Yemen's efforts in counter terrorism. It also called on all member countries in the Friends of Yemen group to bring success to the forthcoming meeting in Riyadh in Feb. 2011, emphasizing the importance of the meeting to arrive at decisions reflecting support of the international community for Yemen.

#### The GPC and the Chinese Communist Party hold talks

A session was held on Wednesday in Sana'a between the General People's Congress (GPC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) over reinforcing cooperation and exchanging expertise between the two parties within a signed protocol between them.

The talks also discussed coordination between both countries with regard to the different international issues, in addition to expanding the current cooperation between the two countries, and encouraging investment in industry, agricultural and the exploration of oil and minerals. The two parties discussed strengthening their partnership

in combating terrorism and piracy, and protecting the international navigation routes in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden, as well as preserving security and stability in the Horn of Africa.

#### Laws on industry regulation and national production protection issued

Law No. 20 for 2010 on Industry Regulation was issued on Tuesday. The law contains 28 articles in ten chapters covering industrial activity development, national industry promotion, industrial zones, small industry, industrial control, industry obligations, and sanctions. In addition, Law No. 21 for 2010 was issued on National Production Protection from Impacts of Harmful International Trade Practices. The law consists of 28 articles divided into six chapters covering the ministry's responsibilities, procedures and harmful practices.

#### ADEN

#### About 500 media to cover 20th Gulf Cup

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information for the Radio and Television Sector and Head of the Media Committee for the 20th Gulf Cup, Ahmed Al-Hamati, expected on Friday the arrival of about 500 journalists and photographers from around the world to cover the competition.

In a statement to Saba News agency, Al-Hamati made it clear that facilities will be provided for journalists and reporters who are expected to cover the tournament events. Journalists will be

provided information from the media center, a tournament booklet, as well as a guidebook covering historical, archaeological and tourism sites in the city of Aden and across Yemen.

Al-Hamati pointed out that a central media center and media centers in the two main stadiums have been equipped to help journalists perform their media and press functions to the fullest.

#### Yemen and Pakistan in anti-piracy cooperation talks

Aden Governor Adnan Al-Jafri met on Monday with Pakistan's Ambassador to Yemen, Syed Khawaja, and the crew of the Tariq, a Pakistani warship currently visiting Yemen. The meeting focused on the bilateral cooperation in fighting maritime piracy.

Al-Jafri described to the envoy and crew the developments Aden has made, mainly in the investment and economic sectors, as well as the efforts being made to tackle pirates in the Gulf of Aden. Khawaja praised the level of cooperation between Yemen and his country, and said Pakistan is looking forward to opening a Pakistani school in Aden. The captain of warship praised the facilities that Aden Port and the local Aden authorities provide for ships.

#### TAIZ

**Taiz deputy governor named**  
Republican decree No. 211 for 2010 was issued on Thursday appointing Ali Aziz Ali Al-Hujairi as deputy governor of Taiz governorate.

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# The many dangers of Yemen's water shortage

By: Malak Shafer

In the best case scenario water is carried on a donkey's back, but in most parts of Yemen, it is largely women who take up the burden of climbing up and down mountains to fetch water from springs and deliver it to their houses.

For Hanan Hizam and Bushra Aqlan, two teenage neighbors who live on the peak of a mountain in Same', Taiz governorate, getting water for their families is an arduous task.

Every day they clamber down the mountain side to reach a small river, where they fill their 20 litre water containers, place them on their heads, and climb back up the mountain. The number of journeys they must take each day depends on their families' needs, but each trip takes just over an hour.

The two girls were filmed by a French organization, What's Up Productions, that came to Yemen in June 2010 to conduct a study on the shortage of water. In the video posted on their website, Hanan said that a girl from their village had broken her leg and another had broken her arm on the same journey they do every day. She looks into the camera pleading to the government to help them get better access to water.

## Water access in rural areas

Nearly 50 percent of those living in villages and remote parts of Yemen depend

on springs, wells, or water trucks, according to a report by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation published in 2010. But wells and water trucks are not always good alternatives for those living in rural areas. Wells are often unclear and water truck deliveries are expensive.

"The water truck in our village in Taiz costs YR 10,000 (USD 50) because my family lives very far from the city centre. They struggle a lot to obtain clean water," said Mahmoud Saeed who currently lives in Sana'a.

A report titled 'The Voice of the Poor' released by Oxfam in partnership with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has noted that water scarcity has placed enormous pressures on farmers, some of whom have had to abandon food crops for cash crops such as qat. This brings about additional threats to the country's food security.

The shortage and expense of water has also had negative effects on livestock production as farmers find it harder to water their animals and grow feed for them. This has led to an increase in poverty among communities in some rural areas.

In the remote areas where people do not have easy access to water, girls are increasingly dropping out of school as they have to spend more time collecting water from wells far from their houses, according to Abdu Al-Kubati, a water activist. Furthermore, many poor people

in rural areas have resorted to drinking unsafe and contaminated water.

## Water shortages in urban areas

There is a growing concern about Yemen's rapidly depleting water reserves. According to a recent report published by the Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED), one third of Yemenis lack access to safe water.

The Minister of Water and Environment, Abdulrahman Al-Eryani, attributes Yemen's water problems to its rapidly increasing population and to qat cultivation. Faced by shortages of water, those living in villages are leaving for the cities and contributing to Yemen's already increasing urban population. They also come to the cities seeking work and a better life.

The increase in urban population has gradually resulted in diminishing water reserves in the cities. For example, the Sana'a water basin is running out of water - nearly 40 percent of the underground water supply in the Sana'a basin has already been depleted. The current population in Sana'a is estimated at 3 million, over a million more than a decade earlier.

In the not too distant past, people in the Sana'a basin were digging down 100 feet to hit water, but now they have to dig as deep as 1,000 feet. Al-Eryani mentioned in a workshop held by the ministry in June. Over the last 20 years, the groundwater in Yemen has been



Hana and Bushra struggle to carry water to their families on a perilous mountain track near a village in Taiz governorate.

pumped up at a rate approximately four times greater than it can be replenished by natural recharge, the AFED report stated.

## Water, qat and conflict

According to Professor Abdulla Al-Noman from Sana'a University's Faculty of Agriculture, the planting of qat is increasing which further exacerbates the stress on water reserves, especially in Sana'a. There are approximately 13,500 wells in Sana'a alone that are dedicated to irrigating qat.

It is estimated that more than 90 percent of the water resources in Yemen are used for irrigation, with 36 percent consumed for watering qat trees alone. Wide-spread illegal well drilling in the Sana'a basin and elsewhere takes further unknown amounts of water.

The groundwater around the capital is depleting fast. The first layer of the basin from 30 to 70 meters has already run dry. Most of the second layer from 70 to 300 meters has been depleted, and the third layer which reaches 900 me-

ters is fast heading towards depletion too, according to Engineer Abdulkhaleq Al-Wan, a public awareness specialist at the Sana'a branch of the National Water Resources Authority.

In fact, there is a real 'water war' in Yemen where in some areas people fight over water like the recent conflicts in Amran. Last year, in a small village in Amran governorate, qat farmers wanted to monopolize wells in order to irrigate their farms. As a result, many people were unable to obtain water from the wells they had been dependent on for their own domestic needs.

Arguments and acts of violence flared up between farmers and villages until an agreement was forged between the parties by local elders. Now anyone breaking the water sharing agreement has to pay a fine of YR 5,000 (USD 25).

In Rada'a district, Al-Baidh governorate, conflicts over water used to irrigate qat spilled over into deadly violence a few months ago. Conflict between the Wadi Thah and Al-Mas'oud tribes over a well irrigating qat led to attacks that left

11 people dead, six from Al-Mas'oud and five from Wadi Thah, according to Dhan Al-Rada'i, an eyewitness from a village overlooking the area.

According to a report by the Yemen Armed Violence Assessment (YAVA), violence over land and water kill far more people in Yemen than internal political conflicts. Around 4,000 people are killed over land and water disputes each year.

According to the United Nations, two to three litres of water are required per person per day for drinking, and 20 to 30 litres for other domestic needs. Nowadays, getting this basic minimum is becoming increasingly difficult for many Yemenis.

4U

You can watch What's Up Productions' video about Yemen's water crisis on their website at: <http://www.whatsup-prod.com>

# 'I Love My Book' campaign - instilling reading in children



Students from Khawla school pose for the Yemen Times holding books provided by the 'I Love My Book' campaign. They all read books and want more.

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

Laila Al-Abbadi sits cross-legged in the corner of Khawla school library in Sana'a, excitedly turning the pages of a new book. The shelves around her are stacked full of children's books, all provided by the 'I Love My Book' campaign, a project launched by the British Council.

Laila is an avid reader, her parents having encouraged her to read and write from a young age. She is one of the library's most regular visitors and an annual visitor to Yemen's Book Fair. The 11 year old is always asking her parents to provide her with new books.

"When I read any story I feel that I'm part of it. I like reading stories more than reading school text books," she said. "When there are no new books, it's no problem, I just re-read the old ones," she said jokingly.

Despite her young age, Laila is well aware of the importance of reading.

"Reading is very important. There is no good future without reading," she

said.

Laila has been able to take her hobby to new heights thanks to the 'I Love My Book' campaign. The campaign was set up in 2009 by a youth empowerment program called Global Change Makers, supported by the British Council. It aims to encourage 9-15 year olds in Yemen to read, and to raise awareness about the importance of reading, especially among parents. As well as distributing over 600 books, the campaign has set up a number of 'children's corners' in the school libraries of Sana'a and Aden, where children can sit and read together.

"Books can become your passport to another world. They enable you to share dreams with other people and benefit from their wisdom and their experience," said Michael White, the British Council Director in Sana'a. "Books do indeed enable you to build your life."

The 'I Love My Book' corner in Khawla school library was packed full of eager students, some sitting at tables, others spread-out on the floor. But despite the large gathering, the library

was completely silent. Each child absorbed in a book. The school also lends books out, so that students can take books home with them after school.

Entesar Al-Ameri, the school's librarian smiles with pride as she looks over her students busy reading. According to Entesar, the students spontaneously come to the library and read for hours at a time.

"The campaign has had a great response from our students. They arrive in flocks, many of them prefer reading here to studying the school's curricula."

Parents are often to blame for not encouraging their children to read at home, says the head of the campaign, Elham Al-Quhali, who criticizes Yemeni culture for not considering reading as important and literate parents fail to support their children when it comes to reading.

"Unfortunately, most of their parents do not instill in their children a love for reading," she said. "If we can increase the number of libraries, especially for children, we will have a very clever future generation."

Illiteracy rates among Yemeni children have increased, according to a recent report conducted by Yemen's Shura Council. Two million children are not enrolled at school, and a high proportion of students dropout from school during the early stages of their education. The literacy rate for 15 to 24 year olds in Yemen is 80 percent, according to UN figures from 2007.

According to Al-Quhali, the campaign has helped many students discover talents in reading and writing that they never knew they had.

Laila Ba'alawi, 13, a student at the same school, said that because she has read so many stories she now wants to try writing her own. "I have taught my mother how to read and write because she is illiterate," she said proudly.

Laila said that she reads about five books a day and tries to encourage her younger sisters to read. When she is older she hopes to become a dentist and author of children's stories.



Students come to the library spontaneously. They prefer the books in this library to those in the school curriculum.

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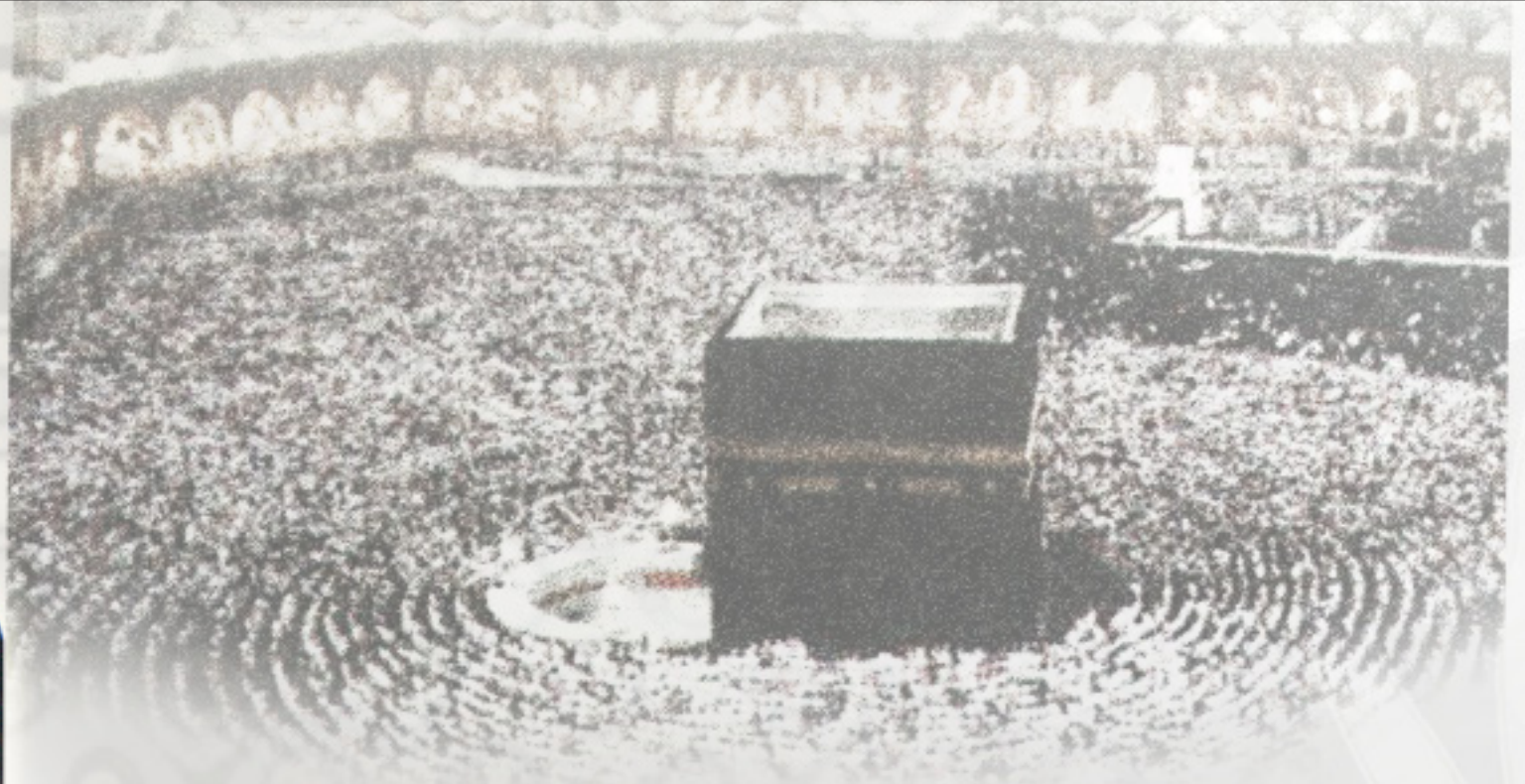
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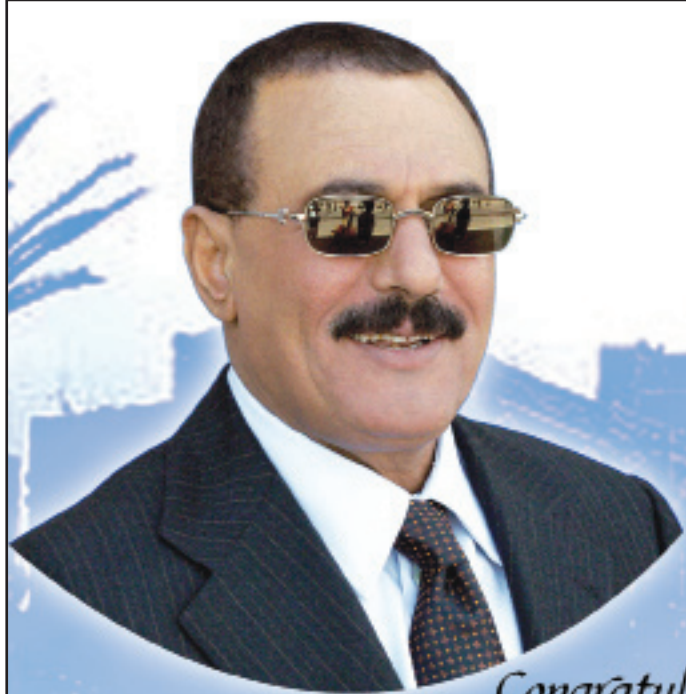
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بمناسبة حلول عيد الأضحى المبارك تتقدم شركة طيران السعودية باسم رئيس مجلس الإدارة والمدير العام للتنفيذي وكافة موظفي الشركة بأسمى آيات التهاني والتبريكات لفخامة الأخ الرئيس علي عبدالله صالح وأخيه خادم الحرمين الشريفين الملك عبدالله بن عبدالعزيز والشعبين الشقيقين اليمني والسعودي والأمتين العربية والإسلامية أعاده الله علينا وعليكم بالخير واليمن والبركات وكل عام وأنتم بخير،،

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الناقل الوطني الثاني في اليمن

المدير العام التنفيذي  
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## 30 November

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President

**Ali Abdullah Saleh**

the Political Leadership and the people of Yemen  
on the Occasion Eid Al-Adha Al-Mubark  
and the Occasion of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary  
of 30 November.

**Many Happy Returns**

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القلبية إلى فخامة الأخ/

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رئيس الجمهورية

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بمناسبة عيد الأضحى  
والذكرى الـ ٤٣ ليوم الجلاء  
في الـ ٣٠ من نوفمبر المجيدة

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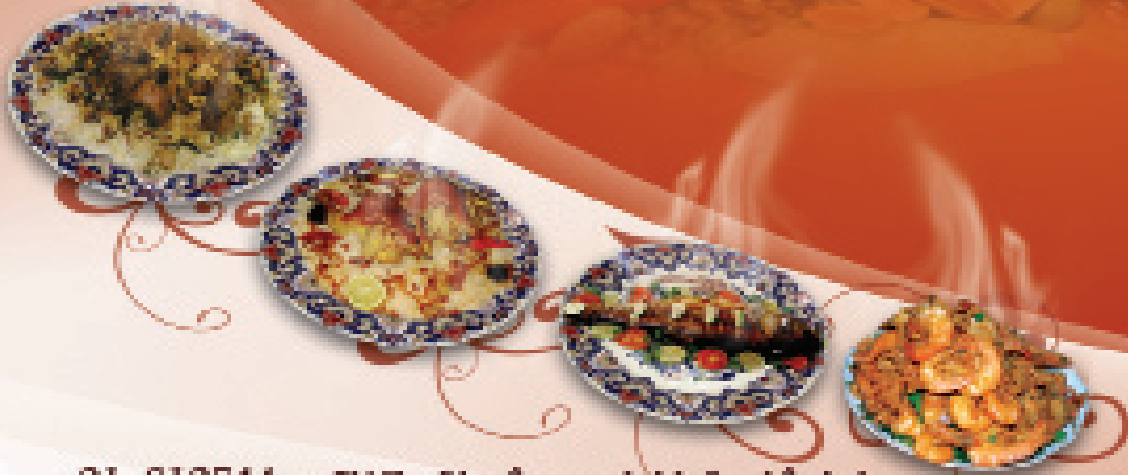


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أعاده الله وعلى جميع الأمة العربية والإسلامية بالخير والبركات  
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As well as the Management Team & All staff of both  
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**H.E. Ali Abdullah Saleh**  
President of the Republic of Yemen

on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha Al-Mubark and  
the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day  
30 November



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We extend our congratulations to His Excellency President

**Ali Abdullah Saleh**

and the Yemeni people

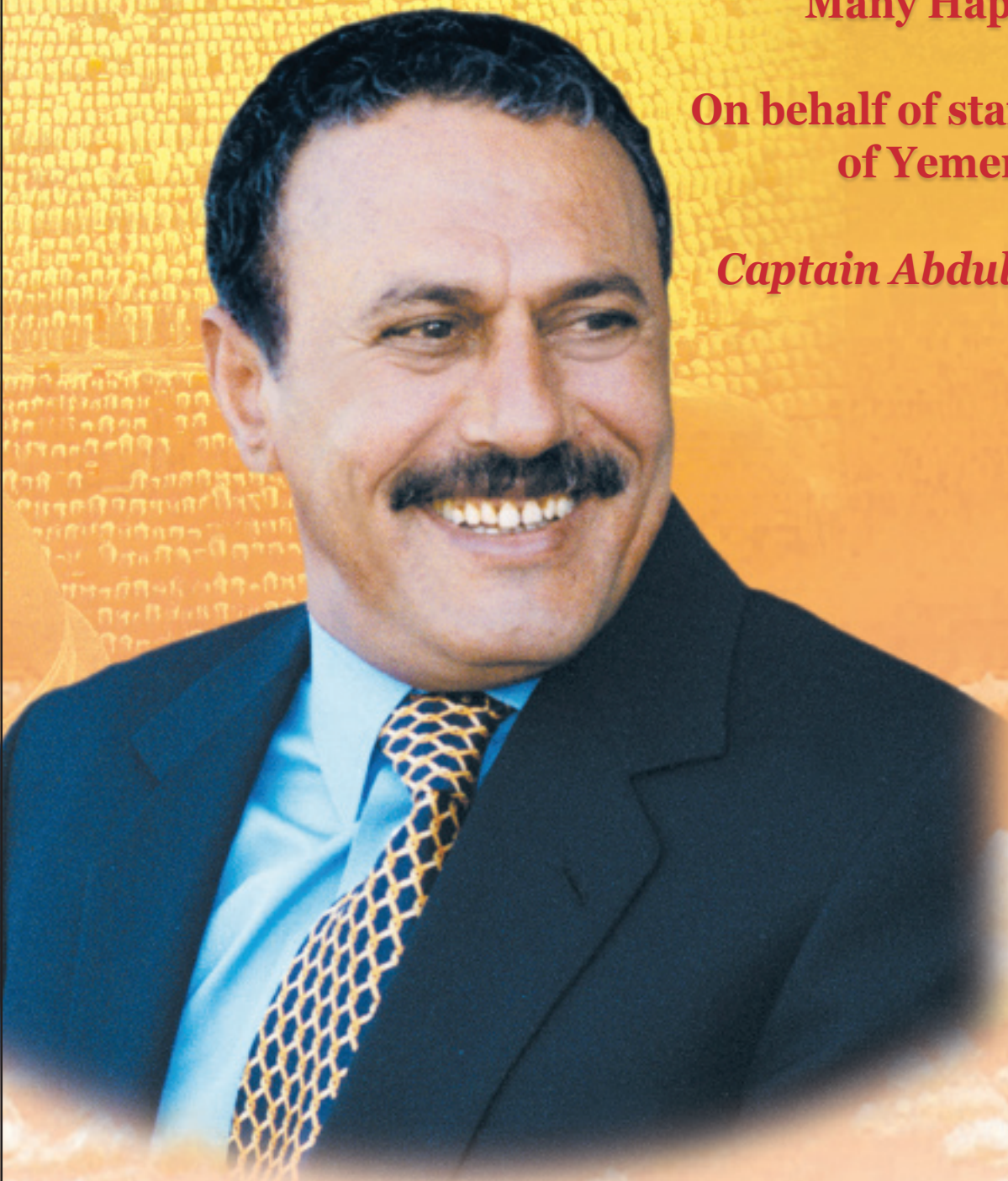
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On behalf of staff and employees  
of Yemen Airways

*Captain AbdulKhalik Alkadhi*



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الضيافة العربية الأصيلة

# Yemen's Flora



## Safflower: Flowers from the sun

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Safflower, also known as 'fake Saffron', is a herb used both in food and cosmetics. While it is similar to the more expensive saffron, it is also very beneficial to one's health and popular in Yemeni cuisine. Two types of safflower are known in Yemen, one is yellow while the other is red.

Traditionally, the crop was grown for its seeds, and used for coloring and flavoring foods, in medicines, and for making dyes. For the last fifty years or

so though, the plant has been cultivated mainly for the vegetable oil extracted from its seeds.

"In addition to using safflower in our food, it is used as a paste to regenerate the facial skin," said Maymona Ahmed who works for a beauty salon in Sana'a.

In Yemen, safflower is used in traditional medicine as a paste to reduce melasma, labyrinthine, itching and herpes. It is also used as a mouth freshener after meals and the flowers are used in a special drink to ease period pain.

Safflower is believed to have originated in an area bounded by the eastern



The safflower has many uses in traditional medicine.

### Nutrition and health benefits of eating safflower

- Consumption of safflower helps in boosting immune system, thereby giving strength to fight against diseases and infection.
- It is useful for relieving the symptoms of fever and is used as a drug for treating measles.
- Safflower is known to be a good uterine tonic and hence, is used for treating premenstrual syndrome and correcting irregular menstrual cycles.
- Since it contains very low saturated fatty acids, safflower oil helps in reducing the level of cholesterol in the blood.
- Safflower paste is applied on the skin to provide relief from mild skin inflammations, rashes, and so on.
- Safflower oil is considered to be a good remedy for acne prone skin, reducing dryness of the skin and nourishing skin with moisture.
- Due to its richness in polyunsaturated fatty acids and essential fatty acids, safflower oil is used for massaging the scalp and the hair. This results in dilating the blood vessels in the scalp, improving blood supply to the scalp and supplying more nutrients to the hair roots.
- A teaspoon of safflower kernels, when mixed with six shelled almonds and honey is used for treating constipation. The same dose has also been beneficial for young, weak and pregnant women.
- Safflower is a very effective aphrodisiac and hence, helps in the treatment of sexual debility. For this, powdered safflower seeds should be mixed with pistachio nuts, honey and almonds. This mixture when taken with milk, every day before going to bed, improves sexual vigor and thickens semen.
- Infusion of the flowers when combined with honey and consumed helps in treating asthma.
- A mixture of ½ teaspoon of powdered safflower seeds and one tablespoon of honey helps in treating bronchial asthma. The mixture should be consumed once or twice a day.
- Safflower also acts as an expectorant and thus, reduces the spasms by liquefying the tenacious sputum.
- A brew made from safflower foliage is taken for preventing abortion and female sterility.
- Safflower is also known to reduce pain, fever and enlarged breasts.

Source: <http://lifestyle.iloveindia.com>

Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. It has been identified, as growing in Egypt over 4,000 years ago and has since been cultivated across the Middle East, throughout the Mediterranean region, and in India, initially for the orange dye obtained from the florets. Safflower has also spread eastwards to China and Japan. The Spaniards took Safflower to Mexico.

The list of uses of Safflower goes on... It is used as an antiseptic to clean wounds and reduce swelling. The Chinese believe that it reduces cholesterol and 'stimulates' the immune system - although it is not advisable to take saffron during pregnancy. In addition it used as an antidepressant and to remove obsessions and irrational fears, it is also said to help induce sleep and help you relax.

"I have personally used it and recommended it to friends who feel anxious. I mixed a spoon of safflower seeds in a glass of water then strained the seeds before drinking. After taking it a few times my friends confirmed that they feel more relaxed," said Radhath Mumaiza a Yemeni herbalist.

Others advise that mixing it with curd, ground almonds, honey and anise seeds and eating a few spoons of the mixture has a cooling effect on the mood.

According to the Health Line and American health reference site, safflower oil lowers high blood pressure and coagulation in patients with chronic cor pulmonale, although there is limited available evidence supporting this.

Safflower can also be used in fighting fevers. It was used for many years to treat measles before the vaccination was developed. It helped to relieve the fever and symptoms and allow the body to fight infection. While this is no longer necessary because measles is such a rare illness, safflower still remains a good treatment for fevers caused by other problems.

When it comes to women's health, safflower is an herb that can be used to help with menstruation. If you have problems with irregular periods, safflower can actually help to induce a period. This is a good alternative to pharmaceutical hormones that are often used for this purpose.

## Got any heart disease pills, mate?

By: Ismail Sheikh  
For the Yemen Times

An old man yelled from the debab at a pharmacist across the street: "Do you have any heart diseases pills? The strong ones?"

"Sorry not today," replied the pharmacist as the bus rolled away.

After overhearing this strange encounter, the Yemen Times decided to enquire further into the role of pharmacies and the use of self-medication in Yemen. While the pharmacist in the previous scene refused to broach the topic of self-medication, a number of customers were happy to share their thoughts.

For Mohammad Obad's, a man of 43, going to the doctors is not a priority. It won't fit into his busy schedule.

"If I get seriously ill, then I'll consider the doctors," Mohammad said as he heaved a sack of newly prescribed drugs onto his shoulder. "I believe that pharmacists are just as qualified as doctors, for me it's a sensible shortcut."

Mohammad's refusal to visit a doctor stems from a lack of time, but for others it's a case of trust, or lack of it. Mabrook Al-Haimi, 58, is convinced that Yemen's doctors are untrustworthy. "I wouldn't trust them with my life," he shouted over the hustle and bustle of the pharmacy. Mabrook explained that the treatment he received for a lung infection from a doctor last year ended up making him considerably worse.

"I trust my wife who makes me mixtures of traditional medicine and I feel good after taking them. Besides, I cannot afford to just go to the doctors whenever I feel ill."

Fatima Ahmed, a woman of 30, went to the doctors to receive treatment for a long-term stomach disease. Her friends were terrified after hearing that the doctor wanted to use a laryngoscope to examine her stomach.

"I couldn't live with the idea of hav-



Taking medication without knowing its side effects, might cause severe injury that cannot be reversed.

ing a surgery. Though afterwards I realized that they weren't cutting me open, they were just putting a tube down my throat to analyze my stomach."

Superstitious beliefs and a general lack of health awareness often leads patients to seek medical treatment elsewhere, said Dr. Abdullah Thawaba, a physician at the National Tumors Center.

"The long treatment process might drive patients away from seeking doctors' help when it's needed," said Dr. Thawaba.

Illnesses which have been left until they reach a critical stage, where doctors can do little to help, is something that Dr. Thawaba witnesses on a daily

basis. "I think patients ought to consider seriously the consequences of not going to doctors early enough."

The process should be maintained as it is, that is, going to doctors first for a diagnosis and then to the pharmacists for medicine, explained Dr. Honaina Hamoud Honaina, a pharmacist in Sana'a. "People tend to try and shortcut these steps using traditional medicine but this may do more harm than good," he added.

"There is no problem selling sedatives and pain killers to patients. In addition we are obliged to point them to doctors if the situation is not under control," said Dr. Honaina.

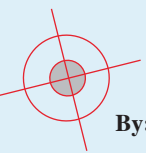
"Narcotic medicines should not be

handed out to patients just because they know the name of the drug," said Dr. Honaina. "Narcotic medicines are given only by registered doctors and only in certain amounts."

Side effects vary from one medicine to another, according to Dawod Dwaillah, a 26 year old medical school graduate. He explained how fatal a misuse of medication might be. "We are obliged to ask for a prescription for certain kinds of medication. We were taught that there are drugs we cannot handout without a doctor's signature and stamp."

Pharmacists can give medicine to patients as long as their condition is not so serious as to require a doctor's examination, explained Dwaillah.

## HEALTH WATCH



By: Dr. Siva



This weekly column is to disseminate health information to the readers in Yemen and outside. Dr. Siva is currently working at Aden Refinery Company Hospital. Life style diseases and cancer prevention are his special interests. Complementary medicine and naturopathy are his passions.

## Keep the V-bug at bay

Farida is a student at Aden University. Two weeks ago, she developed fever and throat pain. She consulted a doctor. Farida was diagnosed with streptococcal throat infection and her doctor prescribed an antibiotic to treat the infection. Farida started to feel better soon after she took the medication.



The pain in her throat subsided and her temperature returned to normal. But then she noticed an unusual discharge in her underwear. To make things worse, her genital area felt very itchy.

Farida told her mom what was going on, and her mom took her back to the doctor's office. There, Farida found out she had a yeast infection. Although she had been nervous about seeing a doctor for such a personal reason, she was relieved to find out that diagnosing and treating a yeast infection is simple and painless.

Yeast Infections or *candidiasis*, affect around 75 percent of women at some stage in their lives. Yeasts are small organisms that live on human body in small numbers. However due to certain conditions, there may be an outgrowth of these organisms which may lead to an infection. Candida organisms can grow on moist, warm areas of the body like the female genital area. When they cause an infection in the vagina, it is known as vulvovaginal *candidiasis*. Normally, the slightly acidic environment of the vagina prevents yeast and other microorganisms from growing. If the vagina becomes less acidic, too much yeast can grow and cause a vaginal infection. Vaginal yeast infection is caused by a specific type of Candida species called *Candida albicans*. Trichomonosis is another common infection in many Yemeni women wherein the discharge will be thin, foul smelling and frothy. In addition there will be profound itching and irritation in the genital area.

An infection (thrush) is usually attributed to natural imbalance issues like indigestion, pH balances, acidity and also hormonal changes. With proper changes in your diet, hygiene and lifestyle, you can control these issues to a large extent.

*Candida* can overgrow for many reasons. Stress, pregnancy, and illnesses that affect the immune system may allow yeast to multiply, as can certain medications. These include some birth control pills and steroids. Or if you're taking antibiotics, such as for throat infection, the antibiotics can kill 'good' bacteria that also live in the body and normally keep the growth of *candida* in the vagina in check. Girls who have diabetes that isn't controlled are at a higher risk for yeast infections.

Many girls find that yeast infections tend to show up right before they get their periods because of the hormonal changes that come with the menstrual cycle. Clothing (especially inner garments) that is too tight or made of materials like nylon that trap heat and moisture might lead to yeast infections because yeast can thrive in this type of environment. And douching and using scented sanitary products can upset the healthy balance of bacteria in the private part and make yeast infections more likely.

### Symptoms of Yeast Infection

Common signs and symptoms of yeast infections include:

- itching and irritation in the genital area
- redness, swelling, or itching of the genital
- a thick, white discharge that can look like cottage cheese and is usually odorless, although it might smell like bread or yeast
- pain or burning when urinating or during sex

If you have any of these symptoms, see your doctor or gynecologist. It's easy to confuse the symptoms of a yeast infection with those of some STDs and other vaginal infections. Your doctor can give you the right diagnosis.

With a little change in your daily habits and lifestyle, you can find a permanent way to cure thrush. A healthy lifestyle includes consumption of proper healthy foods. Junk food and alcohol should be avoided as much as possible.

Hygiene also is equally important. Take the necessary steps to keep your private parts free from constant dampness and moisture.

Recurring thrush can also be treated by natural means. Many of these are available in your kitchen!

Taking dietary supplements like garlic, cranberries, yogurt (preferably with lactobacillus bifidus), cinnamon, washing the affected area with diluted apple cider vinegar (around 1 to 3 tablespoons in 1 liter water) is found to be effective in the prevention of yeast infections. Some recommend vaginal douching with dilute Tea Tree oil.

Oral and intravaginal homeopathic combinations are also found to be good. Unfortunately, they are not available in Yemen. (Calcarea carbonica for intense itching with thick white or yellowish discharge. Borax for burning pains with egg-white colored discharge that occurs midcycle. Sepia for burning pains with milky white discharge and pressure in vaginal area. Graphites for backache with thin white discharge that is worse in the morning and when walking. Arsenicum album for burning, offensive discharge.)

### Prevention of yeast infection

Care should also be taken so that the area remains free from any type of yeast. Keep 'that' area clean and dry. Change pads often during your periods.

Do not use too much of deodorants or soap since they may damage the sensitive skin in that area. Shun bubble bath. Wear 'breathable' cotton underwear and loose pants. Say no to tight clothing or clothing made of synthetic material. Use antibiotics only when necessary. Keep away from simple and refined sugars, breads, pasta, baked goods, sweets, dairy products, alcoholic beverages, peanuts, and all known food allergens. Eat whole foods with plenty of protein, fresh vegetables, and grains.

Vitamin A (10,000 IU/day) enhances the integrity of the vaginal mucosa. Zinc, vitamin E and vitamin C improve immunity and help to restore the integrity of vaginal mucosa.

If you are facing chronic discharge, you should certainly take an opinion from your doctor. The test is simple and painless. It involves using a swab (like a cotton bud) to take a sample of cells from the vagina. The genital area will also be examined.

Treatment is very simple and involves using antifungal cream, pessaries, pills or a combination.

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# Revenge killings keep children out of school



Carrying weapons is commonplace in Yemen

Thousands of children in three of Yemen's 21 governorates have stopped going to school for fear of being targeted by revenge killings, according to international NGO Partners-Yemen (PY).

PY is running an awareness campaign in the governorates of Al-Jawf, Marib, and Shabwa which run from north to south in central Yemen and where the tribal system is paramount in social and political life. The presence and influence of the official authorities here is still limited.

PY has been getting children in schools that remain open to chant the slogan "To those who deprived me of my father; don't deprive me of my education", but thousands of children have stopped going to school for fear of crossing tribal boundaries.

"I haven't gone to school since 2005 when I was in grade six. I fear that armed tribesmen from Hamdan tribe may kill me," said 17-year-old Salim Yahya of the Al-Shulan tribe in Al-

Jawf Governorate, which has been in conflict with the Hamdan tribe for 40 years now. Dozens of people in the two tribes have been killed in revenge killings over the past 20 years.

The conflict between the two tribes first broke out in the early 1970s over disputed land, with each tribe claiming ownership. "Now, those plots of lands are no longer a problem. The problem is that of complicated revenge killings that continue to kill thousands of tribesmen and keep children out of school," Sheikh Sultan Al-Aradah, a chief mediator in the conflict from the governorate, told IRIN.

Dealing with the conflict at this level is very complicated - even through traditional structures - as tribes consider it a "black shame" to remove the threat of a blood feud from the family or tribe of an individual who has committed murder, said a PY situation analysis paper.

According to Judge Yahya Al-Mawri, a member of the Interior Ministry-affiliated supreme national committee for addressing revenge killings,

revenge killings in the three governorates claimed the lives of 4,698 people between 1998 and 2008. He could not give a more up-to-date figure as no official records of revenge killings and conflict casualties have been released in the past two years.

The three governorates have a high illiteracy rate: "Fifty-six percent of the male population and 70 percent of the female population... are illiterate," he said.

According to 2009 statistics from the government's Central Statistical Organization, 1.3 million people live in these three governorates where the illiteracy rate is 63 percent, compared to the national average of 41 percent.

#### Schools closed

Revenge killings have led to the closure of several schools, especially in Al-Jawf and Shabwa governorates. The situation is not quite so bad in Marib, said PY.

Abdulhamid Amer, chairperson of local NGO Social Development and

Peace Association in Al-Jawf governorate, told IRIN that around 20 schools across the governorate are closed. "As many as eight schools in Maraziq and Al Sayda areas have been closed for five years now," he said, adding that thousands of boys and girls had dropped out of education as a result.

According to Naji Al-Sammi, conflict management officer with local NGO Brotherhood Society for Peace and Development in Shabwa governorate, more than a dozen schools in his governorate have been deserted for several years as a result of revenge killings.

"Al-Nabub School in Nisab District, where around 500 students were enrolled, has been deserted for more than five years now. Few students have moved to other safer areas to complete their education; most have stopped going to school since then," he said.

#### Mediation efforts

Many former teachers have started mediating between warring tribes: "As our school in Al Sayda District has been deserted for five years now, we found ourselves idle, so we started working as mediators to help end long-standing conflicts, district school teacher Khalid Al-Qubati told IRIN.

The carrying of guns is common-

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place in the three governorates. "Parents teach their kids how to carry and use guns, as well as how to kill... They don't care about sending them to school," said teacher al-Qubati, who is from the central governorate of Taiz, but works in Al-Jawf governorate.

PY's awareness campaign is designed to ensure a safe environment for children in school and has reached out to over 50,000 local women in the three governorates to promote girls' and boys' education and the need to protect students from revenge killings, Nadwa Al-Dawsari, PY executive director, told IRIN.

"Our awareness activities have been well received in communities and that is because we frame them in a way that is appealing to local culture and builds on existing positive traditions," she said.

According to Al-Dawsari, the ineffective role of government institutions in these remote tribal areas, extreme poverty, and poor infrastructure are the key challenges facing awareness efforts. "If government institutions were involved, our campaigns could be much more effective," she said.

Source: IRIN

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