

Locals criticize effectiveness of authorities responding to plane crash in Al-Qadesia

Story and photo by Bassam Al-Ashmori

SANA'A, Feb. 20 — One day after a Sukhoi 22 aircraft on a military training mission crashed into the Al-Qadesia neighborhood in Sana'a, wrecking havoc and killing several, locals condemned concerned authorities for their slow and "ineffective" response.

"The Air Forces came to the scene, took the torn parts of the plane and the black box and then left without giving a hand in the rescue operation," said Abdullah Al-Kuhlani, a resident in Al-Qadesia neighborhood, which is located near Change Square, the area famed for housing Yemen's revolution.

On Tuesday, the aircraft plummeted 1,000 feet after a "technical default," according to Mohammed Al-Khubani, an officer in the Air Forces.

The crash killed 12 people, wounded 11 others, and destroyed at least three houses in its path, according to official security sources.

Although workers in the Capital Secretariat and the Military Works



Firefighters struggle to put out the fire after a plane crash with little help from other authorities.

Department were seen cleaning up the scene late Tuesday night and during the day on Wednesday, many residents feel slighted.

"I'm waiting for an official to come

and compensate me for the car I lost in the accident. I worked day and night to collect money to buy it," said Najeeb Yahia Mohammed, referring to the Mayor's promise to

provide assistance to victims.

State leaders have not officially offered explanations for the crash.

"General Abdurahman Hansh, the deputy minister of the Interior

operates under the auspices of the Interior Ministry.

Hizam said initial findings should be released soon.

Turn to page eight for more photos of the crash.

Ministry, directed the capital city general manager to launch a joint full-scale investigation in coordination with the Defense Ministry into the aircraft crash," said Colonel Mohammed Hizam, the editor-in-chief of Al-Haris newspaper which

Three Technical Committee members withdraw in protest

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Feb. 20 — Three members of the National Dialogue Technical Committee withdrew from Wednesday's meeting in protest against the detainment of several prominent Southern Movement activists by the state following protests in the south, National Dialogue Secretary General Ahmed Awadh Mubark said. The focus of the meeting was supposed to be discussion of the lists of representatives provided by participating political parties.

As a consequence of their withdrawal, chair of the committee, Dr. Abdulkarim Al-Eryani said he will bring this issue to the attention of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and the committee will suspend any further meetings until this issue is resolved.

Committee member Mohammed Al-Amiri told Yemen Times that the three southern members who withdrew from the meeting are Lutfi Shatara, Liza Al-Hassani and Ali Hassn Ali Zaki.

Yemen Times contacted the three members, but they declined to comment.

The act of protest resulted in delaying the examination of the modified lists of Islah and the Nasserite Party, said Mubark. The purpose of the discussion was to determine whether the modified lists fulfilled criteria set by the Technical Committee.

The discussion of the lists was postponed, said Mubark, and the meeting was devoted to discussing the southern issue and protests in the south.

Dialogue members have requested that Aden's governor, a key southern player and the local council in the governorate should remain neutral until the matter is resolved. They have also condemned arbitrary detentions.

Deputy Secretary General of the National Dialogue Yasir Al-Ro'aini told Yemen Times that Wednesday's meeting was meant to discuss the lists of the Islah Party, the Nasserite Party, Houthis, women and youth to make sure that they adhere to conditions and procedure.

The revision and check process aims to ensure compliance with criteria and conditions laid out: to nominate 50 percent of the repre-

sentatives from the south, 30 percent to consist of women and 20 percent from the youth and that the list should be representative of Yemen's governorates.

The Technical Committee reviewed party and political movements' lists last week and found that they did not comply with the specified standards and conditions. The only party that met the criteria was the Socialist Party.

Youth to start micro businesses with international support

Story and photo by
Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANAA, Feb. 20 — The first phase of a Youth Economic Empowerment Project (YEEP) funded by the Japanese government and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) that helps young people start their own businesses was announced on Monday.

The project aims to create sustainable employment for young, disadvantaged Yemenis.

At a ceremony in the Salem Al-Sabah Secondary School in Sana'a, Kawkab al-Thaibani, a YEEP communications officer, told the Yemen Times that 70 youth are taking advantage of the project.

The project provides youngsters with life skills development and assists them in starting either individual micro-businesses or forming partnerships with others to form joint ventures.

Sabah Badri Bakeer, the CEO of YEEP, explained that participants use their own earnings and savings as the foundation to start the business, but UNDP triples their money through a loan. The organization grants YR3, about \$1.50, for every riyal saved.

All proposed businesses must be approved by a feasibility study



Participants of the Youth Economic Empowerment Project flex their muscles with funders of the project.

conducted in cooperation with Al-Amal Bank.

"We are happy to receive this attention and will continue these micro-businesses once we get

the support two months later," said Sulaiman Al-Qasemi, a young beneficiary, referring to the amount of time it will take for UNDP to match their savings.

Al-Qasemi plans on opening an accessories store.

Other proposed businesses include cafés, fashion design companies and stationery stores.

Sana'a to host Annual Tourist Festival again



Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANAA, Feb. 20 - The Ministry of Tourism is preparing to host the fifth annual Summer Tourist Festival in Sana'a this year.

The director of Sana'a's tourism office, Adel Al-Lawzi said the festival will include art exhibitions, musical performers and theatre.

The event will be held in Al-Sabab Park and the Old City.

Sana'a was once again chosen to host the national festival for a number of reasons. It is a historic city, Al-Lawzi said, and has a diverse population with over 2 million people.

Al-Lawzi further praised the capital city for its moderate climate, museums, traditional markets, historical sites and the re-

nown hospitality of its residents.

The annual festival is prepared each year by the Ministry of Tourism to reflect Yemen's history, heritage and nature.

The director of the Tourism Promotion Council, Fatima Al-Horaibi met with the Minister of Tourism, Qasim Sallam recently to discuss the date of the festival, which should be held in June or July, Al-Horaibi said.

In addition to music, theatre and art events, the festival will include folk events such as traditional clothes and handicrafts exhibitions that reflect Yemen's historical richness and diversity.

Well-known Arab and Yemeni musicians have performed in the past. The festival will be kid-friendly, with film screenings and games.

Prepaid electricity meter system to reduce Electricity Corporation's debt

Rammah Al-Jubari

SANAA, Feb. 20 — Yemen's Ministry of Electricity started installing new prepaid electricity meters for residents last week, as well as government institutions, as an alternative for old meters where customers were billed later.

Harith Al-Omari, the deputy of the Public Electricity Corporation, said the corporation adopted the prepaid system to reduce the organization's deficit which is largely due to unpaid bills by both residents and government institutions.

Al-Omari said the new meters that operate by accepting prepaid cards will also eliminate the difficulty corporation employees face when trying to read meters inside homes as the new cards will eliminate the need for readings.

Zuhair Al-Zubairi, the director

of the new prepaid electricity meter system, said they will also solve problems the old ones caused like electricity imbalances, damage to central substations, and sudden voltage increases that cause a breakdown in electricity.

Al-Zubairi said the Public Electricity Corporation will provide the new electricity meters for free. The cards he says are designed to be bought in any amount starting from YR 100, less than \$1, and are currently sold at the Public Electricity Corporation. After the corporation installs 100,000 meters, the cards will be available at local grocers, the same way phone credit is sold.

So far, 1,000 meters have been installed, including at the house of the electricity minister.

Over the past two years, Yemen has struggled to provide its citizens with enough electricity as it



The new meters are free.

has sustained attacks on electricity towers, usually carried out by disgruntled tribesmen.

City to organize and enforce traffic in Old Sana'a City with new plan

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANAA, Feb. 20 — The Old City's chaotic streets are slated to get a traffic face lift.

Khaled Al-Akwa, the director of Old Sana'a district, said a plan will be implemented in mid-2013 to organize traffic movements in the Old City by placing regulatory traffic signs that indicate directions.

Ameen Joman, the deputy of the Capital Secretariat, said a traffic plan was created in 2010 but was never implemented after the outbreak of the revolution in 2011.

"I met with Abdulqader Hilal, secretariat of the capital, on Monday to discuss organizing traffic movement in the Old Sana'a. The meeting recommended speedy implementation of the plan," Joman said.

Adel Al-Lawzi, director of the Tourism Office in the Capital City,

said once the traffic laws are in place, they will work to raise the awareness of locals to obey the laws. Al-Lawzi says the disorganization of the Old City can often scare tourists off.

This project comes at the same time the local council intends to renovate Old Sana'a district based on an agreement with UNESCO, who named the area one of its world heritage sites in 1986.

At the end of last month, Parliament approved a bill that allocates money to protect historic cities and their architecture. The bill was based on a report presented by the Media, Culture and Tourism Committee.

The terms of the bill specify the rules and procedures for renovating historic buildings and criminalize their destruction.

The articles and terms of the bill entrusted the General Authority for Maintaining the Historical Cit-



A narrow street in the Old City

ies to count, evaluate, and classify the contents of each historic site in a national record keeping database.

Dutch kidnap victim released, five abducted foreigners still missing

Mohammed Al-Samei

SANAA, Feb. 20 — Although one victim was released this week after being kidnapped, five other foreigners are still missing, suspected to be in Al-Qaeda's captivity.

The Interior Ministry's official website said that security forces freed a Dutch national on Sunday who had been kidnapped a week earlier near Al-Ziadia in Hodeida governorate.

According to the Defense Ministry's September 26 website, the Dutch national was moved to Sana'a on Sunday after being freed.

No information was provided on how the release was secured. The Interior Ministry declined any further comment.

A security affairs researcher, Mohammed Al-Khalid said the Dutch national was released be-

cause Hodeida residents cooperated with security officials. Had the hostage been taken to a rougher area with armed tribesmen, the release may not have materialized, he said.

Al-Qaeda affiliates are believed to still have a Saudi diplomat, a Swiss female teacher, a Finnish couple and an Austrian national in their custody.

The Austrian national and Finnish couple were kidnapped on December 21 by armed men in Al-Tahrir district in Sana'a. Reuters quoted a senior security official saying the abductees had been sold to Al-Qaeda affiliates in Al-Beida governorate.

The Swiss teacher, was kidnapped in March 2012 and is believed to be Al-Qaeda's custody in Shabwa governorate, located in eastern Yemen.

The Saudi diplomat was kidnapped in Aden this past March.

He appeared in video footage allegedly published by Al-Qaeda in October. In the footage, the Saudi appealed to his government for help.

In exchange for his release, the Al-Qaeda kidnappers called for the Saudi government to release some of their members, including several women, from prison. They also asked for a large financial ransom.

Al-Khalid said the increase in recent kidnappings is due to the state's weak security apparatus and political disputes.

Tribesmen typically kidnap foreigners to force concessions on political opponents. Often, abductors demands are met not by political rivals or the government, but by Al-Qaeda affiliates, who in turn demand the release of detained members or even larger sums of money for the release of hostages.

GPC and Saleh supporters defend ex-president's right to stay in Yemen

Mohammed Al-Samei

SANAA, Feb. 20 — Yemen's former President Ali Abdullah Saleh said in a speech delivered on Tuesday in Sana'a in front of supporters, that leaving Yemen is not an acceptable option for him.

This comes after a statement released this week by the United Nations' Security Council (SC) threatened Saleh with sanctions, accusing him of attempting to derail political reconciliation in the country.

Change Square revolutionaries and the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) have called on Saleh to leave Yemeni politics permanently, accusing him and his aides of sabotaging the political transition.

But, Al-Motamar website, a mouthpiece for Saleh's political party, the General People's Congress (GPC), said the party and its

allies are committed to ensuring a successful political reconciliation and the full implementation of the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative, the international compromise that removed Saleh from power.

"The government and those derailing political reconciliation are supposed to abide by the Gulf Initiative and its operative mechanism," Saleh said, asserting his innocence.

Saleh's supporters consider the UNSC's statement a matter of interference in the GPC's internal affairs.

The editor-in-chief of Al-Mithaq newspaper, Mohammed Ana'm said as long as Saleh is still alive, he will not leave the political arena. Al-Mithaq is also often accused of being the party's mouthpiece.

"The nation is not the property of Saleh or the Socialist Party or

particular group or person. Yemen is for all Yemenis," Ana'm said, defending Saleh's decision to stay in Yemen.

Political analysts say Saleh's continued role in politics will create obstacles for national reconciliation and the National Dialogue Conference, slated to start on March 18.

Political analyst Nabeel Al-Bukairi said Saleh is the ringleader of those trying to foil progress of a peaceful power transfer deal as the country transitions politically. Saleh's 33-year rule hindered progress in Yemen by allowing unqualified corrupt figures to lead government institutions, he said.

The GPC is currently divided, some of its members and supporters recognize the legitimacy of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi rule, while others remain staunchly loyal to Saleh.

Study and herbalists advocate for jasmine

Nadia Haddash

For the average Yemeni, jasmine and its fragrant flowers are just a means of decoration used for celebratory occasions such as weddings and graduation parties.

Planted in large areas across Lahj and Hodeida governorates and sold cheaply throughout Yemen for around \$20 to \$30 per kilogram, its fragrant scent and beautiful aesthetics have made it a staple part of cultural practices for hundreds of years.

Yet, according to a recent study released by the Food and Post-harvest Techniques Center (FPHTC) in Aden, jasmine's value stretches far beyond decoration and into the world of health care and beauty.

Speaking about the study's findings, Hassan Khamis, the director of the FPHTC, said that jasmine has natural advantages in healing a variety of diseases and ailments such as arthritis, gout, sciatica, asthma, cough, epilepsy and constipation.

Although the study recommended that jasmine should not be used without consulting a doctor or herbal medicine specialist, its release illustrated the value of traditional forms of Yemeni medicine, like jasmine, in complementing contemporary forms of medicine.

Hassan even went as far as to point out that the effects of abscesses can be lessened by drinking boiled water with jasmine's flowers because they contain complex mixtures of several oxidation compounds that help heal internal organs.

For his part, Nabeel Al-Nabehi, an alternative medicine specialist,



Jasmine flowers are common throughout the whole of Yemen and sold cheaply at markets.



The flower is commonly tied together in necklaces called Fowl, used in weddings to decorate both the bride and the groom.

said that jasmine and its derivatives can be used to treat both adults and children, adding that it has no side effects and is a healthy addition to anyone's medicine cabinet.

He added that it is also used to boost morale and refresh the body with the flowers' smell often having a positive influence on people's feelings and emotional state.

Talking about the various qualities of jasmine, Al-Nabehi moved from the medicinal to the beautifying, saying that he uses jasmine oil to treat women with skin problems.

"Jasmine oil is the best medicine to treat skin problems and rejuvenate it. Several creams and ointments are made of jasmine because of its beautifying qualities and smell," he said

Abdulfatah Al-Maroni, a herbal medicine specialist based in Sana'a, said, "Multiple herbal medicine specialists use jasmine oils in aromatic bathing to activate the circulatory system and help the body relax."

So pronounced is the affects of the flower on peoples' moods and ability to relax, that its use has spread beyond Yemen and the wider Middle East to the west, where it is often used in the bath after a hard day at work, or in massage to rejuvenate the skin and relax aching muscles.

Al-Maroni pointed out that jasmine oil is used similarly in Yemen, usually mixed with other vegetable oils such as anise and chamomile, which act as a base in massages rituals.

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OUR OPINION

Yemen's creative little minds

There is a huge problem in our educational system, especially in basic education. It used to be relatively bad, now it is so bad that I am seriously losing hope that Yemen's future generations will be efficient or productive.

It's not just about spelling mistakes and weak mathematics skills. It is more about basic reasoning skills or rather, a lack of them.

Yemenis have problems strategizing, taking initiative and managing time. Most of what they do all the time, including senior executives, is trouble shooting. We are struggling everyday just to maintain the status quo.

It is not the problem of individuals per se, it is a national issue starting at the top and carrying through to the very bottom.

Those who are able to think creatively either leave the country in a continuous brain drain, or stay and try to make the best of it in frustrating circumstances.

Yemenis who can really think, are doing well and have managed to establish lucrative businesses. The rest of the nation is barely staying afloat, their sole purpose in life is to complain about unfair conditions.

This reminds me of a story I read on the fifth dimension. It talks about an ant that is hypothetically trapped in a box and does not have the ability to look up. This ant only moves in two dimensions: X and Y. It is unable to scale the walls of the box and get out. If only it knew about the "up" option. We know there are X, Y and Z options, and we also know there is a fourth dimension, time.

But think of the possibilities if we found a fifth dimension and how to use it. The story suggests we could perform miracles and even travel through time and space if we discovered the fifth dimension.

For most of us in Yemen, like the ant in the story, we are still trapped in X and Y. Instead of getting better, it is getting worse and younger generations are only being taught X or Y. A time will come when the only thing we can do is stand in place because our brains will not function. We will have lost all ability to be creative.

Other cultures realize they need to invest in the minds of little ones in order to improve the future. I stumbled on an example of this by chance on a British website www.storystarts.co.uk. It teaches children to write creatively and use their imagination to create their own stories.

I am proud to say that my daughter Aya, who is going to be seven next month, has published her first story there.

We had lots of fun with this story. I was very impressed with her large imagination and knowledge.

I highly encourage you to try this with your little ones. Maybe we can create a dent in the formidable wall of ignorance and help our kids think, for their sake more than ours.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Progress in the fight against global poverty

Thestar.com
First published Feb. 19

The news is better than anyone anticipated. This year's Human Development Report, which measures how well countries are doing economically and socially, shows a profound global shift. Forty nations – not just economic tigers such as China, India and Brazil – are rapidly lifting their people out of poverty.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which has issued 21 of these annual reports, called this year's edition, which will be officially released on March 14 in Mexico City, "The Rise of the South." It is the most upbeat report in years. But, it also challenges the once-dominant North (Europe, North America and Japan) to cede some of its policy-setting power

to such nations as Turkey, Mexico and South Africa, as well as the emerging superpowers.

"People throughout the developing world are increasingly demanding to be heard," the agency says. They have the digital technology to raise their voices and the will to foment change.

It had been clear for some time that the world's economic axis was shifting. What hadn't come to light was the improvement in people's lives in dozens of countries once considered backward. The UNDP compiled evidence on everything from income and literacy levels to gender rights and longevity to draw up its 2013 rankings. When researchers looked at the numbers, the theme of this year's report was obvious.

The UNDP would not disclose individual country rankings in advance of the report's release. But officials did say that a fifth of the

nations they surveyed – all in the developing world – did better than expected. And their success looks sustainable.

Surprisingly, there was no common pathway. China relied on a rising economic tide to lift all boats. Brazil, on the other hand, deliberately put in place in anti-poverty programs to ensure that the gains of growth were shared. Others countries used tools that reflected their values and priorities.

Less surprisingly, and disappointingly, all 10 countries in sub-Saharan Africa were excluded from the "rising South." So were Asia's chronic laggards: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma) and Yemen. There is plenty of work to do.

The Human Development Index (HDI), like other statistical tools that attempt to reduce the complexity of human life to numerical scores, has always had its critics. Some say it is

simplistic. Some call arbitrary and misleading. Some point out that a slight adjustment in the evaluation criteria can lead to dramatic changes in countries' rankings. Others complain that it focuses solely on material well-being.

Many of these objections are valid. Year-to-year changes in a country's ranking can be caused by anything from the quality of its data to the weight assigned to specific components of the index. But over its two-decade history, the Human Development Report has proven to be an accurate gauge of important geo-political shifts and a good guide to the challenges they pose.

In past years, the report was welcomed by the top-ranked country – a position Canada held for eight years – and greeted with hand-wringing by development agencies. This year, the world moved in a welcome direction.

Youths are changing Yemen's political landscape

Gabool al-Mutawakel
Dailystar.com.lb
First Published Feb. 13

Positive civil and political youth activism has been the most rewarding result of the Yemeni uprising of 2011. Individual activism, initiatives and the participation of youths in new political parties have introduced fresh approaches and perspectives to Yemen's civil and political arenas. Youth involvement is already changing the landscape in Yemen.

For example, in 2012 the Al-Watan Party was co-founded by young business leaders, development practitioners and professionals, many of whom had never previously engaged in politics. Its doctrine is that of a moderate and civil party based on individual initiative and social responsibility. It believes in limited interference of the state in economic and society and consists of around 85 co-founders and 3,000 members.

When asked why they decided to form a new party, most co-founders argued for the need to revitalize the political scene in Yemen and transform the public's negative perception of politics, by building a model in which politics is tied to societal values.

Looking to the future, their aim is to develop a political party that relies on transparency and fair competition, and which uses authority appropriately as a means to a better Yemen in the long term.

Their diligence proved that their aspirations were not simply pipe dreams: Al-Watan was able to transfer their goals into concrete practices in their day-to-day operations, policies and approaches. Their attention to detail in the way that they have conducted meetings and developed plans showcases their professionalism, efficiency, effectiveness and emphasis on participation.

Most importantly, Al-Watan has taken steps to ensure that decision-making processes are not dominated by a limited number of people. For example, to prevent both direct and indirect manipulation through funding, the party developed policies that place a ceiling on donation amounts from co-founders and members. The party has also developed governance policies to monitor leadership performance and oversee the division of roles (executive, constitution advisory, complaints and others). Al-Watan demonstrates how youths have been able to organize themselves to better support Yemen.

Another example is the Erada Foundation for a Qat-Free Yemen, established in early 2012 by Hind Eleryani, a journalist for NOW Arabic in Beirut, and carried forward by Nasser Alshamaa, an activist and the executive manager of the Erada Foundation.

Qat is a leaf that most of Yemenis chew for four to six hours daily. While chewing qat, people usually feel energetic. However, withdrawal symptoms make users lethargic and less productive. This affects the economic and social life of Yemenis. The emerging NGO's pilot campaign was "One Day without Qat," which has now happened twice and received a highly positive response from Yemenis and media. The campaign took place in Sanaa, Taiz, Hodiedah and Hadhramout.

The foundation has thus far organized 15 weddings without qat in three separate governorates, and run awareness campaigns in several boys and girls schools. In addition, it has organized a successful one-day protest in front of Parliament, calling for the passage of a law to restrict the use of qat in governmental institutions. Thirty days after Erada's protest, the health minister submitted a 20-year strategy to Parliament outlining steps to eradicate qat from the country.

A final example is the Memorial

Walls Initiative, a project begun by Murad Subey. Murad, an artist, joined with other young artists to raise awareness around the issue of forced disappearances, which have been occurring in Yemen since the 1970s. Over a 20-week period, they drew the faces of almost 70 missing persons on the walls of Sanaa, Ibb and Taiz as part of a voluntary initiative using art as a peaceful tool in order to send a strong message regarding a topic that has remained hidden in Yemen for decades.

In this way, Murad and his friends

were able to help the families of the disappeared raise their voices, grieve openly and present their cases to the public. These youths are forward thinking, creative, passionate, self-motivated, result-oriented, fast learners and have the energy and time to participate in new ventures. Youth are the real asset of Yemen today, and the real builders of Yemen's tomorrow.

Gabool al-Mutawakel is co-founder of the Youth Leadership Development Foundation in Yemen.

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Children's Parliament, where are they now?

Samar Qaed

Although he finished as a delegate for the Children's Parliament over two years ago, Mukhtar Al-Miri has not stopped defending children's rights. The 18-year-old continues in his efforts to protect and secure rights for children around the country, saying his experience with the organization that promotes childhood leaders, will guide his future.

"I help educate children about their rights. I have also accompanied organizations that pay field visits in order to create child-related reports on issues like child labor," Al-Miri said.

Established in August 2003 as a joint initiative by the Democratic School, a non-government organization, the Ministry of Human Rights, the Ministry of Education and the Supreme Commission of Motherhood and Childhood, the Children's Parliament has proven an effective way to enlighten children about their rights and engage them in the political decision making process. Since its inception it has helped 30,000 children from

across the country connect and has held over five elections, installing democratic values in the next generation of politicians.

Recently in the spotlight due to their interrogation of representatives from the government and armed groups regarding issues like childhood marriage, child soldiers and crime, Yemen's Children's Parliament is playing a relevant role in a country where a youth driven revolution toppled a regime.

Former members of the Children's Parliament regularly speak about the influence of the experience on their life, which has enabled them to effectively deal with a range of child-related social issues.

A goal of Children's Parliament is to have participants return to their respective governorates to spread lessons they learned.

Ahmed Yaseen, who was the head of the Children Parliament in 2006 and from Aden, said that families in governorates nationwide compete to secure a spot for their child within the organization.

One of the various reasons the coveted positions are so competitive is the skills the students say they gain.



The Children's Parliament in Yemen installs democratic values in the next generation through an array of activities like voting.



Children recently questioned leading government members about their rights and issues like child labor.

"The children are selected to join the Parliament because they lack knowledge about their rights. We help them to develop their leadership skills and an understanding of their importance in society," said Yaseen.

We also teach them how to write annual reports about children rights, in addition to forwarding their recommendations to the Yemeni government, the United Nations and organizations working on children rights in Yemen in order to improve the childhood experience," he added.

Talking about his continued involvement with the Parliament, Yaseen said, "I am still in touch with the Parliament to offer advice and instructions for the new members.

Contrary to Al-Mihri and Yaseen's experiences, some of the former Children's Parliament members say

they now feel less fulfilled and suggest that their post-Parliament life doesn't provide them with opportunities to engage in the political sphere.

Many have suggested that the government establish a forum or a council to engage people after they finish with the Parliament under the premise that it will allow the government to benefit from their skills and provide new members with training.

Mohammed Al-Khyat, from Taiz, described his 2006 experience with the Parliament as "distinctive," yet disconnected from his real life. Currently busy with his studies at Yemen's College of Medicine, he says that he has found it difficult to correlate his activities in the Children's Parliament with his busy schedule.

"It's a great step that children understand what life means and exer-

cises their rights early," he said, but he went on to say that a big problem with the effectiveness of the Parliament is that after the end of their membership, children's activities become limited to advisory positions.

"We have thought about the establishment of youth parliamentary forum so that we can continue our rights-related activities, yet our proposal has not been considered due to the financial costs attributed to implementing it," Al-Khyat said.

Wadad Dahmsh, from Ibb governorate, was a member in the Children Parliament in 2008. Once the youth revolution broke out in February 2011, she took to the streets to participate in the mass protests.

"At the time of the revolutionary momentum in 2011, I had the thought that if I had not participated in the Children's Parliament and

been aware of my rights, I would not effectively participated in the protests."

In order to provide former Parliament members with the opportunities they have asked for, Um Kalthum Al-Shami, the coordinator of the Children Parliament, said the Democratic School started carrying out a future leadership project in 2006, which is linked to the Children's Parliament in coordination with the local councils in the governorates.

The project aims to give participants in the Children's Parliament a chance to suggest projects to increase children's rights and is financially supported by the governorates. Al-Shami says it allows those who have participated in the Children's Parliament to continue in their efforts to develop children's rights.

Experts guess at motives for parricides

Bassam Al-Ashmori

Ahmed Al-Hamami, has been incarcerated in the psychiatric section of the Central Prison in Sana'a for the last six years, forced to reflect on a crime he says he doesn't fully understand.

"I murdered my family unconsciously and woke up to find myself behind the bars," said the 30-year-old.

Now, that time has passed, Al-Hamadi recalls his unclear motives for murder - he felt his entire family was conspiring against him.

It was these thoughts that drove him to snatch the rifle from the shelf in his bedroom and approach the living room where his father, sister, aunt and cousin were sitting.

Without a second thought, he opened fire indiscriminately, killing them and leaving the living room covered in blood. He did not flee the scene, instead he chose to lie down and sleep.

"After the police took me to the police station, and then to the psychiatric sanatorium of the Central Prison, I realized what I did," said Al-Hamami.

Al-Hamadi's actions are not isolated, and are one of over 48 parricides that occurred in Yemen over the last eight years, according to statistics from the Prison Author-

ity. Although the statistics would not be startling in many countries around the world with much higher rates, because Yemen has long been characterized as a family focused society, such crimes force communities to question motives for crimes that shake the public.

But, because it is still a relatively small phenomenon, experts vary on their opinions of the cause of parricides.

"Parricides should be subjected to in-depth scientific study so that solutions are put forth, wrong demeanors are righted and social difficulties are resolved," said Dr. Ibrahim Al-Sharfi, a psychiatrist at Al-Rasalah Psychiatric Hospital.

Speaking about the reasons behind this worrying trend, Judge Mohammed Sa'ad, a prosecution member in the southwest court of Sana'a, cited a reason that is often given in Yemen, a deeply religious country - weak faith in god. Sa'ad said this can lead to a breakdown in family relations, causing children to seek revenge on their parents.

However, increasingly, professionals are also acknowledging the role of environment and psychological factors in shaping these events.

Nasser Qaed Saif, a sociology professor at Sana'a University, said the social trend towards urbanization is a dominant factor in cases

“Parricides should be subjected to in-depth scientific study so that solutions are put forth, wrong demeanors are righted and social difficulties are resolved.”

of parricides. He said the move of families from village environments to cities lays the foundations for cultural and economic changes, which can cause domestic conflict.

As father's sometimes have to move to cities from rural village to find a job and cannot afford to bring their families with them, a parent's role can become less defined, said Saif. He says this can lead to family disintegration, which can play a role in family violence, including murders.

Al-Sharfi said another issue is the lack of awareness of mental illnesses in Yemen.

Although never diagnosed, Al-Hamami exhibited signs of mental illness that may have led him to commit his crime.

Al-Sharfi said mental illnesses only get worse if left untreated and can lead people to take desperate measures when they are unable to cope with circumstances.

With many people hiding the depth of their psychological problems from their family and medical staff and a lack of societal awareness, they can often become more and more isolated, increasing the likelihood they will harm themselves or others.

In closing, Al-Sharfi echoes sentiments throughout the psychology world in Yemen, saying, "Being inactive to address the mental illnesses brings harms to the families and the entire society."

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Modern eyeliner replaces once popular Arab kohl

Amira Nasser

In modern cosmetics shops all over Sana'a, you will likely not find a product that used to be sold ubiquitously in Yemen as natural eyeliner - Arab Kohl. The traditional makeup that is made from crushed ithmid stone and was used for centuries by women for both cosmetic and medical treatment has largely lost favor with younger generations.

Although it is still readily available in spice shops where it has traditionally been sold, when contemporary stores began emerging in Yemen they brought with them a plethora of global makeup brands. Slowly girls began embracing new trends and today they say kohl is a thing of the past.

"I don't use the traditional Arab kohl for my female customers," said Al-Anood, a 21-year-old who works in a beauty salon.

She says her clients, who mainly come in to have their makeup done for weddings and parties, say kohl is not as convenient or attractive as commercial products that come in a variety of colors and are small and

compact.

"[Kohl's] color is not completely dark. I cannot control its use as well as modern eyeliners," Al-Anood said, referring to the powdery nature of the substance. "The [cosmetic] eyeliners help the eye pop, compared to Arab kohl."

Historians believe the use of Arab kohl dates back the early B.C. years and was worn by both men and women in cultures all across the Middle East and North Africa. Traditionally the ithmid stone, a rock found in the region, is crushed using a mortar into a fine powder and then kept in copper containers. It is applied to the eyes using a "miel," or a thin copper wand and quickly spread between the lower and upper lid while the eye is closed.

"There is no longer a demand for Arab kohl. So, we don't offer it," said Mokhtar Ahmed Adulateef, a cosmetics vendor. "The majority of the customers are young girls and a few older women."

Although Arab kohl has vanished from beauty salons and cosmetics shops, older women can still be spotted on the street, with their eyes adorned with the crushed stone.



The sight of young girls wearing traditional arab kohl has become increasingly rare.



Maryam Al-Shawosh, a woman in her 50s praised Arab kohl for the lack of chemicals that are found in many modern eye liners.

"Applying Arab kohl is natural because it is made from a natural stone and causes the eye to protrude naturally and gives it glamour that eyeliners cannot match," she said.

Al-Shawosh says spice shops offer women a variety of options when choosing the product.

Awadh Al-Wajeeh, a spice shop owner said they bring in stones from all around the Middle East.

"[There are] different types such as the black and the red," he said.

Besides a cosmetics product Arab kohl has also been used for centu-

ries to cure ailments like eye infections and hair loss.

"It helps widen the eye and purify it of microbes," said Al-Wajeeh.

However, Amal Al-Dabhani, an ophthalmologist, said diseases can be spread not curbed if people are not careful and share the same equipment to apply the kohl.

"Many diseases such as conjunctivitis, bacterial infections and viral infections can be transmitted from one to another if the kohl container is mutually used. If the kohl container is used by one person, this allows the user to avoid infections," Al-Dabhani said.

Although Al-Dabhani said there is no scientific evidence that links

Arab kohl to the cure of certain diseases, she says people say it leads to eye comfort and can keep eyes clean if used properly.

Part of the reason for this, Al-Dabhani says is that kohl is pure and doesn't contain chemical derivatives like modern eyeliners that are potentially harmful.

"Arab kohl is not mixed with other materials such as the lead that can damage the eye," she said.

However, the doctor also said that this doesn't mean modern eyeliners are necessarily unhealthy, but consumers should check be aware of chemicals used to create certain brands and make informed decisions.



The variety of colors and brands in the global makeup market has lured girls away from traditional techniques.



Unlike black kohl, red kohl is for medicinal use only.

Locals criticize effectiveness of authorities responding to plane crash in Al-Qadesia



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