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## Tunnel found near Saleh's house, investigations underway

Amal Al-Yarisi

SANA'A, Aug. 12—Local media associated with the General People's Congress (GPC) announced late Monday that a tunnel leading to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's house was discovered, deeming it a plot to assassinate him.

In a statement published by the state-run Saba News Agency, the Supreme Security Committee, headed by President Hadi, said that "the security apparatus began investigating the matter and found a tunnel dug inside a warehouse to the north of Saleh's house on Sakher Street in the capital."

The tunnel was discovered on Monday by Saleh's guards. The warehouse is not on Saleh's property and it remains unclear who owns it.

Al-Motamar Net, the mouthpiece of the GPC, said that the tunnel was dug in an attempt to assassinate Saleh, who is the current head of the party.

"The tunnel starts inside the hanger with a depth of 6.70 meters. An 88.40 meter long, 70 centimeter wide, and 1.70 meter tall tunnel was dug towards Saleh's house," read the statement.

Under the orders of the president, the Supreme Security Committee established a fact-finding committee, which includes the deputy head of the National Security Bureau, the criminal investigation assistant at the Interior Ministry, the director of the Political Security Bureau in Sana'a, and a team of specialists to identify whoever was involved in



Many news agencies, including the GPC mouthpiece Al-Motamar Net, are accusing the Houthis of having dug the tunnel in an attempt to assassinate the former president—a claim the group vehemently denies.

the operation and what their motivation was.

"The tunnel may be true and not fabricated by the GPC and in such case it means that some armed groups are trying to foil the political transition process," Abdulsalam Mohammed, head of Abaad Strategic Studies Center, said, adding that "the Houthis or Ansar Al-Sharia may be involved in this process."

"The GPC might have announced the discovery of the tunnel inten-

tionally at this time, taking advantage of the difficult conditions the country is experiencing," he said.

Several news websites announced the Houthis' involvement in digging the tunnel that leads to Saleh's house.

Houthi member Ali Al-Bukhaiti denied the allegations, saying that news organizations accusing the Houthis are publishing false information. Al-Bukhaiti explained that the Houthis are demanding the

state to expedite the investigation of this case.

There was a prior attempt on the former president's life on June 3, 2011 during Friday prayers in Al-Nahdain presidential mosque in Sana'a. Rumors circulated that either the Houthis or the Hashid tribe were responsible, however, the investigation committee which was formed shortly after the attack has yet to release any findings and no one has been tried.

## Renewed clashes in Al-Jawf result in casualties

Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Aug. 13—Clashes between Houthis and armed tribesmen renewed in Al-Ghail district of Al-Jawf governorate on Tuesday causing dozens to flee into peaceful areas of Al-Jawf or neighboring Marib governorate.

While in Al-Safra area in the west of Al-Jawf the presidential committee continues to implement a ceasefire agreement, which was signed on August 9 by both conflicting parties, it could not yet advance to Al-Ghail.

"We tried to go to the conflict area [on Tuesday and Wednesday] but we could not reach it because the warring parties refused to stop firing and to allow us to reach the area," said Mohammad Daraan, a

member of the presidential committee formed last month which is tasked with mediating the conflict.

The committee did not specify who broke the truce and both parties to the conflict traded blame.

According to Mubarak Al-Abadi, director of the Islah Party's Media Department in Al-Jawf, two residents who were fighting on the side of the tribesmen against the Houthis in Al-Ghail were killed and three others wounded early Tuesday.

Mohammed Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthis' Political Office, would not provide an answer to whether any Houthis died in the clashes when asked by the Yemen Times.

Mabkhout Mohammad, a journalist in Al-Jawf, reported seven injured civilians as of Wednesday

afternoon.

In a separate incident, Houthi gunmen took control over Al-Jawf Security Department in Al-Hazm city but handed it back to government forces later that day, according to Al-Abadi.

"Local security forces are backing the tribesmen in their fighting against the Houthis," added Al-Abadi.

The renewed fighting in Al-Ghail caused many residents to leave their homes to neighboring areas in Al-Jawf and to the neighboring Marib governorate after their homes were destroyed in the course of fighting, reports Faisal Al-Aswad, a journalist in Al-Jawf.

Al-Aswad explicitly referred to the Al-Urdi village located in Al-Ghail, where "the situation is get-

ting worse. It's not only that people are killed and injured but some people are also left homeless and displaced."

Dozens of Al-Urdi residents were displaced on Tuesday Al-Aswad said.

The two parties signed a ceasefire agreement in Al-Jawf on August 9 which required both parties to remove roadblocks and barricades in the governorate and to exchange prisoners and abducted individuals. All these agreements were broken in the district of Al-Ghail.

The presidential committee is continuing its task to broker and implement a ceasefire in Al-Jawf, which it began on July 19 when it was formed by the minister of defense under orders from the president.

## Bomb explosion in Lahj kills 8, wounds 34

Amal Al-Yarisi

SANA'A, Aug. 13—Eight people were killed and about 34 others injured on Wednesday when a bomb placed near the Saber Central Security in Saber area of Tebn district in Lahj governorate detonated as bomb disposal experts were trying to defuse it.

According to the state-run Saba News Agency, a police official in Lahj said that eight were killed and 34 were injured in the blast. The official reported that the bomb disposal experts placed the bomb in a vehicle so they could take it

out of the residential area before attempting to defuse it, but it exploded before they could drive off.

Fahmi Othma Maoda, the security chief of Lahj, said that three bomb disposal experts were killed in the blast.

Among the casualties were Mohammed Fareed, the security chief of Tebn district, and Hisham Atiry, the managing editor of Aden Al-Ghad newspaper.

The bomb was planted on the main road near Saber Central Prison, the main prison in Saber area, Maoda said, adding that "investigations are underway to

identify the circumstances of the incident."

A resident informed the security apparatus about the bomb and a team of bomb disposal experts was sent to defuse it, according to Maoda.

Basim Al-Zuriqi, a journalist in Lahj, said that several people were injured in the blast because after hearing about the bomb many residents rushed to the scene out of curiosity.

It remains unclear who planted the bomb and for what reason.

Ahmed Abdullah Al-Majedi, the governor of Lahj, is quoted on the

Defense Ministry's website as saying that "terrorists set a bomb on the road in Saber area."

"A team of experts from the Military Engineering Department was sent to defuse the bomb. They defused the first detonator but the terrorists detonated the second one remotely," he added.

The incident comes amid an increasingly unstable security situation in Lahj.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula on Saturday attacked several security and military institutions in Al-Hawta city, the capital of Lahj.

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# Controversy surrounds alleged Houthi courts in Amran

■ Madiha Al-Junaid

**SANA'A, Aug. 13**— Fawwaz Saleh, an engineer in Amran who was sentenced to death on Sunday by an improvised tribal court suspected to be affiliated with the Houthis, has had his death sentence suspended, sources told the Yemen Times.

On Monday, Al-Masdar Online quoted "local sources" as saying that "a 'Houthi' tribal court sentenced an engineer to death in a rushed hearing session on Sunday."

The sentencing of 36-year-old engineer Fawwaz Saleh, who works in Amran Cement Factory, followed his alleged murder of a colleague at work, inside the factory.

After the protest of Mowatanah (Citizenship), a human rights organization in Sana'a, the sentence has been suspended.

Abdulrasheed Al-Faqeeh, the director of Mowatanah organization, told the Yemen Times that after the organization's opposition to Saleh's death sentence, "we were informed by the Houthis that the death penalty was stopped."

The suspension of Saleh's death sentence was confirmed by Abdulateef Al-Marhabi, a journalist in Amran, and Waheed Al-Rubati, whose father works at Amran Cement Factory and who lives in the same neighborhood as the convicted Saleh.

"Saleh is now awaiting a final decision regarding his case," Al-Rubati said.

Al-Rubati added that Saleh was taken to a Houthi office, the "Office

of Ansar Allah," where people go to request judgments, mediation and decisions in cases of conflict.

"They have this specialized office for releasing judgments and resolving citizen's issues since the courts often delay people's cases. Many residents seek their help," he said.

Jalal Al-Ashmoori, a resident in Amran and a university teacher in computer programming and engineering, told the Yemen Times that "courts" run by the Houthis do exist in Amran, often located in ordinary houses.

Al-Faqeeh said that Saleh is still being detained in a stadium in Amran after he had first been held in a school which the Houthis were using as a prison.

"Houthis run make-shift prisons in Amran and the areas they control," he stated.

Mohammed Hizam, deputy head of the Public Relations Department at the Interior Ministry, affirmed Al-Faqeeh's statements, saying "Amran is under the control of Houthis. We have no business there now. We can do nothing. They have courts in the areas they control. They also have prisons there."

Ali Al-Imad, a member of the Houthis, denied the existence of an official Houthi court system in Amran saying, "yes, perhaps in Sa'ada we have courts due to a lack of government presence there, however, in Amran we have none and this judge [that delivered Saleh's death sentence] was not assigned by the Houthis."

Ahmad Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi's political office, also

denies the existence of Houthi-run courts in Amran, explaining that only tribal negotiations are taking place in the governorate. "There are no official courts run by Houthis. All we do is tribal arbitration and mediation to avoid revenge and wars among tribes," said Al-Bukhaiti.

He added that the Houthis do not use any of the sites owned by the government in Amran governorate. "After the president's speech [on July 23] to the citizens of Amran and the return of many to Amran, everything returned to its pre-war status," said Al-Bukhaiti.

Al-Faqeeh highlights conflicting information regarding the courts in Amran, telling the Yemen Times that "the Houthis say that the judge was a tribal judge assigned by the locals, the locals say that he was assigned by the Houthis."

Abdurrahman Barman, a lawyer based in Sana'a, said that according to Yemeni and international law as well as the country's constitution, the Yemeni judicial system is the only one allowed to deliver court decisions, especially when it comes to criminal cases.

"Tribes can only have their own agreements and arbitrary judgments regarding commercial and civilian cases, delivering decisions that are agreed upon by both sides," he said.

### Death sentence of Fouad Qasim

According to a statement published by the Mowatanah organization, a resident in Sa'ada governorate, Fouad Qasim, was executed in Am-

ran on August 5.

Al-Ashmoori told the Yemen Times that Qasim was sentenced to death in Sa'ada by a tribal court allegedly run by the Houthis. Yet, his execution, which was documented in a video that spread quickly through social media websites, was implemented in Amran.

"The sentencing occurred in Sa'ada, but the execution was in Amran, where Qasim is originally from," Al-Marhabi said.

According to Al-Ashmoori, the sentence followed Qasim's alleged murder of a father and three children, all belonging to the same family.

Ahmed Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi's political office, commented on the execution of Qasim, saying that his father handed him over to tribal authorities in Sa'ada to avoid having his three other children killed as retribution.

"Everything was done according to tribal customs. Houthis had no hand in killing him. His father signed those documents to deliver him to the other family whose father and children were killed. They were the ones who killed him in a tribal agreement," said Al-Bukhaiti.

Al-Faqeeh stated that because Qasim was not tried by the government, he has been executed for a crime that "only a rigorous court decision can decide on, sentencing him for being guilty or not."

According to Al-Faqeeh, Qasim "was supposed to be handed over to the government's judicial authorities and not be executed."



### 15 years of imprisonment for three convicted gang members

**SANA'A, Aug. 13**—The Specialized Criminal Court in Sana'a convicted three accused members of an armed gang in Marib governorate on Wednesday.

The three gang members were convicted for their involvement in an attack on Ali Haza Asilwi that took place on March 15, 2001, when Asilwi's car was blocked on the main road in Marib governorate and looted.

The three convicts were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment and are required to pay a penalty of YR3,000,000 (\$13,960) to Asilwi.

The Specialized Criminal Court also ordered the Criminal Investigation Bureau and the security offices in Marib governorate to arrest the other gang members and hand them to the responsible justice departments.

### Rare Arabian tigers killed in Al-Dhale

**SANA'A, Aug. 13**—Azhar Al-Nofaili, the manager of Sana'a Zoo announced on Wednesday that three Arabian tigers were killed in Al-Sho'ab area, Al-Dhale governorate in July.

In a statement published on the Defense Ministry's website, Al-Nofaili said that hunting in Al-Dhale governorate threatens the Arabian tiger to go extinct. He added that the Arabian tiger is considered an endangered and rare animal which must be preserved.

Al-Nofaili indicated that killing Arabian tigers has harmed farmers in many areas in Yemen, disturbing a natural balance caused by the tigers' preying on animals which are obstructive to farming, such as monkeys, hyenas, and lynxes.

Al-Nofaili explained that only four

Arabian tigers are currently living in Sana'a Zoo and that the zoo's artificial habitat is impeding their reproduction.

### Ministry closes 50 shops selling gas, two gas stations

**SANA'A, Aug. 13**—The Ministry of Industry and Trade office in Ibb closed 50 shops selling gas in jerry cans in addition to two gas stations on Wednesday for violating prices set by the government.

Mohammad Al-Seaghi, the manager of the Ministry of Industry and Trade office in Ibb, was quoted on the Defense Ministry's website as saying that the office referred 80 violations to the state prosecutor. Violations ranged from increasing prices to short-handing customers.

Al-Seaghi added that the office had tasked field committees to monitor the markets in Ibb and report any violations of set prices.

### Suspected AQAP affiliates kill Hadramout citizen, accuse him of sorcery

**SANA'A, Aug. 13**—A resident of Hadramout governorate named Hussein Al-Beehd was killed Tuesday morning by two armed men riding a motorbike after his name came up on a list of people accused of practicing sorcery, according Sabri Doaik a journalist from Sheher.

Individuals suspected of being affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) have threatened to kill those on the list unless they gave up sorcery, Doaik said.

He added that armed men in Hadramout have killed four citizens during the past two months whom they accused of practicing sorcery and that Al-Beehd had survived a previous assassination attempt in Shehr district, in May 2013.

# Prices of basic commodities still stable, government says

■ Ali Saeed

**SANA'A, Aug. 13**—The Ministry of Industry and Trade said on Wednesday that prices of basic commodities, including wheat, bread, and sugar, are still stable and no increase was reported after the government removed fuel subsidies on July 30.

"Prices of the basic commodities are stable and were not changed in any governorates," said Bushra Al-Absi, manager of the Awareness and Communication Department at the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

The prices of basic commodities

which are set by the government were not affected by the removal of fuel subsidy because the industrial and trade sectors began buying fuel at unsubsidized price on May 27 of this year, according to the Yemen Petroleum Company, a state-run company and the sole fuel provider in the country.

Members of the Chamber of Commerce met with President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi on April 2, asking the government to remove the fuel subsidy or allow them to import their fuel needs at unsubsidized prices to prevent the shutdown of

their businesses due to the nationwide fuel shortage which was highest between late March until late July.

Al-Absi said that the ministry sends surprise field teams to markets to check stability of prices and anyone found selling commodities at higher prices is taken to the state prosecutor.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade office in Taiz governorate, south of the capital Sana'a, shut down five bakeries in two districts of Taiz city on Tuesday because they violated the price and weight of

bread loafs set by the local councils in the governorate.

Likewise, The Industry and Commerce Office in Aden governorate closed 16 bakeries on Monday for not selling bread at prices set by the government.

Mahmoud Al-Naqeeb, manager of Consumer Protection at the Ministry of Industry and Trade said that since fuel subsidies were removed, the ministry monitors price stability by asking its offices in all governorates to report commodity prices to the headquarters of the ministry.

As Faisal Ghanem, a bakery owner

in Sana'a told the Yemen Times in a previous statement, "we are in desperate need to increase prices because our business heavily depends on petroleum products." He added that decreasing the size of a loaf of bread is often seen as an alternative to raising prices by bakers.

Al-Absi explained that transportation costs increased slightly after the government removed the fuel subsidy and for that the ministry

has yet to publicize the certain percentage increase on commodities that suppliers and dealers can raise, but not to exceed this percentage.

Around 80 percent of Yemen's food is imported from outside, according to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). This means that in the long run the fuel subsidy removal will impact food price stability in the country because of increased transportation costs.

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## Who is Jalal Baleedi?

■ Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

Jalal Mohsen Saeed Baleedi Al-Marqashi, also known by his nickname Hamza Al-Zinjibari, is the field commander of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in the governorates of Abyan, Shabwa, Lahj, Hadramout, and Al-Baidha, where the group brands itself to locals as Ansar Al-Sharia.

Baleedi has appeared in several videos published by AQAP showing its operations against military, public, and private institutions in the south.

He led an operation on Friday that resulted in the killing of 14 soldiers, four of whom were beheaded, after abducting them from a civilian transportation bus in Hadramout.

### A normal upbringing

Not a lot is known about Baleedi's early life. He was born and raised in Al-Sawad village of Wadi Mawjan area in Al-Wadhee district, on the borders of Al-Mahfad district, Abyan governorate, where he still owns a house.

Ahmed, a resident who lives in Al-Sawad village, whose name has been changed for fear of reprisal from Baleedi, told the Yemen Times that Baleedi went to school in their village and worked in a bakery in Abyan city on the weekends and holidays throughout his schooling and for a short while after.

He was fond of soccer, so he joined Hassan Sport Club as a goalkeeper in 2000 and 2001, Ahmed said.

Before joining AQAP in Abyan in 2011, Baleedi was the Imam of a mosque in Zinjibar, the capital of Abyan.

Ahmed estimates that Baleedi is about 35 years old and his family is still living in Al-Sawad village, adding that Baleedi visits them now and then but in secret.

According to Ahmed, Baleedi was a good man and helpful with the people in his village, but his behaviors changed and he became hostile and several people of his village came to fear him since he joined AQAP in 2011.

"Some of Baleedi's family members are Al-Qaeda affiliates... and this probably encouraged him to continue," he added.

Abdulrazaq Al-Jamal, a journalist with insight to Al-Qaeda, told the Yemen Times that he has conducted three interviews with Baleedi, the last of which was on May 30, 2012 during the clashes between AQAP and the military in Abyan.

"Baleedi has a great ability to convince others of his beliefs. He is eloquent and is able to express his ideas. He is popular among people in southern Yemeni governorates such as Abyan, Hadramout, Shabwa, and Lahj," he said.

### Recent events

"Baleedi's popularity in the south was negatively affected by the last operation of killing 14 soldiers," said Al-Jamal.

Al-Jamal believes that "the high-ranking leaders of Ansar Al-Sharia are not happy with the latest major attack in Hadramout and this means the popularity of Baleedi will decrease among Ansar Al-Sharia and ordinary citizens."

But what raises questions with many people following recent actions in Yemen is Baleedi's free movement and the fact that he is taking photos and videos of himself and other AQAP members around Abyan and Hadramout, and posting them online shortly after, without any interference by Yemeni or American security agencies.

Baleedi moves with considerable freedom in the mountains of Abyan and Shabwa, and in Al-Qatan and Seyoun districts of Hadramout, where he currently resides, many locals report seeing him walking freely in the streets. Many question why he has not yet been arrested or killed by the state or by a US drone strike.

A soldier in the 37th Armored Brigade in Al-Mahfad district, who declined to be named for fear of reprisal, told the Yemen Times that "Baleedi has great fame and inspires a lot of fear when we hear about his movements



in Al-Mahfad, which makes us always afraid when we leave the camp. We have heard that he is a ruthless man with clever ideas and plans which target soldiers."

### Jalal's father

Baleedi's father, Mohsen Saeed Baleedi Al-Marqashi, is a brigadier general who comes from the same district as President Hadi, Al-Wadhee. Baleedi's father was reinstated in the army at the end of last year after a forceful layoff of hundreds of soldier's from the south in 1994.

Jamal Al-Qeez, the head of the Security Department in the Defense Ministry, confirmed that Jalal's father works in the military. President Hadi issued in September last year a presidential decree in which he reinstated numerous officers who were laid off from service during the 1994 war, and Baleedi was one of them.

According to Al-Masdar Online, Baleedi's father condemned his son for the Friday attack that resulted in the killing of 14 unarmed soldiers and reported Jalal Baleedi had visited his family's house in Abyan for a short period after the attack.

Media outlets published news suggesting that Jalal has ties to his father's position in the military and that he could be using those ties for his own benefit. Al-Qeez denied such allegations, saying that Jalal's father has no leadership position and is just like any other normal employee

## ADVERTORIAL

### In its second and greater offer in Yemen, Sabafon celebrates the fourth draw of the Prizes Card Offer 2.

In coincidence with Eid Al-Fitr, Sabafon Mobile Company, Yemen's First Mobile Operator, celebrated the fourth draw of the Prizes Card Offer 2 launched early 2014 for loyal subscribers, including billing and prepayment subscribers.

In the celebration held in Aden, Hussein Ahmed Talib Al-Atas won the grand prize (BMW X3 2014), and Mohsen Ali Ali Ahmed, Salim Saleh Ahmed Hazmal, and Ali Mohammed Mohsen Saifan each won one 100 gram golden bars, in addition to several other prizes.

Mr. Mohammed Al-Shami, Marketing Department Manager, expressed

happiness about what the company is doing for its customers through the Prizes Card Offer 2, which is the first of its kind in the field of communications in Yemen.

Al-Shami asserted that all subscribers still have an opportunity to win by recharging their mobiles using the 80-unit balance cards.

The grand prize was handed over to the winner in a celebration held inside the company's headquarter in Sana'a, in the presence of managers and employees of Sabafon, as well as several journalists.

Mr. Mohammed Al-Abadi, the Com-



munication Manager, congratulated the winners and wished good luck for all other subscribers, adding that the offer is still ongoing and there are 200 more prizes to be distributed to customers.

# Does creativity require money?

## The bankruptcy of fine arts in Yemen

■ Mohammed Al-Khayat

Many Yemeni artists link the beginning of the country's modern arts scene to the central figure of Hashim Ali Abdulla Al-Dawbala. Born in Hadramout in 1945, the artist lived and practiced art in Taiz for most of his life. Training several famous local artists, such as Hakim Al-Aqel and Amina Al-Nusairi, and establishing the Yemeni Artists Association in 1986, Al-Dawbala shaped Yemen's emerging modern arts scene.

While the arts in Yemen, as in other countries, have never been considered a priority in the government's funding allocation, Ghada Al-Haddad, an artist who received the Presidential Award for Fine Arts in 2008, singles out the years between 2004 and 2007 as somewhat of a highpoint, with then Minister of Culture Khalid Al-Rowishan investing heavily in Yemen's arts scene.

"Minister Al-Rowishan started workshops for artists in every Yemeni governorate and allocated a special budget for each one of them. These workshops supplied painting tools to each painter, all they had to do is come to the workshop and start painting, without bearing any of the costs," remembers Al-Haddad.

While the Ministry of Culture had halted its support to these workshops in 2007, they managed to stay operational, being financed by private donors and arts admirers.

Interestingly, the 2011 uprising is referred to by artists like Najeed Al-Seraji as an important turning point in Yemen's art scene. Al-Seraji, who was among the protesters at Sana'a's Change Square, explains that on the one hand, political upheavals "were a [blessing] for painters, inspiring many to criticize Yemen's political past and present through the artists' brush." On the other hand, Al-Seraji perceives the pre-2011 arts scene as favorable to the current situation. "The economy was doing better and there used to be many more events held in art houses and in the governorates," he says. According to Al-Seraji the main reason for the deterioration of fine arts in Yemen today is the halt of most of these artistic activities and events.

### Does a lack of money equal a lack of awareness?

Although Dr. Abdulkareem Nasser, a former sociology professor in Taiz governorate, explains that a variety of factors are responsible for a widespread lack of interest in and appreciation of the arts in Yemen, he singles out the economy as a prime reason.

"The deteriorating economic situation in Yemen has a direct effect on fine arts audiences. Add to this that many Yemenis are suspicious of fine arts because they believe it to be forbidden under Islamic law. Debate over arts' religious legitimacy has caused many to stay away from it," he explains.

Nezar Al-Sanafi, who received the Presidential Award for Fine Arts in 2013, and manages the Bayt Al-Fan (House of Art) in Yareem district in Ibb, links the lack of awareness and interest in arts to Yemen's education system.

He criticizes the ministry for failing to support artists and for Yemen's lacking cultural movement. "People do not understand fine arts and they do not care for it," he said.

Through his work at the Bayt Al-Fan, Al-Sanafi tries to counter such trends, by raising awareness and supporting the practice of art. The Bayt Al-Fan was established in 2004, following a resolution of the then Minister of Culture Khalid Al-Rowishan. Located in all of Yemen's governorates, the art studio offers a place for artists to practice their profession or hobby. It also hosts many cultural activities, such as musical events and exhibitions. Given its tight budget, the Bayt Al-Fan is no longer able to provide artists with many much-needed materials, however. Instead, it acts as a platform for them.

Despite Al-Sanafi's efforts, most children in Yemen grow up without any access to art. Although art classes are offered to students from the 1st until the 9th grade in public schools in governorates like Taiz, Hodeida, and the capital city, the government does not provide any painting equipment. Art classes frequently revolve around the teacher drawing on the board, which students are requested to copy in their notebooks, using ordinary pencils.

Sameera Al-Ezzi, an art teacher at the Raba Al-Adawiah girls school in Sana'a, says that the Ministry

of Education neither provides a curriculum to art teachers nor does it offer any tools or materials. "However, there are some private companies that provide tools and materials like brushes, colors and drawing books." Al-Ezzi continues saying that company support for the school takes place in partnership with the ministry to support education. However, the company does not miss the opportunity to advertise to the young audience, making sure its name is on material provided to students.

According to the artist Al-Haddad it is not only the government which lacks an interest in improving arts education in the country, but also parents. "Many parents [expect] that more important things will be provided before arts are addressed," she explains.

In light of little interest and material support, some schools in Yemen dropped art classes altogether. "Theoretically, we have an art class for students—but we don't teach it because we lack painting materials," said Radman Al-Hajaji, principal of the Al-Fath School in Hodeida governorate.

### Arts: An unprofitable profession

According to Nasser, people's low interest in art explains why artist's income is so low in Yemen. There is simply no demand for their work.

"I used to be blessed with a gift in painting and I still am until now. However, I do not paint anymore because art requires costly things," said Riyadh Abdualrazaq, a former artist. Due to his financial status he had to give up his artistic work and start a job as a carpenter which leaves him no time to draw anymore. While Abdualrazaq wishes to practice art he also needs to make money. "Unfortunately, I could not do both," he says.

It is only after an artist achieves fame that he might be able to live off his hobby, explains artist Radfan Al-Mohammadi. Even those painters who gained relative fame, however, often need to rely on additional source of income to survive and continue their art. Those who cannot afford expensive painting materials have to give up their gift and go on to do other things.

"At first I could not afford to buy a box of colors at YR500 (about \$2.50) to practice my hobby. I



The picture above was painted by Hashim Ali Abdulla Al-Dawbala, who was born in 1945 and is considered by many Yemeni artists to be a key figure in the emergence of Yemen's modern arts scene.

simply did not have enough money," said Al-Haddad. She explains that the material for one oil painting on a high quality canvas could cost almost \$100.

Not only are tools expensive, the profession itself is unprofitable which partially explains why it is socially stigmatized in Yemen as elsewhere.

"I have always been blessed with a talent for painting, which was quite concerning to my family. Fine arts aren't a financially reliable profession in our country," explains Al-Sanafi.

Likewise, Al-Haddad explains, "at the beginning of my career I did not receive any support from anyone. Even my family opposed the attempt to develop my skills in order to make money. It was only through perseverance that I was able to reach what I was aiming for."

Jalal Al-Shameeri, an artist from Taiz governorate, sees the financial struggle of artists in Yemen best exemplified by the life story of Hashem Ali, whom he calls a "pioneer of fine arts in Yemen." In spite of having reached considerable fame inside and beyond Yemen, Hashem Ali died as a poor man in his rented house in Taiz.

### Is art for the rich?

In light of the lack of funding flowing into Yemen's art scene and the financial struggle of Yemen's artists, it has been asked whether the profession is only suitable for the well-off. Suspicion is fueled by artists like Ayman Othman, who confesses, "I was only able to succeed in art due to the high income of my family. I attended several training courses which helped me to hone my skills."

While Othman argues that art can be practiced with minimum resources, requiring little more than creativity, the example of Abdualrazaq, whose financial situation forced him to stop practicing art acts as a vivid counterexample.

Artists like Al-Haddad, Al-Sanafi, Al-Seraji, Al-Shameeri, or Al-Mohammadi all share a humble background, and continue to struggle financially. While not being upper class, they all belong to Yemen's intelligencia, as does their audience.

According to Al-Mohammadi, most of those who are interested in art are journalists, poets, and intellectuals. Given the lack of interest and funding it is unclear whether their combined efforts to

maintain Yemen's art scene will be fruitful in the long-term.

"The absence of interest from all societal groups in arts is disastrous to the development of fine arts in Yemen," said Shadi Abdulhakeem, the marketing director of the Arabian Forum for Fine Arts and the head of the Nastati (We Can), which supports music, painting, and acting in Yemen.

While initiatives like the Bayt Al-Fan, Nastati, or the Arabian Forum for Fine Arts, which teaches fine arts in Sana'a, aim to provide Yemenis with access to art, their lack of funding diminishes their success. In fact, the Arabian Forum for Fine Arts is required to charge for its art classes, while artists working in the studios of the Bayt Al-Fan need to finance their own material. Whether money stands in the way to artistic activities or not is a question that raises different answers in Yemen. While artists like Al-Seraji blame Yemen's economic woes for the deterioration of fine arts, Abdulhakeem links the halt of most artistic activities and events in the country to a lack of competition and incentives. He criticizes that there are few awards handed out to artists in Yemen that could encourage fine arts performers.

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# Motorcycle sidecar attracts women riders in Sana'a

Story by **Abdullah Al-Samei**  
Photos by **Aref Abdulmomen**

**K**haled Ameen, a motorcycle taxi driver in Sana'a, was surprised to see a woman waving for him to pull over, as it is unusual for women in Sana'a to travel by motorbike. He initially thought she was just going to inquire about directions or ask him a question, but the woman, in her 40s, asked Ameen for a ride.

Recently, Ameen witnessed an increasing number of female customers—a development which he links to the addition of a sidecar to his motorcycle, which allows women to rely on motorbikes without having to be uncomfortably close to a male stranger or to drive them themselves.

The emergence of sidecars is directly linked to the government's ban of motorbikes in Sana'a, which was implemented in December 2013 as a measure to reduce the number of assassinations in the capital—many of which had been carried out by armed men on motorcycles. Several motorcycle taxi drivers, who saw themselves bereft of their daily source of income, added sidecars to their motorbikes, thereby trying to skirt the ban. With a sidecar, so the argument goes, the vehicle in question resembles more of a Tuk-Tuk than a motorbike and can thus continue being used as a taxi.

While it remains unclear whether the ban is achieving any results in reducing Sana'a's crime rate, it has impacted women's practices in the capital.

According to Ameen, women are attracted to the new design of motorcycles, especially the covers which came with the addition of the sidecar to protect passengers from the sun and rain.

Fatima Abdulsalam, a housewife in Sana'a who recently began using motorcycle taxis, confirms Ameen's observations, describing the sidecar as "safe and comfortable."

While she used to be afraid of taking motorcycles, arguing that "they were not suitable for women," she argues that the sidecar turned motorbikes into an acceptable means of transportation for women. Furthermore, "they are quick and can be used to avoid traffic."

Using motorcycles also has its economic advantages. "They are affordable, therefore I would like to encourage those who are poor and who rely on a limited income as well as women to try it, because it is fun."

Wedad Al-Badwi, a rights activist at the Culture and Media Center in Sana'a, says the days of motorcycles being the domain of men are over.

In her opinion, the new motorcycle sidecars come close to the Tuk-Tuk and are thereby more socially acceptable for women. It may take time, however, until women fully accept and adopt motorcycle side-



Many women in Sana'a say the addition of a sidecar makes travelling by motorbike safer, more comfortable, quicker, and more socially acceptable than the normal two-wheeler.

cars as a new means of transportation. After all, "it is due to [long established] traditions and customs that women in Sana'a are not used to riding motorcycles."

So far, motorcycles have been a social taboo for women in Sana'a, explains Al-Badwi.

The social character of norms preventing women from riding motorcycles is also emphasized by Nassr Al-Salami, a professor of comparative Islamic jurisprudence at Al-Iman University in Sana'a. In his opinion, it is not Islam preventing women from riding on motorcycles. Instead, he says, it is due to traditions and customs that people refuse to accept women on motorcycles.

Different values in Hodeida and Hadramout

But, customs and traditions vary among Yemen's governorates. While in Taiz and Ibb women on

motorcycles are as rare and as little accepted as they are in Sana'a, women in governorates like Hodeida and Hadramout are often seen on motorcycles.

In Hadramout the only requirement for women using motorcycles is that they are accompanied by a male relative who is driving, says Aref Abdulmomen, who studies journalism at Sana'a University but is originally from the region.

Nora Bakatheer, a student at Hadramout University, specifies that the male relative needs to be a "mahram," an Arabic expression describing male relatives, such as brothers, fathers, or uncles, whose relationship with a woman makes it impossible to marry her.

As long as they are accompanied by a mahram, "women ride behind the motorcyclist without being criticized by anybody. People are used to [seeing that]," Abdulmomen

says.

Many people in Hadramout—the largest of Yemen's governorates—prefer motorcycles over cars to avoid traffic in some of the governorate's congested streets. In fact, Abdulmomen said that motorcycles are the most popular means of transport in Wadi Hadramout, an area within the governorate, where almost every family owns one.

Bakatheer explains that it is hard for women not to rely on motorbikes due to the long distances within the sparsely populated and large governorate.

Contrary to Sana'a, women on motorcycles have become such a common sight in Hadramout that Bakatheer refers to the practice as "a tradition and a habit." In fact, she explains that locals often prefer a woman to ride a motorbike as it protects her "from the harassment of ill-mannered individuals," when

compared to public transportation. Yet, Bakatheer points out that women in Hadramout are still a long way from being able to ride motorbikes alone "because the locals consider it a shameful act."

Like in Hadramout, people in Hodeida are accustomed to women riding on motorbikes. Abdullah Al-Bora'i, a resident of Hodeida, said that women in the region frequently use motorbikes, riding directly behind the motorcyclist—even occasionally with men they are not related to.

Balqees Ahmed Sameeh, from Hodeida governorate, confirms that she regularly rides a motorbike, sitting behind her husband, in order to go to the market, the coast, or to visit her family and friends. Sameeh clarified that society in Hodeida is generally accepting of women on motorcycles as long as they are accompanied by a mahram.



## From the old, something new

University students in Hadramout build model drilling platform using recycled goods

Story and photo by  
**Ali Abulohoom**

**S**even students from Hadramout University have excitedly moved back and forth between their university, the blacksmith, and a welding workshop for over a year, putting together machine parts, eager to realize their plan of building a model drilling platform.

Students at the university's Petroleum Engineering Department have traditionally submitted written and theoretical work as their graduation project. The completion of a model drilling platform constitutes the first time that students have chosen to work on a practical project instead.

"Every student comes up with different ideas for the graduation project. We decided to make our project practical rather than theoretical," says Al-Samei, a member of the student project.

The model drilling platform, which contains all the parts and equipment found in real platforms, is three meters long, two meters wide, and able to dig down two meters deep, Waleed Al-Areeqi, the head of the student project, proudly explains.

Abdullah Baradi, dean of the Petroleum Engineering Department, compliments the project, saying

"it can be used by the students in the future, as the model is perfectly able to operate and dig."

The importance of using the model drilling platform for teaching purposes is also emphasized by Al-Areeqi, who highlights the need to link theoretical studies with more practical aspects. He complains that students' education often falls short of practical insights and experience gained in the field, as most drilling platforms in Yemen belong to international companies and it is sometimes difficult to coordinate field visits with them.

Mazen Al-Yahri, the supervisor of the project, confirmed that the model will be enlisted to teach future students how petroleum platforms are functioning, what parts it consists of, and how those parts work.

Remarkably, the student group relied on recycled material in producing the model drilling platform. Long searching for second-hand parts at blacksmith and



A group of seven students at Hadramout University built Yemen's first model drilling platform which can be used to teach future students how petroleum platforms are functioning.

welding workshops, they turned parts of old cars, trucks, and winches into usable components of the model drilling platform.

Baradi admires that students

relied solely on recycled material, avoiding ready-made parts that are often imported and fairly expensive. As the students themselves explain, it was both for economic as

well as environmental reasons that they decided to rely on recycling. "We wanted to show that we could turn abandoned materials into useful things," Al-Areeqi explains.

Pointing out the potential of their project and wide environmental significance, Al-Areeqi adds that, with the exception of very specific parts, drilling platforms could be built with recycled material. No oil company representative has yet seen their project.

Al-Yahri praised the students for their creativity and emphasized that the model drilling platform was built in only a year, whereas "it may have taken several years had they used conventional methods."

"We are inspired by these students who teach us that everything is possible if there is determination and will," he said.

The Petroleum Engineering Department at Hadramout University is the only department in Yemen that is specialized in petroleum. It was established by the government in an attempt to benefit from oil resources found in the governorate. The department's students who are lucky enough to get a job commonly work in one of the oil companies operating in the region.


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**OUR OPINION**
**Finally some action**

**W**e have been waiting for quite some time for a proactive political move to take place in Yemen. Since the conclusion of the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) there has been a standstill on the political front except for reactionary damage control, triggered mostly by security incidents.

Now that the National Authority for Monitoring the Implementation of NDC Outcomes has begun its work there is some hope. After this body was announced on April 24, 2014 it did not meet for over three months. The void caused by the lack of political dialogue has not only created political problems, with security consequences, but has also given a legitimate reason for citizens to be disappointed by the entire political process and worse, to mistrust it.

The reason for this delay according to the president—who heads the body—was specified during its first meeting on Monday: "Economic and security challenges prevented the body from commencing its work within two weeks of its announcement as scheduled." My personal opinion is that these challenges should not have prevented the body from meeting, and indeed, perhaps the absence of any meetings contributed to their emergence in the first place. Despite this, I am relieved that the National Authority for Monitoring the Implementation of NDC Outcomes has finally started to tackle the tasks at hand.

The most important milestone now is the drafting and referendum of the constitution, which the body should ensure adheres to the NDC outcomes. We need a solid media strategy that makes every step of this body visible to the public and provides channels for receiving feedback, which can then be used to improve outcomes.

The relationship between the National Authority for Monitoring the Implementation of NDC Outcomes and the government remains unclear as the body does not have any implementation authority; the government remains the country's sole executive power responsible for putting the NDC outcomes into effect. I don't know whether the government is accountable to the body monitoring the implementation of NDC outcomes and what role the parliament plays in this regard.

Moreover, the mandate of the body monitoring the NDC's implementation ends with the elections, which hopefully will be by the middle of next year. Will the new parliament be able to continue the transitional roadmap on both the federal and the regional level? And will the new government, on both levels, be able to establish the new federal state?

What scares me most is that the NDC's Regions Defining Committee, which laid out Yemen's federal system, allows the future government to redesign the country's federal structure within its first term in office.

This means that in five or six years from now, depending on how long the new government's mandate will last, the number of Yemen's federal regions might be changed, internal borders between regions be redrawn, towns be shuffled between regions, and so on.

Does this mean that we have to restart all over again in five years? Or will the current institution building in Yemen be strong enough to withhold against the changes? There are an abundance of challenges to confront ahead, but at least we are in motion again.

**Nadia Al-Sakkaf**

**Iraq crisis:**
**West's "mandate" limited by national borders—and don't dare mention oil**

**Robert Fisk**  
independent.co.uk  
First published Aug. 10

**I**n the Middle East, the first shots of every war define the narrative we all dutifully follow. So too, this greatest crisis since the last greatest crisis in Iraq. Christians fleeing for their lives? Save them. Yazidis starving on the mountain tops? Give them food. Islamists advancing on Irbil? Bomb them. Bomb their convoys and "artillery" and their fighters, and bomb them again and again until

Well, the first clue about the timeframe of our latest Middle East adventure came on the weekend when Barack Obama told the world—in the most disguised "mission creep" of recent history—that "I don't think we're going to solve this problem in weeks—this is going to take time." So how much time? At least a month, obviously. And maybe six months. Or maybe a year? Or more? After the 1991 Gulf War—there have actually been three such conflicts in the past three-and-a-half decades, with another in the making—the Americans and British imposed a "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq and

Kurdistan. And they bombed the military "threats" they discovered in Saddam's Iraq for the next 12 years.

So is Obama laying the groundwork—the threat of "genocide," the American "mandate" from the impotent government in Baghdad to strike at Iraq's enemies—for another prolonged air war in Iraq? And if so, what makes him—or us—think that the Islamists busy creating their caliphate in Iraq and Syria are going to play along with this cheerful scenario. Do the US President and the Pentagon and Centcom—and, I suppose, the childishly named British Cobra committee—really believe that the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), for all its medieval ideology, is going to sit on the plains of Ninevah and wait to be destroyed by our munitions?

No, the lads from ISIL or the Islamic State or the caliphate or whatever they like to call themselves are simply going to divert their attacks elsewhere. If the road to Irbil is closed, then they'll take the road to Aleppo or Damascus which the Americans and British will be less willing to bomb or defend—because that would mean helping

the regime of Bashar Al-Assad of Syria, whom we must hate almost as much as we hate the Islamic State. Yet if the Islamists do try to capture all of Aleppo, besiege Damascus, and push on across the Lebanese frontier—the largely Sunni Mediterranean city of Tripoli would seem a choice target—we are going to be forced to expand our precious "mandate" to include two more countries, not least because they border the one nation even more deserving of our love and protection than Kurdistan: Israel. Anyone thought of that?

**Is it not significant—or just a bit relevant—that Kurdistan accounts for 43.7 billion barrels of Iraq's 143 billion barrels of reserves**

And then, of course, there's the unmentionable. When "we" liberated Kuwait in 1991, we all had to recite—again and again—that this war was not about oil. And when we invaded

Iraq in 2003, again we had to repeat, ad nauseam, that this act of aggression was not about oil—as if the US Marines would have been sent to Mesopotamia if its major export was asparagus. And now, as we protect our beloved Westerners in Irbil and succor the Yazidis in the mountains of Kurdistan and mourn for the tens of thousands of Christians fleeing from the iniquities of ISIL, we must not—do not and will not—mention oil.

I wonder why not. For is it not significant—or just a bit relevant—that Kurdistan accounts for 43.7 billion barrels of Iraq's 143 billion barrels of reserves, as well as 25.5 billion barrels of unproven reserves and three to six trillion cubic meters of gas? Global oil and gas conglomerates have been flocking to Kurdistan—hence the thousands of Westerners living in Irbil, although their presence has gone largely unexplained—and poured in upwards of \$10 billion in investments. Mobil, Chevron, Exxon, and Total are on the ground—and ISIL is not going to be allowed to mess with companies like these—in a place where oil operators stand to pick up 20 percent of all profits.

Indeed, recent reports suggest that current Kurdish oil production of 200,000 barrels a day will reach 250,000 next year—providing the boys from the caliphate are kept at bay, of course—which means, according to Reuters, that if Iraqi Kurdistan were a real country and not just a bit of Iraq, it would be among the top 10 oil-rich countries in the world. Which is surely worth defending. But has anyone mentioned this? Has a single White House reporter pestered Obama with a single question about this salient fact?

Sure, we feel for the Christians of Iraq—although we cared little enough when their persecution started after our 2003 invasion. And we should protect the minority Yazidis, as we promised—but failed—to protect 1.5 million genocided Armenian Christians from their Muslim killers in the same region 99 years ago. But don't forget that the masters of the Middle East's new caliphate are not fools. The boundaries of their war stretch far beyond our military "mandates." And they know—even if we do not admit—that our real mandate includes that unspeakable word: Oil.

**A crisis a century in the making**

**Vali R. Nasr**  
nytimes.com  
First published Aug. 10

**A**merica's tentative return to the battlefields of Iraq, however reminiscent it is of unfinished American business there, is also a deadly reminder that the Arab world is still trying to sort out the unfinished business of the Ottoman Empire, a century after it collapsed. After World War I, the region's Arabs were not allowed a proper foundation on which to build stable, functional nations. And in more recent decades, they have been largely unsuccessful in doing so on their own.

Those painful facts are most obvious now in Iraq, where sectarianism has been undoing all of America's past efforts to forcibly plant a pluralistic democracy in soil made arid by longstanding grievances, inequities, tribal identities, and violence.

The Arab world today is the product of maps drawn by the British diplomat Sir Mark Sykes and his French counterpart François Georges-Picot in 1916, and sanctified at the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. European rule over Arab states that were only nominally independent followed; this left these states

struggling with legitimacy ever since. When the Europeans left, they were followed by dictators who talked of nationalism, but failed to convince their own citizens that they were important participants in the nation.

**America can use its military power to contain, but not resolve, paroxysms of violence in the Arab world**

That was because the arbitrary boundaries had left these new Arab states open to perpetual internal clashes based on rivalries among tribes and religious sects. Their leaders spoke the language of modern nationalism, but their states never quite united. So they turned to domination by one tribe or sect over others.

The Ottomans, by contrast, knew how to manage diversity. Their decentralized model embraced a rudimentary pluralism that saw politics as the pursuit of a workable balance between differing tribes and religious communities. More often than they do now, these communities could tolerate and coexist

with one another, despite differences.

In the failure of the Arab Spring and the ascendance of Islamist militancy, we are seeing a new explosion of tribal and sectarian differences. This is the real root of the challenge posed by non-state movements that seek to form shadow governments in ungoverned territories. We have seen them before in Lebanon, Libya, and the Palestinian territories.

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, though it feels frighteningly different and more toxic to outsiders, is only the latest example. And it is not entirely original. The last time an alliance of tribes and Islamic zealots changed the map of the Arab world was in 1925, when Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud's puritanical Ikhwan warriors swept across the Arabian Peninsula to create a new Islamist country that still bears his name.

At the end of imperial rule, the dominant idea in the Arab world was a unifying Arab nationalism. It captured the popular imagination, but Egypt, Iraq and Syria paid it only lip service as they struggled to mold national identities out of their own varied sects and tribes. When Arab nationalism eventually lost its luster, another imagined idea, Islamism, replaced it. Though it seems

larger than any one Arab state, it unites only so far. Sunnis and Shias agree on Islamic unity, but not on whose history, theology, and laws should define it, or on which sect should lead it.

Today, it is a blend of Islamism and nationalism that defines Arab politics. This explains the ferocity of the Sunni-Shia split. Resurgent religious identities are pushing against the bounds of nation-states that were conceived assuming the dominance of secular nationalism.

For most of the last century, this tension was kept at bay by dictatorship, in a regional order most recently backed by the United States. But now, both Arab dictatorship and the order that sustained it have lost their moorings—first because of America's state-shattering in Iraq, and then because of popular rebellions. Now the whole post-World War I regional order has come under question from extremists who blend Islam with populism, nationalism, and anti-imperialism. The West and its Arab allies are merely playing catch-up, and not very well.

Today, the Obama administration would prefer to leave the Middle East's incompressible politics and insoluble problems to the locals to sort

out.

But what is unfolding is not all that alien to our knowledge of history, nor is it entirely a product of Arab history and culture. This is a process that Europe set in motion a century ago. The new nationalisms that followed the Great War took firm root only in places like Europe, where the boundaries of new nation-states were better matched to natural ethnic or linguistic divisions.

The lesson is that America can use its military power to contain, but not resolve, paroxysms of violence in the Arab world as it is now drawn. That would require constitutional arrangements that would allow for genuine power-sharing—a modern iteration of the Ottoman Empire's workable balance, on a nation-by-nation scale. That alone will bring to the Arab world the peace that eluded it at the end of World War I.

This is a job for our diplomats more than for our soldiers. We can start in Iraq, hoping that success there will help the rest of the region as well.

*Vali R. Nasr, the dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, is the author of "The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat."*

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**Offices**

**Taiz Bureau:**  
Imad Ahmed Al-Saqqaf  
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156,  
Telefax: +967 (4) 217-157  
P.O.Box: 5086, Taiz  
Email: ytaiz@y.net.ye

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# Politics of Qat: The Role of a Drug in Ruling Yemen

## By Peer Gatter

Book review and extracts  
**Nadia Al-Sakkaf**

The cover page shows an old man with an apprehensive look in his eyes, half-smiling as he hands you a bunch of qat leaves. In the background there is a wild-eyed teenage boy, cheeks swollen from the qat that fills them, peering into the camera.

This 862 page hard-cover book published by Reichert Publications is a weap-

on in all senses of the word. Besides documenting the ever growing role qat plays in Yemen and in the life of Yemenis, the book also analyses Yemen's qat policy, the tribal qat economy, and the qat connections of our decision makers.

I had this huge publication lying by my bedside for months before I summoned the courage to pick it up and start reading. This was not only due to its intimidating size, but probably even more so due to its

topic. Qat, and the political and economic schemes around it, were to me as a Yemeni always a well-known problem. I just was too afraid to read for myself and acknowledge how I as a citizen am part of a society that enables this culture of qat.

I don't chew Qat and personally I am ardently opposed to it. But I live in a society where Qat prevails. After years of research, Peer Gatter, the author of this book, published it in 2012, offering to the

world an insight into this drug and what it has done to my country. Gatter was working for many years for the World Bank and UNDP in Yemen and is now heading the Integrated Expert Program for Afghanistan of the German Development Cooperation (GIZ-CIM).

To read more about the book go to [www.qat-yemen.com](http://www.qat-yemen.com)



PART 10

# Donor demands and qat

During the early 1990s, Yemen had been severely affected by a series of political and economic shocks. The collapse of the Soviet Union considerably reduced aid to the two parts of Yemen from both Cold War blocks and left the newly unified country with a heavy burden of external debt. The costs associated with the merger of the two once antagonist systems of north and south further weighed on the fragile economy.

The crisis forced Yemen in early 1995 to seek IMF and World Bank assistance and embark upon a wide-ranging structural adjustment program. This Economic, Financial and Administrative Reform Program (EFARP) called for deep cuts in spending, a cutting of subsidies, privatization of state-owned enterprises, civil service reform, and major monetary and financial reforms, including a floating exchange rate leading to a significant depreciation of the real effective exchange rate in March 1995. The Yemeni government also reached agreements with the Paris Club creditors on a re-scheduling of its foreign debt which in 1996 represented 165 percent of GDP.

This gave donors—in particular the IMF and the World Bank—considerable leverage over the fate of Yemen during the second part of the 1990s. Regarding qat, the World Bank made further recommendations to the government in its 1997 strategy paper “Towards a Water Strategy,” advising the government to include qat in national statistics, make it the object of research and extension in order to exploit water saving potential, and support a long-term education and public awareness campaign on qat.

### The hesitant inclusion of qat in official statistics

Until very recently, Yemen did not have a reliable agricultural statistics system and only very limited data were being collected on a rather small sample basis. In view of Yemen's growing dependence on food imports since the early 1970s and the simultaneous explosion of qat agriculture, the government's laissez-faire attitude towards the drug and its negligence of scientific research and statistical follow-up until the late 1990s was perceived as highly worrisome in the international development community.

During the 1970s and 1980s, sta-

tistical yearbooks of South Yemen provided a single figure on qat—its production in tons. Qat and henna were the only crops for which neither figures on production area nor on yields were provided.

Shortly after President Ali Abdullah Saleh came to power in 1978, qat disappeared from North Yemen's statistical yearbooks and from the national accounts published by Yemen's Central Bank. The only official documents providing figures on qat in the decade preceding unification with the South were the summary sheets of the 1979 agricultural survey and of the 1981 and 1987 Household Budget Surveys. But detailed survey data remained classified. Qat was even excluded in GNP calculations of the republican north.

When the systems of North and South were merged in 1990, all key areas of data collection, statistical analysis, and management were moved to the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) in Sana'a, an agency of the Ministry of Planning and Development. At the same time, the laws of the South regulating the qat trade were repealed and a decision was taken to henceforth exclude qat from statistics of the unified state. The government's decision to act as if qat were not there extremely hampered economic analysis and agricultural research until the late 1990s. The only tangible figure on qat available during this period is that on qat-related spending in rural and urban areas from a summary of the 1992 Household Budget Survey (HBS) that put the share of qat in household spending at 8.3 percent at the national level (9.5 percent in urban areas and 7.9 percent in the countryside).

Only in the late 1990s figures on qat reappeared in national statistics, after international donors had pressured Yemen to include the drug once again in its annual reports in order to bring about more accountability in the national accounts.

The 1997 Statistical Yearbook (SYB) thus provided for the first time in nearly two decades estimates on production value, quantity, and area cultivated with qat in a brief overview of main agricultural indicators. In the more detailed tables reflecting the area of agricultural crops, production output in tons, yields per hectare, and production values, qat was absent, however, and only included two years later. In the national accounts chapters



Wadi Sa'wan in Bani Hushaysh district: A minibus was recycled as a watchtower to guard qat fields.

of the statistical yearbooks qat was included after 1998. The drug appears in the calculations on GDP structure, GDP at producers' prices and its growth rates, at both current and constant prices. However, it was only in April 2003 (SYB for 2002) that qat was included in its own GDP category.

Consumer price indices of the yearbooks did not explicitly mention qat until June 2002 (SYB for 2001), despite the fact that a household budget survey conducted in 1992 had documented that qat was the single most important consumption item after cereal and meat products. Starting with the yearbook for 2001, expenditure on the drug is listed in a combined figure with tobacco. Before this the word “qat” was avoided and related expenditure merely listed under “tobacco etc.” Along with tobacco and cigarettes, qat is also listed since 2002 in tables on inflation rates.

In the listings of average retail and wholesale prices in Yemen's main cities however, until today the drug has not been taken into consideration, despite qat consuming most of the household income of many families.

In June 2004, the results of the 2003 Family Health Survey were briefly presented in the health chapter of the SYB for 2003. A table provided data on the frequency of qat use in rural and urban areas among males and females. In subsequent yearbooks qat was however once again excluded from health statistics.

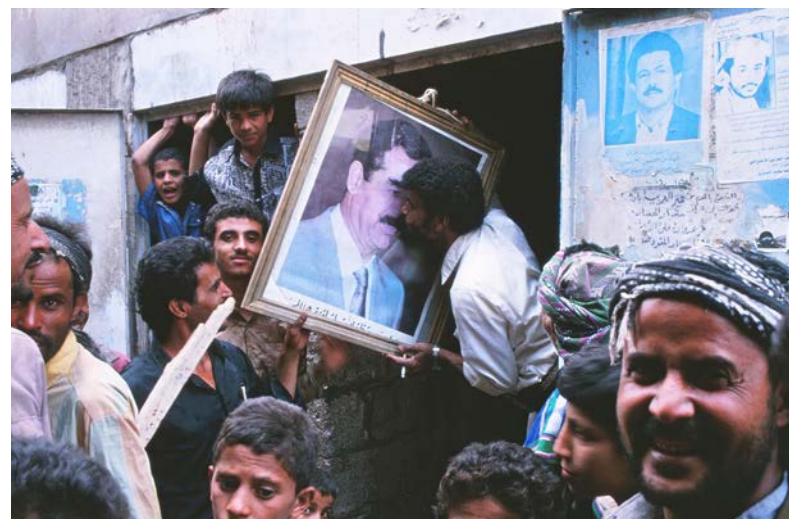
In 1998, the EU launched a project for “Improvement of the Agricultural Statistics System in Yemen” (IASSY) with a proposed budget of 4.7 million Euro. The project was “to monitor agricultural development and food security in rural areas by regularly collecting, processing, analyzing and publishing data.” The IASSY became a forerunner of a comprehensive agricultural census that was supported by the EU with a further 5.5 million Euro and carried out between 2001 and 2005 (generally referred to as

“2003 Agricultural Census”). The census was a milestone in achieving a better understanding of Yemen's rural economy. For the first time it provided an objective and quantitative knowledge of many structural aspects of the country's agricultural sector down to the district level.

### The birth of an inoperative unit for qat research

To this day, research on agriculture and on qat in particular is very low on the government's agenda. Until the late 1990s the donor community in Yemen showed little concern

consumption came at a high cost for health. Despite this knowledge, qat was seemingly not a real priority for the Ministry of Agriculture since it took another two years until a chairman for this research entity was appointed. The unit was established in February 1998 and Dr. Ali Numan Abdullah, a pioneer of modern Yemeni agriculture and one of the founders of the Ministry of Agriculture, became the unit's chairman—and its only staff. The premises that by mid 1999 still lacked windows and furniture is located in the plain north of Sana'a, southwest of the



Nearly one million Yemeni workers have been expelled from the Gulf states to punish the country for not denouncing the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. This did not mar Yemeni enthusiasm for Saddam Husayn. Qat merchants (here in a Dhamar market in 1993) even named a potent qat variety after him: “Qat Saddam Husayn.”

about the drug. However, in August 1995, the minister of agriculture and water resources issued a decree concerning the establishment of a unit for research on qat within the Agricultural Research and Extension Authority (AREA). This unit was to be affiliated to AREA's Regional Station for Research of the Northern Districts (RSRND).

The decree documents the ministry's awareness that the continuous expansion of qat was a threat to Yemen's food production and that its

different production systems, on the dangers of the random use of pesticides in qat cultivation and on the drug's role in the economics of rural households.

Since the Ministry of Water and Irrigation did not earmark any operational funds for qat research, the Qat Research Unit's chairman turned in 1999 to the donor community for support. But here he also found closed doors. The Qat Research Unit however succeeded to secure a small budget for a comprehensive field study on the role of qat in Yemen's rural economy.

When the National Conference on Qat finally took place in 2002, the Qat Research Unit together with AREA presented proposals for future qat research projects, outlining their objectives and expected outputs and giving detailed budgets and time frames.

Among Yemen's government, civil society, and donors, the Qat Research Unit and its work are today largely forgotten, and even in the Ministry of Agriculture itself the research entity is only a faint memory that had first fallen into insignificance due to lack of funding and was then closed in 2007.

### Enforcing a higher taxation of qat

Following IMF recommendations, Yemen's government had issued a law on Taxation of Production, Consumption and Services in 1991 in order to enlarge its revenue base. The law that had also reformed the taxation of qat and elevated the tax rate on the drug from 10 to 20 percent after unification, had however never been fully implemented. The tax levied on qat at checkpoints and in markets remained at ten percent far into the 1990s. Only upon pressure exercised by the IMF and the World Bank during the negotiations of the Economic, Financial and Administrative Reform Programme (EFARP), the government agreed in 1996 to implement the qat tax legislation, but it would take several more years before this law was applied and accepted all over Yemen. This did not go without resistance.

During the Ramadan festivities in January 1998, qat disappeared altogether from the markets in Aden, much to the anguish and frustration of chewers. Due to tax increases and the frequent extortion of qat or bribes by tax officials, the city's big qat merchants went on a strike and refused to import the drug from its growing areas in Yemen's midlands around Al-Dhale. They set up a flying picket point on the Al-Dhale-Aden road to deter smaller merchants from transporting any qat into Aden. The strike was only lifted upon the intervention of a number of Al-Dhale members of parliament who promised to relate the qat merchants' grievances to the relevant authorities in Sana'a.

Today, Law No. 70 of 1991 is implemented all over Yemen, the actual taxes collected at checkpoints and in markets are however nowhere near 20 percent of the retail price. They amount just to around 1-2 percent of the sales value of qat; another 1-2 percent are likely to go into the bribing of tax officials. In 2005, the tax rate of 20 percent was confirmed by the amendments to the Law concerning General Sales Tax. However, this did not make tax collection any more efficient.

التوزيع النسبي لأفراد العينة (10 سنوات فأكثر، حسب مدى مضغ القات والنوع ومكان الإقامة)									
Percentage distribution of simple individual (10 years & over) by chewing Qat, kind & Place of residence									
جدول رقم 7									
إجمالي			ريف			حضر			استخدام القات Using Qat
جسمة	نساء	رجال	جسمة	نساء	رجال	جسمة	نساء	رجال	
Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	
25.7	13.1	38.0	27.1	14.0	40.0	21.1	10.2	31.7	Daily
3.8	2.6	5.0	3.1	2.2	4.0	5.9	3.8	8.0	أسبوعياً
12.0	11.3	12.6	12.5	12.2	12.8	10.3	8.7	11.9	أثراً
2.3	2.1	2.5	2.4	2.2	2.6	2.1	2.0	2.3	لا يستخدم في السابق
55.7	70.3	41.4	54.3	69.0	40.0	60.0	74.6	45.6	لم يستخدم قط
0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	لا يعرف / غير معين
61598	30504	31094	46568	23076	23492	15030	7428	7602	المجموع

Yemen's Statistical Yearbook for 2003 is the first government publication that gives figures on qat chewing.



# Egypt's rural poor watching Sisi's policies

IRIN  
First published Aug. 11

It has been over two months since President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi formally took power in Egypt following an election in which he won a huge majority, albeit on a low turnout. During his inaugural speech, Sisi highlighted the plight of the country's farmers and rural poor, promising to develop the agricultural sector, provide more arable land and support those in desperate need.

His words have raised hopes within the often-neglected rural regions that Sisi can use his strong mandate to push through major reforms to improve their lives, especially after many lent him their support during the election.

Yet analysts say Sisi's plans have so far been vague and point out it is still too early to know what effect his policies will have on agriculture. Indeed, as his government pushes ahead with plans to cut fuel and other subsidies, fears are growing that rural poverty may even increase.

## Upper Egypt top of priorities

During his first-ever media interview in May, then presidential candidate Sisi spoke about re-mapping Egyptian governorates through a "development corridor" plan that would include major new infrastructure networks to enable farmers to use over four million new acres (1.62 million hectares) of land. By introducing scientific irrigation methods, he said, the country could double its agricultural production.

"The plan is set to create new employment opportunities in agriculture," Richard Tutwiler, director of the Research Institute for a Sustainable Environment (RISE) at Cairo's American University, said. Egypt has 8.6 million acres (3.48 million hectares) of agricultural land, according to the State Information Services, but this would increase by a little more than 40 percent under Sisi's

plans, Tutwiler said.

It is clear that the need for a new approach is most acute in Upper Egypt, the vast rural region which despite its name is located in the south of the country. The area is home to around 40 percent of Egypt's population but 70 percent of its poor, according to the World Bank.

Likewise, residents suffer from among the highest rates of illiteracy, malnutrition, and infant mortality, while access to safe water and sanitation are limited. Residents have long accused the Cairo-based central authorities of neglect, arguing that not enough of the central budget is allocated to the south.

"Basic services are in very bad condition," said Dyaa Abdou, programme manager for agricultural development at the Egypt Network for Integrated Development (ENID). The project, which is funded by the UN Development Programme among others, aims to build up the capacity of local farmers and support rural projects, yet Abdou admits that the state of infrastructure can be a hindrance to their work. "You can't do any real development without improving these services."

## Water and sanitation

Among the top concerns for Egypt's rural farmers are the poor water networks. Only a little more than one in ten people in rural Upper Egypt have access to clean running water and sanitation, according to ENID. For farmers this can cause harvests to fail, while for the rural poor unclean water increases rates of gastrointestinal diseases, cancer, or kidney failure. "The most pressing priority for rural people is to have an adequate sanitation infrastructure," ENID managing director Heba Handoussa told IRIN. This concern was echoed by farmers in the area around the southern town of Qena such as Ramadan Abdel Razy. "We don't have a pipe network that covers all areas," he bemoaned.

Among the projects proposed by



Many farms by the Nile river in Upper Egypt lack access to clean running water and proper sanitation, leading to failed harvests and an increased incidence of disease.

ENID is a new network of large irrigation canals. Poor villagers mainly depend on traditional sewage systems in which sanitation pits are dug without a cement base, often leading to sewage leakage into the water under ground. "We have small canals, with trapping grass and weeds," Salah Ahmad, an ENID board director, told IRIN, adding that a new network would help boost Upper Egypt's economy.

As yet, few concrete steps have been taken in this direction. Amal Ismael, head of the Agriculture Min-

istry Directorate in Qena, said they were waiting for confirmation of new developments from the central government. "There are many governmental regulations applying to water sanitation and framing processes but there are no specific projects for water, sanitation, agricultural activities in the ministry," she said.

## Food woes

Another area of focus for any government seeking to help the rural poor is food security. Egypt's 2011 Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey indicated that 74.3 percent of households in Upper Egypt suffer from chronic food insecurity. The poorest families often buy less expensive, less nutritious food leading to severe health diseases.

Amal, a teacher at a private school in Al-Azayza village, said many of her students were suffering from

anemia, which can be caused by a lack of iron or vitamins in the diet. "Right now, we have 149 kids in need of healthy food, out of these, 92 are severe cases."

As farmers in the region traditionally have small landholdings, they cultivate relatively few crops, and they have a low market value, according to the International Fund for Agricultural Development. A simple, though short-term, route to ameliorating this crisis would be to encourage more production through fertilizers. During his election campaign, Sisi suggested he would do just that, but the effects have yet to kick in.

Currently small farmers can get a limited number of fertilizers for EGP70 (\$10) per sack, but they cost double that on the market and plans to increase subsidies appear popular. "We need more fertilizers. The government only gives us two

sacks when we should get six," said Mouheb Al-Kes Haroun, a teacher of agriculture at a technical school in Al-Azayza. Yet fresh reports from Egypt suggest that prices of fertilizer may actually increase, rather than decrease.

Other small-scale projects could also be broadened to aid the rural poor. ENID recently introduced poultry backyard production in two poor villages near Qena, by distributing 30 chicks to the 20 poorest households and encouraging them to raise chickens. Likewise the organization has started a roof gardening project to raise awareness of food security. "The idea is to show people how to make good use of their home roof by planting and eating food from it," said Muhammed, a worker on the project. "It's easy and low cost. Any family can do roof gardening."

Continued on the back page

## وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان مشروع الصحة والسكان - منحة رقم (H640-RY) مناقصة عامة رقم (36)

يسر وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان - مشروع الصحة والسكان أن يعلن عن رغبته في إنزال المناقصة العامة رقم (36) لسنة 2014 م لشراء وتوريد مطبوعات التغذية ومستلزمات منطوعات صحة المجتمع والتي سيتم تمويلها من هيئة التنمية الدولية (IDA) وعلى الراغبين المشاركة في هذه المناقصة التقدم بطلباتهم الخطية خلال أوقات الدوام الرسمي إلى العنوان التالي: مشروع الصحة والسكان - مبنى البرامج - الدور الاول- شارع مازدا حي الحصة - صنعاء تليفون رقم - 234572-234556 فاكس رقم 234572.

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• يقدم العطاء في مظروف مغلق ومختوم بالشمع الأحمر إلى عنوان الجهة المحدد ومكتوب عليه اسم الجهة والمشروع ورقم المناقصة، واسم مقدم العطاء، وفي طيه الوثائق التالية:

1. ضمان بنكي بنفس نموذج الصيغة المحددة في وثائق المناقصة بمبلغ مقطوع على النحو التالي المجموعة الاولى مبلغ (2500) دولار امريكي
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تستثنى الشركات الأجنبية من تقديم الشهادات والبطاقات المشار إليها آنفاً ويكتفى بتقديم الوثائق القانونية المؤهلة الصادرة من البلدان التي تنتمي إليها تلك الشركات

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• يمكن للراغبين في المشاركة في هذه المناقصة الإطلاع على وثائق المناقصة قبل شرائها خلال أوقات الدوام للفترة المسموح بها لبيع وثائق المناقصة لمدة (30) يوماً من تاريخ نشر أول إعلان على العنوان التالي:

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fadhlem@gmail.com

## Leaked files confirm surveillance company helped Bahrain spy on activists

Phoebe Bierly  
muffah.org  
First published Aug. 12

On August 4 a hacker made a post on the social media website Reddit announcing that she or he had stolen 40 gigabytes of data from Gamma International, a UK-based surveillance technology company. The hacker made the data available for download and has been gradually posting key findings on Twitter; news sites like ProPublica have also begun to comb through it.

Gamma International has long been accused of enabling repressive countries to spy on journalists and dissidents. Its software, FinFisher Suite, infects targets' computers, often through malicious email attachments or CDs, and then harvests data from the infected computer, including passwords, audio and visual recordings of Skype calls, and more.

The hacker encouraged internet users to help analyze the leaked files, saying on Reddit, "I'm unconvincing that news stories about government's surveillance capabilities are actually effective in fighting those systems of control. Listening to stories all day about how we're all being hacked and spied on just feels disempowering. When everyone can participate it's more empowering, more fun, and far more effective. Gamma deliberately avoided

storing identifying information about their customers; the customers I've managed to identify so far are from looking at the metadata in the documents they sent FinFisher support staff and other mistakes they made. The more eyes looking at it, the more we'll find."

Thus far, the revelations from the leaks are, sadly, not shocking. In the past Gamma International's spyware has been found in Bahrain, Qatar, Mongolia, the United Arab Emirates, Australia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Latvia, the United States, Brunei, Turkmenistan, Singapore, and the Netherlands. The data confirms that entities—likely law enforcement and intelligence agencies in most cases—in Bahrain, Mongolia, Qatar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Vietnam, the Netherlands, and Nigeria purchased Gamma International's spyware. The software was also used to monitor computers in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Iran. More countries will no doubt be added to the list of customers once the leaked files have been completely analyzed.

Yet, this is the first definitive proof that Gamma International knowingly sold its software to Bahrain. The company previously claimed that any of its software found in Bahrain might have been stolen. However, the leaked files show that between 2010 and 2012 the company aided the Bahraini government

in monitoring 77 computers, including those of human rights activists and members of opposition party Al-Wefaq. The government also appears to have targeted the computers of at least two members of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Investigation (BICI), a fact-finding commission established by the king of Bahrain to research alleged human rights violations during the crackdown on protests in 2011.

The files include conversations between Gamma International representatives and probable employees of the Bahraini government. In some of these conversations the Bahrainis griped about software bugs resulting in losses of data, saying "[W]e cant stay bugging and infecting the target every time since it is very sensitive, and we don't want the target to reach to know that someone is infecting his PC or spying on him."

The leak could inspire victims and human rights groups to sue Gamma International for apparent violations of British regulations on the export of surveillance technology, although the leaked information may not be admissible in court. When asked about this possibility, a member of Al-Wefaq said, "this is the time for all those who were harmed by this violation to sue Gamma."

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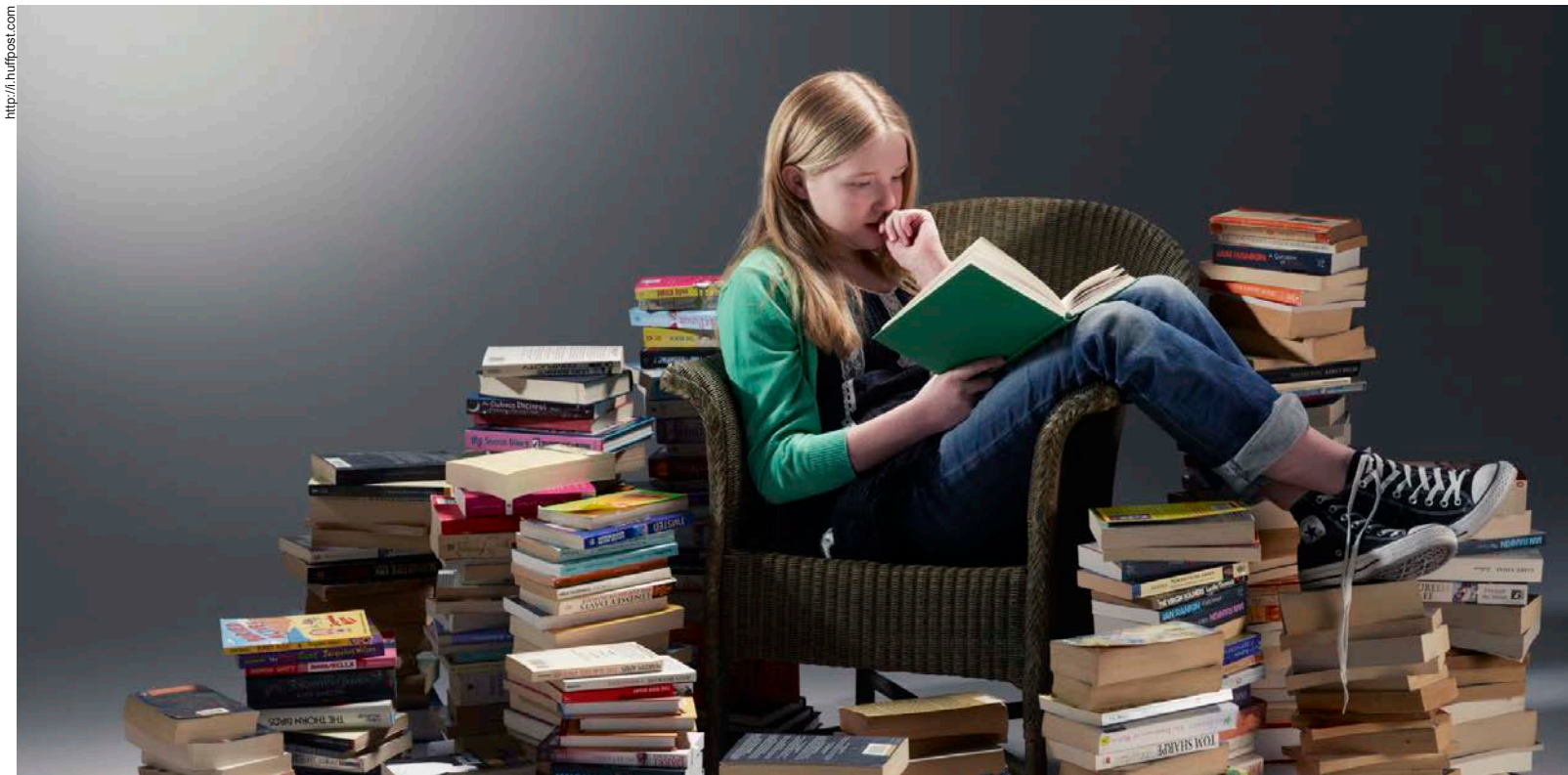
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## The Benefits of Reading

By JAMES M. SUTTON

Reading is the most beneficial act a person can do in his lifetime. It is even more beneficial when it becomes a habitual act. The benefits of reading are countless, and if I were to sit here and try to write all of reading's benefits, I would be an old man before I came close to finishing. However, it is enough for a person with a mind to understand some of the primary benefits of reading to know that this is a habit that is indispensable. Now of course, when I speak of reading throughout this article, I am referring to REAL reading which involves reading for academic stimulation or reading for the improvement of one's language. I am not, however, referring to reading watered down and concise literature in magazines and newspapers, because I do not see any benefit in the reading of these materials other than getting a quick dose of trivial information to carry you through the day and to give you something to talk about at the coffee pot at work.

One common problem all teachers face in the classroom is getting the students to come up with ideas. When students are situated into groups and given a topic to discuss in detail, they find a strong inability to articulate any opinion they might have whether they are for something or against it. These problems, when witnessed, are just simply written off as problems the students have due to their lack



of language; but is that really the problem? I am willing to bet that if you were to give the students the same conversation in their L1 they would meet with the same difficulties as they did when using their L2. This then is not a problem that stems from a lack of language needed to compose logical structures which the listener can understand. This problem, however, stems from a lack of information needed to actually give valuable input into the conversation. The student faces this problem of lack of information due in part to a lack of reading to obtain that informa-

tion. All the problems that we witness in the classroom from lack of ideas to an inability to express any ideas in a fluent and clear way are all results of the students' laziness when it comes to reading. Most students have a strong aversion to the written word and look at books as one would see the boogeyman. This sort of allergy the students have with reading is their own downfall. The only way the students are going to reach any high level of fluency in any language is after they sit down and become familiar with the literature of that language. I do

not believe this problem is limited to ESL classrooms, as I am sure you will find similar problems in English classrooms in which English is the native tongue. Moreover, the students are, in most cases, not being motivated to read more. It is a very simple thing to tell a person what to do. However, if you want the person to actually follow your advice, you need to explain the reason why they need to do that thing.

I hate reading? I always smile when a student tells me this, and that is because they are confessing their own lack of intelligence

and understanding. Moreover, they are giving insight to their lack of patience in regards to their own personal benefit. This is not a statement any teacher should like to hear from a student, but now we live in a time when the teachers themselves are making that remark. What can we expect when the very person we entrust with our child's education makes a statement like that? Now you can see the downward spiral that education is taking. We as educators have to be the role model. We have to be an example for the students to follow because that is what they see us as. If we are lazy in regards to reading and seeking more knowledge to benefit ourselves, what do you expect is going to happen to the students in the classroom. First, we need to look at the habitual problems students have in their studies, and instead of just outright advising them to change their habits; we have to first look and see if these same bad habits

are indeed being learned from us. If we see that the students suffer in speaking and writing because they do not read enough, we then have to look at ourselves and see if we read enough to be proficient in the skills that we are teaching. I will be honest that most of the teachers that I have come across in my decade of teaching would do better by being a student more than being a teacher. I have seen teachers give students stories to read that they themselves have not read nor do they plan to read. This is completely unacceptable. As a teacher, we must have the 'lead from the front' mentality in all our dealings with our students. We cannot be hypocritical to the point that we tell them to do what we do not do ourselves. By leading from the front, we will allow the students to make the connection when they see a teacher who is very fluent in the language, and whenever they see that teacher, he has a book in his hand.

All students, when asked what they want to achieve in the classroom, will say they want a high level of fluency in the language. Yet, are they doing what needs to be done to attain that high level they wish? More than likely they are not. If they were doing what they needed to be doing, they would not answer in the manner they answered in. Moreover, are teachers doing what they need to be doing to encourage students to attain the level they wish to attain? They are definitely not. If they were doing what they were supposed to be doing, the students would never have to ask; they would simply observe the lifestyle of the teacher and understand what they need to do. Therefore, before complaining about the students' lack of understanding and inability to input valuable information in class discussions, we need to first look at ourselves and work on improving ourselves because we are the point of origin for these problems.

## Semantic Errors That Put Many Yemeni Learners of English in Embarrassing Situations

By RABAB AYASH

Yemeni learners of English encounter many problematic areas in their journey of English learning. Semantic errors are one of the most challenging areas to all Yemeni. Wide range of semantic errors are committed in every single utterance some of the errors cannot be tolerated. In many cases, the messages or intentions of the speakers are wrongly understood because of the semantic errors. Many are put in embarrassing situations because of the semantic errors. For example, some would say to a friend "Come to have lunch with me today" the other says "can you cook?", the other says "oh do not you know that I am a good cooker". Examining the example above, Thinking that cooker is the personal adjective of the verb cook and generalizing the idea of adding "er" to the root of the English verbs to form their personal adjectives, the speaker says cooker with no idea that cooker is a wrong use and that the correct form is "cook". The roots of this problem are many they may be originated

in the learners' first language L1 or they may be related to the nature of the foreign language.

The learners first language L1 "Arabic" plays a significant role in the existence of the problem. It has been found that L1 sources include translating concepts, words and phrases literally from L1, i.e. Arabic into L2, i.e. English and applying Arabic linguistic rules to English. Many learners tend to directly translate a word, phrase and/or a sentence from Arabic into English. For instance, a learner might say "In our marriage imitations, men and woman do not sit in mix." Here the speaker uses the term 'imitation' to mean 'traditions' and 'in mix' instead of the correct form 'together'. This error was committed as a result of direct translation from Arabic into English. Another example, in the sentence "In winter, trees had yellow papers." The speaker commits a semantic error because of direct translation. He translated the Arabic word "Warag Asfar" into 'yellow papers' instead of the English correct form 'yellow leaves'. In the sentence "Can you bring me that book? Yes, from my eyes.", the speaker commits a se-

semantic error of the same kind 'direct translation from Arabic'. Many other errors can be put in this category such as:

- *In University, people do not refuse coeducation.* (Reject).
- *My father has many adjectives which make people love him.* (qualities)
- *In our department, the doctors are the best in the world.* (professors).

All the above sentences have semantic errors in them and all of them are created from the same origin which is 'Direct Translation from Arabic into English'.

Coinage is another problem that results in semantic errors. Coinage errors are committed by Arabic speaking learners when their English repertoire does not help them express themselves when they try to communicate in English. The coined words can be of Arabic or English origin. The source of these errors is Arabic rule application in English. Examples of this kind of error are the following:

- *\*My sister wifed very small.,*
- *foded us eggs in morning.,,*
- *but we cand to stop here.*

In the first example, wifed is a derived verb from the English noun wife. Here, the learner coins it depending on Arabic because in Arabic the verb tazawjat (married) is derived from the Arabic noun zawja(h) (wife) and as the learner does not know the English word marry, he/she thinks that the Arabic rule of verb derivation can be applied to English wife. The same thing can be said about foded in where the error lies in coining the verb foded from the English food by applying the same Arabic analogy. In the third sentence, the coined word *cand* is to be seen as the past form of *can* and there is an evidence which is *can*. That is, in Arabic, the word for *could* is *istata:* which must be followed by (to) and that exactly what happens here.

Talking about semantic errors is a long and important topic so the topic will be divided into sections and every section will be discussed in a separated article. Here two kind of errors were discussed, direct translation from Arabic and coinage. In the upcoming edition, further kinds of semantic errors will be discussed.

### A BIT OF GRAMMAR

## Auxiliary Verbs ( have \ do \ can etc )

By RABAH AYASH

These are two verbs in each of these sentences :

I	have	lost	my keys.
She	can't	come	to the party.
The hotel	was	built	ten years ago.
Where	do you	live?	

In these examples **have** \ **can't** \ **was** \ **do** are auxiliaries (= helping) verbs .

You can use an auxiliary verb (without the rest of the sentence) when you do not want to repeat something:

- **'Have** you locked the door ?' 'Yes , I have' (=I have locked the door)
- Ali **was** not working but Shaima'a was. (=Shaima'a was working)
- **'Are** you angry with me ?' 'Of course, I am not'. (= I am not angry)
- She **could** lend me the money but she won't. (= She won't lend me the money)

## الشركة البراق

وعبر مكاتبها .. أن تصومكم

وترحب بكم على ركب اسطولها الحديث ورحلاتها المنتظمة وعلى بساط الراحة ندعوكم إلى رحابنا لنشد الرحال معا صباحا ومساء إلى جميع المحافظات

فرصتكم أملنا وراحتكم مسعانا فلا تنتظروا البراق فلبراق ينتظركم

المركز الرئيسي: صنعاء شارع الستين الجنوبي - جولة المرور  
تلفون: ٠١/٦٠٠٢٤، ٠١/٦٠٠٧٣، ٠١/٦٠٠٧٤، ٠١/٦٠٠٧٤، ٠١/٦٠٠٧٤

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المدارس التركية اليمينية لكافة التخصصات العلمية والأدبية القسم العلمي قسم انجليزي حاصلين على بكالوريوس كحد أدنى مع خبرة 3 سنوات. ت: 525124، فاكس: 525124

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مطلوب مندوبين مبيعات مواد غذائية، المؤهل لا يقل عن الثانوية العامة، رخصة قيادة سارية المفعول، خبرة لا تقل عن سنة في نفس المجال، يرجى

اجادة الانجليزية، حاصل على شهادة ايزو. 733913209

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موظف شاعرة

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مهندس مدني، خبرة سنتين، لغة انجليزية ممتازة. 777055889

بكالوريوس ترجمة - جامعة صنعاء - خبرة في المراسلات التجارية والأعمال الادارية أكثر من 6 سنوات - يرغب في العمل في الفترة المسائية فقط. 777991248

بكالوريوس لغة انجليزية خبرة سنتين في مجال التدريس. اجادة استخدام الكمبيوتر والانترنت. للتواصل / 772663229

بكالوريوس محاسبه وإدارة

باحثون عن وظيفة

- بكالوريوس - لغة انجليزية - دبلوم كمبيوتر - خبرة مراسلات تجارية سنتين. يرغب العمل في الفترة الصباحية. 733778849

هندية الأصل حاصلة على دبلوم انجليزي وسكرتارية بتقدير ممتاز لديها خبرة في الجرافيكس والترجمة والمراسلات التجارية، لديها خبرة في ادارة التسويق والمبيعات، تريد العمل في تعز. 736653489

يوسف علي الرازقي - مهندس تقنية معلومات وحاسوب 771293966

معتز عبداللطيف حداد - مهندس تقنية معلومات وحاسوب 733984178

بكالوريوس محاسبة، خبرة في

### شركات التأمين

٠١/٢٦٤٢٢١  
٠١/٥٥٧٤١٥  
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٠١/٤٤٨٥٧٣

معهد التبي  
المعهد البريطاني للغات والحاسوب  
معهد أكسيد  
معهد مالي  
معهد هورايين

### شركات طيران

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٤٤٨٣٢٩

المتحدة للتأمين  
الوطنية للتأمين  
الشركة اليمنية الإسلامية للتأمين  
وأعادة التأمين  
شركة أمان  
الجزيرة للتأمين وإعادة التأمين  
الشركة اليمنية القطرية للتأمين

### مدارس

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روضة واحة الأطفال  
مدرسة رينبو  
مدارس صنعاء الدولية  
مدرسة التريكة الدولية  
مدرسة مغارات

### سفرات

٠١/٣٨٠٧٧٧  
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قدس فلاي  
سكاي للسفرات والسياحة  
عجلات الصقر  
مركز أعمال الصقر  
العالمية للسفرات والسياحة  
وكالات سفريات اليمن

### مطاعم

٤١٧٣٩١  
٤٣١٩٩٩

مطعم ومخازنة الشيباني (باسم محمد عبده الشيباني)  
تلفون: ٠١٠٥٧٣٦٦٦ - ١٠٠٩٢٥٥٠  
فاكس: ٩١٦٦٦٢

مطعم منابو الياباني  
قطريتي

### مستشفى الثورة

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مستشفى الجمهوري  
المستشفى الألماني الحديث

### طيران اليمنية

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فرع تعز  
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فرع الحديدة

### السعودية الإماراتية الأثيوبية الألمانية (الوفتهانزا) التركية السعودية القطرية

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طيران الخليج  
طيران الأردنية - صنعاء  
طيران الاتحاد  
طيران دبي

### فنادق

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٠١/٤٠٦٦٦١، ٤٠٦٦٨١

فندق ميركوير صنعاء  
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### معاهد

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معهد مالي

### تأجير سيارات

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زاوية (Budget)  
يورب كار  
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### مراكز تدريب وتعليم الكمبيوتر

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NIIT لتعليم الكمبيوتر  
البريد السريع

### شحن وتوصيل

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العالمية للشحن - صنعاء

### مستشفيات

٠١/٤٤٠٧٥٤٠

بنك كاك الاسلامي  
بنك اليمن والكويت للتجارة والانشاءات

### البنوك

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وزارة الشباب والرياضة  
وزارة الصناعة والتجارة  
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وزارة شؤون الداخلية  
وزارة النقل  
وزارة حقوق الانسان  
وزارة الاتصالات وتقنية المعلومات  
وزارة الادارة المحلية  
وزارة الاعلام  
وزارة التخطيط والتعاون الدولي  
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وزارة الكهرباء

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بنك التضامن الإسلامي  
البنك التجاري  
مصرف اليمن البحريين الشامل - الستين الغربي  
بنك اليمن الدولي  
البنك العربي  
بنك التسليف الزراعي  
البنك المركزي  
بنك الامل  
البنك القطري الدولي  
بنك اليمنى للانشاء والتعمير  
بنك سبا الإسلامي  
بنك كاليون  
يونانيد بنك ليميتد

### الوزارات

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٠١/٢٧٢٠٦١

طوارئ المياه  
طوارئ الشرطة  
الإستعلامات  
الإطفاء  
حوادث المرور  
الشؤون الداخلية  
الشؤون الخارجية  
الهجرة  
التلفزيون  
الصلب الاحمر  
الإذاعة

### كلمات متقاطعة

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### الكلمة المفقودة

د ي ا ر

### افقي

1- مطربة لبنانية  
2- ممثلة لبنانية - هيا بالعامة (م)  
3- شهر ميلادي (م) - مطربة ارمنية  
4- صندوق صغير (م) - حرف نصب - العقل (م) - مقياس ارضي (م)  
5- في المصانع - من المنبهات (م) - علم مؤنث (م)  
6- مرض صوري (م) - مدينة فلسطينية - مطربة لبنانية (م)  
7- مواد ناسفة - عاتيت - من السلم الموسيقي  
8- احصل (م) - عاصمة الضباب  
9- كف - مثارتها  
10- التصويري (م) - مدرس (م)  
11- عكس السيارة - قتل (م)  
12- رهن (م) - قوة العدد (م) - في السماء (م)  
13- متشابهان - اهب (م) - علم مؤنث - باع السم  
14- متشابهان - الخامل (م) - من الصناعات المعطانية  
15- محستان - الخضوع (م)

عمودي  
1- ممثلة مصرية - نحضر  
2- من اوجه القمر (م) - اوطاننا (م)  
3- المتكبر (م) - المحافظ على الشيء (م)  
4- غير ناضج - يحققون النظر  
5- فيلم من بطولة محمد هنيدي - جنون  
6- حيوان أليف - الخلاص - نقود  
7- في القلب - لا اذكركم  
8- خلود (م) - حرفان متماثلان (م) - علم مؤنث - للنفي  
9- حيوان أليف - الخلاص - نقود  
10- وجعنا - نخلة بالانجليزي  
11- حرفان متماثلان (م) - حرفان متماثلان  
12- اعلام - الشعور  
13- متشابهان (م) - المتحصرة لقيام بالشيء (م)  
14- مارة مستحضرات تجميل - حزنه وهمه (م) - عكس اخر  
15- الاعتقادية (م) - طمانينتنا

### خطوة خطوة

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خطوة خطوة  
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شرفة الفندق  
قدرات حالية  
11  
رسومات رمزية  
من السيراميك  
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مهارات الدفاع

### استراحة العدد

النجمة

عجائب وغرائب  
رغم فوزه بجائزة أكبر بانصيب في هونغ كونغ بمبلغ 5.7 مليون دولار، أكد الهندي جاجبال سينج - 32 عاماً - عامل توصيل الطلبات للمنازل تمسك بوظيفته التي يحصل منها على راتب اسبوعي 300 دولار امريكي مبرراً ذلك بشعوره بالملل من دون عمل.

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نكتة العدد  
الزوج: اليوم هو الجمعة ولازمتتمتع فيه، ولأجل ذلك اشترت 3 تذاكر سينما.  
الزوجة: ولماذا ثلاثة؟  
الزوج: لك وللولدين.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

## Egypt's rural poor watching Sisi's policies

Mohamed Al-Sayed, director of technical support at the Ministry of Local Development, said they were hoping to increase individual support to farmers to help them grow their businesses. "One of the main challenges in Upper Egypt is to invest in farmers, develop their capabilities through ongoing training

and sustainable agricultural development," he said.

### Health and education

There are other areas, too, where reforms are desperately needed. In the health sector, public services are poor and there are shortages of essential medicines in rural com-

munities. Villagers told IRIN about people having to wait hours for urgent surgery, a shortage of beds, and poor health facilities.

Likewise in education, institutions lack the capacity to accommodate students, with classes of 70 or more, common. High drop-out rates mean illiteracy rates remain over 30

percent in much of Upper Egypt, nearly double those in Cairo and other big cities.

Kamil Abdou, director of The Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development (AUEED), told IRIN many children completed primary school but stayed only briefly in secondary school. "Parents are interested in getting basic education for their children, but they're less bothered [about secondary] because their kids have grown up," he said. AUEED runs one of the 14 schools in Asyut governorate and it has been held up as an example—with significantly higher test scores and lower dropout rates than elsewhere. Abdou said some of the techniques used were simple, and easily transferable to other schools: more individual support for children, teachers following students through the years, and smaller class sizes. Others are harder, such as tackling traditionally high female dropout rates by meeting families to emphasize the importance of education.

Sisi seems to have grasped the scale of the challenge, in principle at least. During his inauguration speech he said he wanted to "focus on providing the premium medical care for the elderly along with the development of the education sector, which includes both the student and the teacher, from providing them with the necessary libraries and stadiums to theatres, and to upgrade the technical education and support, linking education to the needs of the labor market."

### Top-down approach

Yet Hatem Zayed, programme officer at the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights, said he was concerned that in many areas the solutions proposed so far have been vague. He added that plans to cut energy and food subsidies, which Sisi has already begun to push ahead with, would further impoverish millions. The World Food Programme estimated last year that removing high food subsidies could push the national poverty rate up by nearly 10 percent.

"Sisi mentioned that food security would be a priority. However, the policies [he has introduced] don't show that," Zayed told IRIN.

And while Sisi may have shown a genuine commitment for reform, both Zayed and Tutwiler warned that he appeared to have inherited the top-down approach that characterized previous Egyptian governments under deposed dictator Hosni Mubarak.

"One mistake repeated by past governments has been to focus on macro-scale programs without a

thorough understanding of the local needs of the county's rural communities," Zayer said.

Tutwiler identified local participation development as one area of interest around issues such as agriculture, water, and irrigation. The idea entails people taking more responsibility in managing their own resources collectively through community-based local associations.

"It would be interesting to see if the government will encourage poli-

cies of decentralization, local capacity-building," Tutwiler said. "It won't be a huge change of direction but it may ameliorate some of the problems concerning rural people."

The rural poor, many of whom had their hopes raised by Sisi's election, will continue to wait to see if the new president's promises prove to be empty.

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