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Repeated power cuts make selling generators a lucrative business

By: Ismail Al-Ghabri

SANA'A, Sept. 9 — In addition to the pressure of life and the poor living standards in Yemen, repeated electricity cuts have come to constitute a new burden on private homes and shops.

People, particularly in cities, didn't expect they would have to resort to alternatives to provide them with light, such as candles and generators. However, lack of power has started to top the life problems of many.

Shops selling generators on Taiz Street, in Sana'a, swarm with people who come to buy Chinese-made generators of different kinds and sizes.

"We are greatly benefiting from the bad situation, due to the continuous power blackout," said an owner of a shop that sells power generators. "However, we don't want this bad situation to continue because we also suffer from it."

Most generators come from China because are cheap.

"Their prices vary between YR 12,000 [around USD 60] and 200,000 [around USD 1,000] based on their size," he said. "People prefer small generators that cost from YR 25,000 to YR 46,000."

He added that no guarantees are given to customers upon purchasing these generators.

"We just guarantee to provide spare parts for the generators and change them

if there is any manufacturing defect," he said.

Some people pawn off their jewelry and car property documents to purchase these generators, he said. This indicates that Yemeni citizens have become unable to afford these continuous power cuts, particularly during Ramadan.

Khaled Al-Awji, from Dhamar governorate, said that he put his wife's jewelry on pawn to buy a generator.

"I was obliged to put my wife's jewelry on pawn with owner of the generator shop to buy a generator," he said. "We live in a remote area with no electricity service."

Generators to lure customers

Shops owners also buy generators to provide power for their shops because Ramadan and Eid Al-Fitr are important periods for business.

"I have to buy a generator to provide my shop with power, particularly given that these days are an important season," said Fahmi Al-Awadi, owner of a clothes shop on Jamal Street, Sana'a. "People come to buy clothes before the Eid and when the power goes off, we lose customers."

Sameer Al-Ba'adani, a tailor, said that he bought a generator to provide his shop with power and to operate his tailoring machines.

"I cannot work in my shop without

power even during the daytime," he said. "I was obliged to buy a generator to work during this season."

Some shopkeepers share one generator. In such a case, they have to buy a big generator that can provide their shops with enough power.

Ramadan is a season for business, as people shop for Eid, which comes immediately after the fasting month. People buy clothes, shoes, and the typical sweets eaten during Eid.

The shops that sell them, small or in big shopping malls, cannot afford to have no electricity off for two hours several times in a day, as this would kill business.

Marib 1 still not ready

In recent years, there were electricity blackouts during Ramadan, but they were shorter and easier for people to bear. In the last few months, their frequency has increased, with up to three or four power cuts in 24 hours. The length of each has also increased from one to two hours.

People who have to re-arrange their lives around long daily power cuts are still waiting for the Marib 1 power station which was, according to the government's first promise, supposed to start operating in January.

The station is expected to solve the current problem of power blackouts across the country, says the government, but it is still being tested.



Because shops in Sana'a stay open late at night during Ramadan, business owners use generators to keep the lights on during the frequent blackouts.

The station will be composed of three generators, generating a total of 341 megawatts, but some of its parts have still not reached Yemen.

Dangerous alternatives
 Several fatalities have been reported

since the beginning of Ramadan, because of the misuse of alternative sources of power people use in electricity cuts.

Four children aged from 6 months to 13 years from one family died at the beginning of Ramadan this year when a

candle set fire to the room in which they were sleeping in their home in Sana'a, according to the Ministry of Interior.

A couple also reportedly died because they operated a generator motor inside their house without known that generators should be put outdoors.

Vendors resist government shutdowns

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

SANA'A, Sept. 9 — Ibrahim Saeed, 25, is a vendor who sells clothes on Hayel Street, where stores and vendors crowd the heavily populated area of Sana'a.

For the past three weeks, the Capital Secretariat has been trying to get him, and vendors like him to stop.

But even after he was hit in the backbone by the back of a soldier's gun, he did not give up selling. He was taken to Al-Manar Hospital and after three days of treatment, he returned to work last Monday.

"The police followed me to where I store my goods," he said. "My friends and I resisted them when they wanted to seize my goods, and fights broke between us and them. One of the soldiers kicked me with his gun. It hit my backbone, where I already suffer pain because of past injury."

He said that he paid YR 15,000 for treatment from his pocket. "He returned to the street on Monday upon hearing a rumor that vendors would not be prevented from selling their goods on the street until the end of Ramadan.

But the Deputy of the Capital Secretariat Mohammad Al-Gharbi, who is in charge of the effort, denied the news that they were allowing vendors to return to the streets.

"This is a plan adopted by the Capital Secretariat to keep Sana'a streets clean and organized," he added. "The news of allowing vendors to return to the streets is not correct. We will continue the plan we started [in 2007] and this plan is based on a law to organize Sana'a streets."

However, the secretary of the National Organization for Defending Rights and

Freedoms (known as HOOD), Ahmad Arman, said the vendors on the streets are not breaking the law.

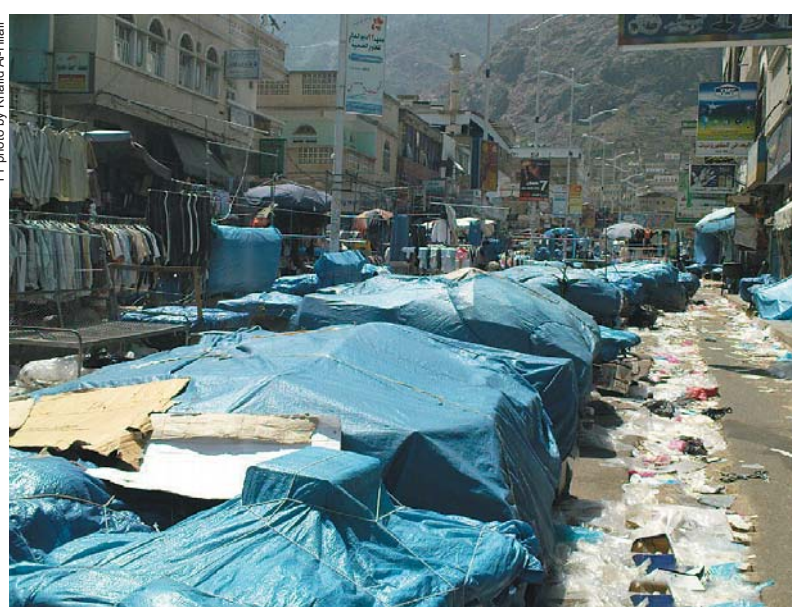
Arman, who is a lawyer, said "the law does not ban vendors to be in the streets but stipulates that they have to keep streets clean and not to cause harm."

Journalists, lawyers and Member of Parliament Fuad Dahaba, all in support of the vendors, met on Tuesday to discuss the issue.

"We held a meeting today led by famous Yemeni lawyer Mohammad Allow to discuss the issue," Dahaba, who is a MP representing the constituency of al-Qa'a and Althahir district. "The meeting discussed the aggressive measures taking by municipality against people."

He said that those who carry the campaign are treating people illegally and seizing their positions. The municipality allows to vendors, who pay daily rent on a few meters of space, to sell their goods in the streets.

This is not true, said Al-Gharbi. "There are gangs renting the streets to vendors and these practices have no thing to do with our work. We have to work for the interest of the citizen. The goods being sold by vendors do not fit quality specifications."



Last year, during Ramadan, vendors filled Tahrir Street in Taiz.

But the holidays, Ramadan and Eid al-Adha, create business for vendors, and there are sometimes twice as many on the streets. Many people prefer to buy from vendors, thinking that they sell goods cheaper than those being sold in stores.

Because of economic deterioration and scarcity of work opportunities, some people prefer to work as vendors in streets, as they see such business more profitable. Some of the young vendors left their schools to support their families.

"I am supporting five families from this business," said Ali al-Usabi, a vendor in Hayel Street who has a large vehicle full of children's and women's clothes worth about YR 300,000.

He says that soldiers have seized his goods, causing him a loss of YR 20,000. But he says he handled the loss.

"I get goods by debt from some wholesalers who support vendors. They support us by allowing us to pay back the wholesalers by installations."

He argued that there is no other choice for them other than this business.

"Which is better, working or turning to terrorist groups to work with?" he said, adding that his family was poor and he did not have the opportunity to finish primary school.

"I loved studying and wanted to continue my education but I needed to support me and my family."

"Most of these vendors are traders who could own big stores. They prefer selling their goods in streets to avoid paying

money for renting stores, taxes and zakat," argued Al-Gharbi.

He said to help poor vendors, the government offers 40 markets distributed across the capital to sell their goods. He said that vendors crowd the streets, despite the fact that there are closed stores- which would be more comfortable for shoppers- in some areas waiting for renters.

"These markets are far away of the centers and populated areas," said Arman. "We are going tomorrow to the building of the Capital Secretariat to discuss vendor issue with the officials there."

He says that such practices encourage corruption. The soldiers and responsible inspector are stealing things of vendors and that the Capital Secretariat has to look at this issue.

Dahaba demanded concerned bodies to look at accusations that vendors face abuse from soldiers.

"Surely, banning vendors from the streets has its negative impacts, causing injuries as a result of fights," said Al-Gharbi. He explained that the Hayel and Tahrir areas right now are full vendors and shoppers and that if the soldiers carried out sudden inspections, violence could ensue.

He said they sometimes avoid carrying out sudden inspections against vendors to avoid fights.

"For me, I hate to be in a position causing problems to people but we have to do our duty," he said.

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War resumes despite ceasefire claims

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Sept. 7 — "Strikes hit the area everyday from one or another direction," said Mohammed Abdullah, who works in a telecommunications center outside Sa'ada. "And people can't differentiate the military from Al-Houthis."

Local families are afraid, and many have left for other governorates where they have relatives. Although roads are open outside the governorate, some people are afraid to leave for fear of being caught in the line of fire.

"The only way we have is through Al-Jawf," continued Abdullah, "And we have had no electricity since the beginning of Ramadan."

Tribal sources said that Sa'ada is witnessing relative quietness during the daytime.

Military supplies continue to flow to Sa'ada, especially to the Republican Guard, whose soldiers are well-trained and loyal to the government.

Sources said that the war did not stop, despite the Supreme Security Committee's previous statement that announced a suspension of military operations in order to allow humanitarian relief to reach distressed and displaced people in the conflict area.

However, war resumed four hours after the ceasefire was announced.

The government accused the Houthis of breaching ceasefire and targeting people at military sites at Al-Malahith, and some areas at Harf Sufian. The conflicts then continued with military attacking Houthi areas by land and by air.

Brig. General, Saleh H. Al-Zawari, the vice-minister at the Ministry of the Interior, said that war will continue until the Houthis surrender.

"The Yemeni government," said Al-Zawari, "stopped the war last Friday night on request by international organizations and announced that on the local and international media on condition that the Houthis do the same. But they continued shelling Al-Malahith and other areas. Thus, it was they who violated ceasefire."

Concerning the general security situation in Sa'ada and Amran, he said, "We are in a state of war, especially around the governorate capital, Saqin, Al-Malahith, Marran, Haidan Mountain and Garf Sufian in Amran." As for the exhaustive war threatened by the Houthis, he said that it was only a media maneuver intended to cause chaos, and that the government does not intend to surrender to tricks.

When asked about the displaced persons camps in the line of fire, he said, "We are about to move them to safer places."

He also said the Houthis killed six women and 11 children accused of spying. The Houthis deny the killings.

Mohammed Al-Sabri, a leading figure in the JMP, an opposition party within the parliament, said the government never intended to honor the ceasefire.

"Stopping war in Sa'ada is not a serious endeavor on the part of the government," he said. "Nor was there such a desire, because the decision was not based on any field indications of suitable condition for cease of operations."

Al-Sabri also said the government was fully aware of which countries supply arms to all parties in Sa'ada.

In recent weeks, the government has accused the Houthis of procuring arms from Iran. The Houthis, in response, accused the government of getting weapons from Saudi Arabia. Both parties deny the international connections.

"The government knows how such support arrives and where it comes from," said Al-Sabri, because it is

responsible for controlling borders and thus it is the party that can limit support. Sa'ada is not an independent state, nor is it an isolated island."

The Arab League's position, he added, is not credible.

"So far, all that was said by Amr Moussa was for media consumption. The statement has no facts or objectives that can be relied on."

Concerning Saudi-Iranian conflict in Yemen he said, "The regional conflict is not new in the area. There is a Saudi-Iranian strife in Lebanon, Palestine and other areas, so why shouldn't there be one in Yemen. Moreover, the regional involvement is on more than one level."

And, Al-Sabri does not foresee the war ending anytime soon.

"I think this was created to continue and that it will not stop because of the financial, regional and political factors that pave the way for a long, not a short, war."

Khaled Al-Anisi, the secretary general of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, or HOOD, said the situation is worsening for displaced people in Sa'ada.

"This raging war has no ethics and does not meet the minimum standards we are asking for," he said. "It ignores both the humanitarian and religious rules in treating civilians, the injured, the dead and captives. It also reflects carelessness and disrespect for humans and human dignity."

"What is going on in the battlefield between the warring parties is that they do not care any more about the number of victims, who would fall injured or die," he added. "Each party is trying to achieve the bigger victory on the field to brag."

Both sides, he said, are neglecting the needs of the people.

"It is clear that they do not care about medical and food relief and human aids reaching the displaced and disadvantaged people on time, nor do they care for the camps of the displaced being in the middle of the battlefield."

Al-Anisi also called for a ceasefire for humanitarian reasons.

"We demand all displaced people be evacuated from their present locations to safe places and the war be suspended for enough time to allow civilians to leave towns and villages to safe places and aid be given to people in conflict areas," he said. "We also demand release of all injured people, who should be moved to hospitals and dead bodies must be handed over to relatives."

"We also request compliance to all national efforts calling for stopping the war, and the battling parties to refrain from using excessive force or committing war crimes," he added.

HOOD released a harsh statement last Thursday which expressed concerns displaced people and the condition of the camps, which were built during previous wars. The camps, according to the statement, are in the middle of battlefields, which made it difficult, if not impossible for aid or relief workers to reach them. Additionally, the people are potentially victims of shelling.

The organization reminded the fighting parties that they have duties in accordance with Islamic laws, and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict and the resolution issued by Red Cross and Red Crescent at the twenty-sixth conference in December 1995 on the protecting of civilians during armed disputes.

The statement asserted that the above international laws are purposed to create safe havens for civilians outside the battlefields, guarantee that humanitarian aid reaches the people, and protects relief workers.

By: Alice Hackman

SANA'A, Sept. 9 — State school students will have to wait an extra week to return to class this year, as the number of detected cases of the H1N1 influenza has risen to 58 in the country and the government has taken measures accordingly.

Governmental schools will now open two weeks after the end of Ramadan, according to Dr. Abdul Hakeem Al-Kuhlani, director of combating diseases and epidemic observations at the Ministry of Public Health and Population.

The main purpose of the move is to give the government time to properly monitor the health of travelers returning from abroad, especially from the umra, the Islamic pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia popular during Ramadan.

"One week after Ramadan was a little bit risky," he said. "We want to have enough time to observe, especially as one week is excellent time for the incubation period."

The rise in detected cases coincides with the beginning of the second phase of the H1N1 or swine flu pandemic worldwide, as announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) at the beginning of the month.

There are over 209,000 cases of the H1N1 strain of swine flu worldwide, of which at least 2,185 have died, according to the WHO.

The youngest detected case in Yemen is 5-months-old, said Al-Kuhlani. Several children of school age have also been diagnosed, as have two pregnant women. All cases remain under treatment.

None of the cases are however serious, and all are in isolation. So far 33 cases have recovered with Tamiflu, the recommended medicine by the WHO, stressed Al-Kuhlani. Only one person, a 40-year-old from Dhamar, has died.

The extra week's holiday will also give time to train teachers, he said.

But state school principals say they have not been contacted by the ministry with either recommendations or details of the training.

"We haven't heard anything," said

Mulatif Ajlan, principal at the governmental Bilal Bin Rabah School for boys in Sana'a. "I was with other principals today and nobody told me anything."

"They didn't send us anything," said Fatima Al-Zuhairi, principal of Rabi'a Al-Adawiyya School for girls in Sana'a.

"If they really want to avoid anything, they should vaccinate," she added.

"In my idea, it is nothing. It is just drug companies who would like to sell," she said, explaining she thought that the pandemic was exaggerated.

Private schools

But some private schools have taken their precautions all the same, and are starting the school year as normal.

"I think we have had enough holidays, don't you think?" said Jalila Jahaf, principal at the private Montessori Pre-School in Sana'a.

"The only thing we can do is to measure the temperature and send the children home," said the principal, whose husband is a doctor.

She brought back a small thermometer from Germany that she will use to measure the temperature of all children who come to school on the first day on Sept. 27.

Any child found to have a high temperature will be sent home, she said. And they will not be allowed back without a medical report.

Prevention and isolation are the best course of action, agrees Gordon Blackie, principal of the Sana'a International School, which has already started the school year.

Most of the school's students, both Yemeni and foreign, traveled abroad for the summer holidays and their parents will probably continue to do so for business, he explained.

However, the staff has held meetings to ensure they are prepared to act if swine flu reached the school. Wednesday's weekly newsletter to parents outlined precautions to take at home to prevent H1N1.

"Don't send kids in if they have a temperature," said Blackie.

The school's five-step action plan is a combination of that recommended by the American Center for Disease Control and his staff's previous experience when SARS broke out a few years ago, said Blackie, who has been at the school for over 10 years.

Although the school made preparations and developed an e-learning back-up plan in case the school had to close down, no such measures were taken as SARS never reached Yemen, he said.

This year, they will see. A plan to educate pupils via e-mail and online learning platforms stands ready if necessary.

H1N1 vaccines

Yemen's plan to purchase vaccines currently sits with the Minister of Public Health and Population, explained Al-Kuhlani.

In the plan Yemen has submitted to the WHO for approval for the second phase, Yemen has planned for the purchase of 1,750,000 H1N1 vaccines. Al-Kuhlani said on Sunday.

Yemen's population is of over 22 million inhabitants, according to the World Bank.

Health workers and vulnerable patients such as those suffering from chronic diseases or pregnant women should be vaccinated first, according to the World Health Organization.

"WHO recommends that health workers be the first, to protect the health system and allow them to care for influenza and other patients," recently explained Dr. Marie-Paule Kieny, director of the Initiative for Vaccine Research at WHO in an online interview.

Priorities are up to each country's government says the WHO: "For example, the United States of America decided to immunize children before or at school entry who are in closer physical contact than adults and can amplify infection rates," said Kieny.

The WHO has developed a tier system for the prices of the vaccines to ensure even the world's poorest countries have access to them, she explained, "but we should not be 'hyp-

notized' by vaccines."

"There are other measures, such as social distancing, school closure, avoidance of large gatherings, antibiotics and personal hygiene," she stressed.

Educating the public

Telling Yemenis about H1N1 and basic hygiene to prevent its spread is a priority, says the government.

The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Guidance has accepted all the H1N1 team's recommendations about spreading awareness about the disease during the Friday sermon at the mosques, said Al-Kuhlani.

Preachers should start educating their congregations about basic precautions against the influenza in a few days time, he said, notably in time for i'tikaf, a period of prolonged prayer at the mosque to start on Sept. 10.

During this time people often sleep at the mosque, he explained. This year, they will be advised to sleep at least two meters apart and not to face each other.

Programs are also scheduled on the television and radio to inform Muslims about recommended precautions during this period.

Schools in the Gulf

H1N1 cases in the Gulf have risen into the thousands, but deaths from the virus are still very few. Saudi Arabia has reported 26 deaths and Oman 10, but other Gulf countries death tolls were still much lower, according to media reports on Tuesday.

In Kuwait, governmental schools will not open until the end of the month, and private schools will not open for another two, according to Kuwaiti publication Arab Times.

UAE health minister Dr. Hanif Hassan told UAE-based newspaper The National that closing down schools in the country was an "overreaction."

"This is not like rabies, which is 100 percent fatal," said WHO doctor and vaccine research expert Kieny, "we are talking about a disease from which most people recover very well."

Ancestral homeland loses more Yemeni Jews

By: Salma Ismail
For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Sept. 9 — In the face of mounting US and Israeli pressure to transfer them out of the country, many Yemeni Jews continue to trickle out of their ancestral homeland, with three families leaving on Wednesday.

With a total of 12 members, the families are leaving to the US, not Israel. Rabbi Yahya Yousef confirmed that the families have currently moved from Amran to the capital Sana'a and are awaiting their flight.

Jews in Yemen used to number 60,000, but shrank dramatically when most left for the then newborn state of Israel between 1949 and 1950 in "Operation Magic Carpet". Their roots date back nearly 3,000 years.

Living among Yemen's 23 million Muslims, there are now only an estimated 200 Jews left in Amran and another 67 living in the Tourist City in Sana'a.

Last month, a 14-member family also left to the United States with the help of Jewish ethnic group of the Ashkenaz.

Media reports claiming that the Jews are being harassed and kidnapped are not always accurate and are "blown out of proportion," according to some Yemeni Jews.

"There have been no kidnappings," said Rabbi Abraham Yahya, the Jewish community leader in Sana'a, adding that there is "some harassment."

"Emigration will slow down because many want to spend the holiday season in Yemen with other family members," he said.

An unfulfilled promise

The majority of Yemen's Jews prefer



Harassment and abuse towards the Yemeni Jewish community escalated following the murder of Masha Al-Nahari, a Yemeni Jew and father of nine. Picture: The Al-Nahari gathers to mourn the deceased Masha.

to stay in their ancestral homeland, as long as the government ensures their safety.

Jewish community leaders are appealing to the president to end the organized emigration of Yemen's Jews by Zionist and Jewish organizations.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh has proposed that the 45 Jewish families in the farming communities of Kharif and the nearby town of Raida in Amran governorate are moved 50 miles southeast to Sana'a, where they can be better protected. He has offered them free plots of land to build homes. This has yet to happen.

"The country is now busy with its own problems, it has forgotten everyone else," lamented Rabbi Abraham Yahya, referring to the country's current struggle with the Houthis in Sa'ada.

The Jewish Agency for Israel and a

coalition of American organizations that includes the United Jewish Communities, New York's Federation, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, and the United Jewish Organizations of Williamsburg have presented attempts to bring Jews out of Yemen as an essential, "life-saving operation".

Israel defines itself as a Jewish state and offers citizenship to Jews from anywhere in the world, including Yemen, although it continues to refuse the right of return of the Palestinian refugees forced from their homes during the fighting that saw Israel come into existence in 1948.

Rabbi Abraham Yahya earlier told the Yemen Times, "I have been to many countries including the US and Canada, but I love my country [Yemen]."

Bickering over Yemeni Jews

The Jewish Agency in Israel isn't happy that Yemen's Jews move to the US. The agency is responsible for furthering the aim of Zionism and hence would like to see them move to Israel.

"[Jews] should not immigrate to the United States. The place of Jews is in their homeland, the Land of Israel, and like all the Jews of the world, the Jews of Yemen have to make aliya to Israel. That is their destiny," a senior agency official had told the Jerusalem Post.

Zionism is the ideology behind "aliya," which means the immigration of Jews to the "Land of Israel," not anywhere else in the world.

The agency is particularly upset because the extraction of the Yemeni Jews comes at the behest of New York's Satmar Hassidic community, which opposes political Zionism and funds Jewish education institutions in Yemen.

Harassment and abuse towards the Yemeni Jewish community escalated following the murder of Masha Al-Nahari, a Yemeni Jew and father of nine, by Abdulaziz Al-Abdi in December 2008.

He allegedly killed Al-Nahari for not converting to Islam. The court later found him guilty and sentenced him to death in June. The sentence is yet to be carried out.

Following this, the umbrella body of the North American Jewish Federation escalated efforts to evacuate almost half of Yemen's Jewish community to the US.

"We are Arabs, we are Yemenis, we have nothing to do with the Jews in Israel," Ibrahim Al-Nahari, whose uncle was murdered last year by a religious fanatic, told the Yemen Times when asked if he would like to immigrate to the US or Israel.

In Brief

SANA'A

Yemeni suspects seized near U.S. embassy

Yemeni suspects have been caught near the U.S. embassy in the capital Sana'a and they did not have any intention to target the embassy, a security source told the state-run 26sep.net on Wednesday.

The source made it clear that the suspects were from Damag area in Yemen's northern province of Sa'ada and they were arrested at the crossroad of Al-Nasr Street with Sheraton Street by a security checkpoint.

Investigations with the caught affirmed that there were no evidences for possible assaults against the U.S. embassy, the source added.

Seven Yemenis died in traffic accidents

At least 7 Yemenis were killed and 77 others injured in 53 traffic accidents last Monday in all provinces of the country.

According to the traffic devices of Interior Ministry, the causes of these accidents were excessive speed, recklessness, chewing the mild stimulant drug of qat by drivers, the lack of periodical maintenance and technical examination of vehicles, the false go by and the use of mobile phone particularly in highways.

About 524 traffic accidents took place throughout the country during the first half of the month of Ramadan.

In the first half of Ramadan, nearly 107 people were killed and 729 others were injured due to traffic accidents. These accidents distributed among 257 crash accidents, 82 running over and 85 overturns.

Traffic accidents in Yemen are still killing hundreds of people monthly, and they left many deaths and injuries and

widow women and orphans children.

According to yemenonline.info, several reasons cause these accidents; the concerned authorities mention few of them and ignore the other ones which reveal that they are directly or indirectly responsible.

International expert in traffic safety at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Bassam Anani said that Yemen is one of the most affected countries by the traffic accidents.

He pointed out that the numbers of deaths are monitored represent only 70 percent of the actual numbers because some accidents are not proclaimed.

Moreover, this figure represents the deaths occurred in the scene while the deaths that occur later on in hospitals are not mentioned.

He said that traffic accidents represent an economic obstacle rather than the bad humanitarian and social impacts that cause a developmental retardation in the country.

According to figures published by the traffic police, some 39,319 people were killed and more than 234,000 injured in road accidents in Yemen during the period from 1990 to 2008.

Over 220 Somali refugees arrive in Yemen's coasts

About 223 Somali refugees have arrived in coasts of Yemeni provinces of Hadramout and Taiz among them 49 women and 10 children, Informaiton Center of Interior Ministry has reported.

Security authorities made it clear to the center that 168 out of the Somali refugees arrived in the coasts of Hadramout within three sequential groups, while 55 others got off in Thubab coastline in Taiz province.

They expected continuation of Somali refugees' influx during the few coming days by a number of 100-150 refugees per day, a matter which makes the Somali refugees' problem in Yemen more complicated.

Moreover, the security bodies in Makha district of Taiz province have captured 22 Ethiopian nationals including 10 women, who illegally sneaked into the Yemeni territories.

The security bodies, which already seized 40 other Ethiopians at Thubab coast, expressed their fears for the Ethiopians' constant influx to the Yemeni coasts during the current month.

Yemen is unable to receive new refugees especially that it suffers economic and social burdens from the Somali refugees whose their number amounted to as many as 1 million refugees on its lands, the security bodies indicated.

Eritrean FM arrives in Sana'a

Eritrean Foreign Minister Othman Saleh Mohammed arrived Sunday in Sana'a for an official visit to hand over a letter to President Ali Abdullah Saleh from his Eritrean counterpart Isaias Afewerki.

Speaking to Saba, Othman made it clear that the letter deals with a number of topics which concern the two countries especially the situation in Somalia.

Committee approves November oil crude sales

The Supreme Committee on Oil Marketing approved on Sunday the crude oil sales for November 2009, to be 5.1 million barrels.

The meeting approved to sell 2.7 million barrels produced in Hadramout province, al-Masila petroleum field, for the best offered price, 62 cent increase

per barrel, and 2.4 million barrels of crude oil produced in Mareb for the best offered price, with 22 cent increase per barrel.

600,000 barrels out of the 2.4 million barrels produced in Mareb were agreed to be sold in world markets and the rest to be sold for the Aden Refinery for official prices approved for November.

During the Sana'a meeting, the committee also reviewed the report of the technical committee on selling the approved quantities of crude oil for the September round, 2009.

Obama confirms support of America for security of Yemen

US President Barack Obama has confirmed support of the United States for the unity and security of Yemen.

In his letter to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the US leader said that the security of Yemen is a vital topic related to the security of the United States of America and the region.

Obama said that the United States would present an initiative to support Yemen to face all its development obstacles and enhance efforts of reforms through International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB) and donors as well as states of the Gulf cooperation council.

The letter was handed over by the Assistant to the US President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John Brennan during his meeting with president Saleh.

The American leader highlighted current partnership between Yemen and United States in filed of combating terrorism, saying that al Qaeda network is a dangerous on all.

In the meeting, president Saleh reviewed with the US official aspects of the mutual cooperation between the two

countries.

The US official valued efforts of Yemen in combating terrorism, affirming concern of America to boost its ties with Yemen and support efforts of the development process in Yemen.

President Saleh asked the US official to convey his letter to president Obama concerning issues of common concern.

He wished president Obama a good health and further progress and prosperity for the American people.

ADEN

Yemen, China discuss economic ties
Aden governor Adnan al-Jafri discussed with China's ambassador to Yemen economic cooperation between the two countries.

The meeting also raised the issue of twinning Aden and Chinese city of Shanghai.

In the meeting, al-Jafri praised Chinese support for Aden, stressing the need for strengthening cooperation between Yemen and China on all fronts.

For his part, the Chinese ambassador highlighted the Yemeni-Chinese deep-rooted ties, touching upon the economic and business ties which he suggested to be forged.

At the end of the meeting, the ambassador invited al-Jafri to China.

MAHARA

Yemen plans two ports to export minerals

Yemen has planned to set up two seaports to export minerals in the eastern province of Mahara, allocating 20.6 million square kilometers for the ports, the News Yemen reported on Sunday.

Navigation institutions and passages and terminals would be established at the areas of Qashen and Khelfoot.

Owing to the desire of companies to

export large quantities of minerals, largely available in the Qashen area, the ministry of Transport and the Arabian Sea Port Corporation have located sites for the ports; conducting studies on them and finalizing procedures for their construction.

The Qashen port is known for ship docking and is to be developed now, while the other port will be new.

Yemen pins hope on its coast in the Arabian Sea to be a business point.

HODEIDAH

Media advocacy campaign supports shanty's residents

The media institutions representatives announced on Sunday to form a media advocacy campaign to support shanty's residents suffering in each of Hodeidah and Lahj governorates.

Chairman of the National Forum for Human Rights (NFHR) Khaled Aiash said the media advocacy campaign is implemented by NFHR in partnership with Rural Youth Empowerment Institution, Al-Amal Initiative and Medical Development Foundation during the period 15 July until 15 October 2009 and in collaboration with CHF International.

Aiash said the media campaign is aiming to address suffering of shanty's citizens to stakeholders for arising their issues because of the lack of basic services to improve their lives as guaranteed by international treaties and laws. For his part, Program Director of CHF International Nashwan al-Somari said the advocacy campaign on shanty's residents targets journalists from different official, parties and independent newspapers to reflect shanty's citizens

sufferings through reports and news storie

Their News

Statement by the civil society campaign "Together Against the Sa'ada War" on the declaration of suspension of military operations in Sa'ada

The "Together Against the Sa'ada War" campaign appreciates the announced suspension of military operations in Sa'ada and calls on the parties to engage in dialogue according to a national mechanism involving all parties

The "Together Against the Sa'ada War" (TASW) campaign receives with great satisfaction the announced suspension of military operations in Sa'ada, and welcomes this significant step. We urge the parties to the conflict to respect and facilitate the tasks of relief teams and to expedite access to the affected civilians in all areas, as well as to allow access by human rights organizations and the media to all parts of Sa'ada.

Together Against the Sa'ada War urges the parties to the conflict to turn this cease fire into a permanent cessation of the war, and to return to dialogue according to a transparent national mechanism involving all parties. The TASW campaign stresses the importance of addressing all of the files opened by the war and the roots of the crisis within the framework of national public and in accordance with the constitution and the law. We invite the parties to the war and the official media in particular to cease all campaigns of public incitement that have the potential to spark confrontations.

AIDemocracy Unveils Our Issue Priorities for 2009-2010

Now seven months into a new presidency, there has been significant buzz this summer about opportunities to make real progress on a number of urgent global issues. Their time has come and by adding more youth voices to the movement, we can advance a unified effort to achieve much needed changes in US foreign policy and the United States' role on the world. AIDemocracy has outlined seven key issues where we feel our generation can have the greatest impact this year and to which we will devote our efforts in the upcoming academic year:

1. A Post-Crisis Solidarity Economy - Trade and international finance offer incredible opportunities for development, but the operating economic model of privatization, de-regulation, and corporate power disproportionately binds the hands of poor countries develop on their own terms. While alternatives of fair trade purchasing, cooperative business and solidarity lending are on the rise, there

remains much to be done to ensure economic justice and sovereignty for all.

2. Modernizing Foreign Assistance - U.S. foreign assistance, which includes military aid, emergency humanitarian aid, food aid, loans and technology sharing, is not only outdated (written in 1961), it's under-funded, cluttered with Congressional earmarks and drastically ineffective compared to its potential. If we truly want developing countries to break the cycle of poverty and dependence, we must rethink our foreign assistance strategy and invest in sustainable development solutions that empower communities and governments to meet their own needs.

3. Civil-Military Balance - Case Study: Afghanistan - The modern era of globalization, non-state actors, and non-traditional warfare requires a holistic approach to security that includes not only physical and political security, but also social, economic, environmental, and health security. We must pursue a smart security strategy that fully funds and equips our Development, Diplomacy, and Defense agencies to prevent, deter, and resolve conflict and the conditions that create it.

4. US-Muslim World Relations - AIDemocracy seeks to alleviate the dangerous tension that have grown between the U.S. and Muslim majority countries by engaging American and Muslim youth in conversations on culture, religion, and the future of US-Muslim world relations that lead to increased awareness and student action. AIDemocracy will pay special attention to US-Iranian relations, and the importance of cultural diplomacy as a peace building tool.

5. Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights & Family Planning - Limited access to reproductive health education and family planning resources for women and youth in developing countries contributes to unsafe sex and adolescent pregnancies with an increased rate of complications, illegal/unsafe abortions, and infant and maternal mortality. Greater U.S. leadership for comprehensive, science-based international family planning programs is needed to stem the crisis.

6. Climate Adaptation Aid - While the U.S. debates domestic climate legislation, climate change is already taking its toll on the Global South with rising water levels, drought, and unpredictable weather patterns that destroy crops and displace entire communities. We face the unraveling of decades of development and more

severe resource wars unless we include adaptation aid for these communities alongside commitments for more sustainable domestic energy policies.

To learn more, visit our website at www.aidemocracy.org. Don't see your issue? No worries, while it is necessary for our national programming to focus on a few issues, AIDemocracy remains committed to supporting students with a desire create a more just world however they choose to get involved! Please contact an AID staff member with your ideas or questions about our general resources.

Training Course on Gender Equality issue

Kasta Morrely is a cultural association of human rights defense, which has as mission the community development through the promotion of democracy values and European civilization.

Within Kasta Morrely Association complementary works a group of specialized Agencies with cultural - educational activity. This type of organization provides a wide opening to the young people interested of involvement in community development through cultural programs. In this way the association may involve in various activities offering a variety of means of action such as: projects to promote culture and authentic art, European traditions; selection, training and promoting young people in cultural-artistic and image field, organizing trainings, seminars, conferences, cultural activities and artistic events, festivals, performances, events, projects and actions to defend human rights, to fight against modern trafficking in human beings, multicultural projects, ecology and sustainable development, etc.

The Association has over 300 young volunteers and staff qualified by state in the cultural-artistic field such as Event Organizers, Masters of Ceremonies and PR Specialists.

The staff of the association has participated in the creation of two National Occupational Standards in the artistic field of image and in the elaboration of the first specialty manuals of the Event Organizer, Master of Ceremonies and Model - PR specialist. The Association members have won numerous national and international awards, trophies, recognitions and distinctions for the training and performances in Organizing events and Promoting the young generation.

Kasta Morrely Association is made up of 7 agencies, 4 organizations and 1 student league coordinated exclusively by

young people between 20 - 30 years old and enjoys the collaboration of some representative institutions locally, nationally and internationally.

Kasta Morrely Association within the human right defense program organizes the international training „The Woman Leader - determinative factor in the fight for promoting the gender equality”.

The training course is opened to young people from all Council of Europe countries.

The training will be held in Iasi, Romania from 15th of May to 22nd of May 2010.

The objectives of the course are:

1. To raise the participants' awareness regarding the phenomenon of violence against woman in the represented countries.
2. To train the participants as resource people who will prepare young people as active citizens in combating discrimination and violence against

women, starting from the model of the woman leader in the community.

3. To create partnerships for the realization of future projects on themes of human rights and gender equality.
4. To make an intercultural exchange among participants.

Programme outline:

- Lectures held by leader women at local, national or international level from various fields of activity: political, administrative, educational, cultural, media, entertainment, youth and sports etc. who will share their experience in fighting for the promotion of gender equality.
- Models of good practice: visits of knowledge to institutions in the local community, addressing theme of equality of chances in the workplace
- Practical workshops to improve the skills about the determinative factor in the fight for promoting the gender equality

Profile of participants:

- Youth leaders active within youth organizations and associations;
- Age over 18;
- Fluent/medium in English (spoken/written), this will be the working language of the course.

The travel cost will be repaid up to 70% of the travel costs. Only the participants who attend the entire training course can be reimbursed.

Board and lodging will be provided and paid by Kasta Morrely.

Participation fee is 50 euro.

Lessons and training have flexible timing so there will be time for site-seeing and enjoying the Romanian traditional food, drink and hospitality.

If you want to participate please send us an e-mail at annahriscu@yahoo.com, until 12 th of September 2009 to receive the application form

New Lufthansa Senator Lounge in Munich

Opening on 1 September 2009/ Exclusive

Design premieres in Munich



Lufthansa

More amenities are in the offing for Lufthansa's passengers with Senator status at Munich Airport: A further Senator Lounge with around 700 square metres of floor space is due to open in Terminal 2 on 1 September, and will ideally enhance the Senator Cafe and Senator Lounge in the EU Departures area. Lufthansa will experience the new and exclusive lounge design on its debut in Munich. Warm earthy tones combined with puristic elements dominate the interior design. At centre stage is the bar with a wide choice of freshly brewed coffee, liqueurs and non-alcoholic drinks. "Lufthansa is continuing to invest in Terminal 2 despite the difficult market environment. With this new lounge we are responding to frequent customer

requests. We are now offering them even more comfort in a pleasant atmosphere," said Munich Station Manager Stephan Klar.

The new Senator Lounge offers an array of amenities for passengers to continue working or simply unwind and relax. Coffee, espresso or Latte Macchiato with an Amaretto flavour.

All are freshly brewed at the bar. In the comfort zone, deep leather chairs are an inviting prospect to take it easy. For the more industrious, the new lounge includes ten workstations, some with integrated computer. Passengers seated anywhere in the lounge can comfortably surf the net with their laptop or access their email accounts.

In the bistro area, passengers can choose from a variety of hot and cold

meals or drinks.

Along with Leberkäse mit Brezn (grilled meatloaf with pretzel) and potato salad, a noted favourite in Munich lounges, the menu runs to any number of pasta dishes or a substantial morning breakfast. An assortment of German and international newspapers and magazines keeps passengers entertained and posted on the latest news, TV programmes are beamed on three screens. Four showers are available for passengers to freshen up.

They are equipped with hair dryer, towels and a choice of toiletries.

Lufthansa offers passengers a total of seven lounges with around 4,500 square metres in Terminal 2. The new Senator lounge is sited opposite Gate area B.

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Children detained illegally in private jails

By: Ali Saeed

Nidhal, 14, from Sana'a, pushed his wheelbarrow around the vegetable market every day selling potatoes to help his poor family. When he came back home, his mother was very grateful for his small contribution in saving his family from begging.

Then one day, when he was in the market with his wheelbarrow, he quarreled with a 19-year-old. As they argued, Nidhal grabbed a jambiyya from a passerby and stabbed him in the back. The man was admitted to hospital, and his family arranged for Nidhal to be put in their sheikh's private jail.

"They put me in a miserable place that is even not suitable for sheep," said Nidhal.

Nidhal's family went to the manager of Child Labor Unit to ask for help them in resolving the problem and bringing the child home.

"We at the Child Labor Unit worked hard to reach the sheikh, but we could not do so," said Muna Salem, manager of the Child Labor Unit at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

After two months, the child's mother was able to collect around YR 200,000 (USD 1,000) which she paid to release her son.

"The child was released unharmed, but described the place of his detention as very miserable and dirty," said the manager of the Child Labor Unit.

"It is not the only case of a street child being detained in the private prison by a tribal sheikh," she said. "There are so many children like Nidhal, and maybe more miserable than him."

Street children often commit such crimes either to defend themselves from adults or fighting each other to survive.

Psychological trauma

Confining a child in a private prison leads to negative psychological consequences.

"We have received many cases of street children who were detained in by their families, their bosses -who sometimes sexually abuse them, or in private jails," said Najwa Al-Jawfi, psychologist at the Safe Childhood Center, a center that provides shelter for street children.

"The law states that it is prohibited to jail these juveniles, but rather they should be put in social care centers," he added.

"For children younger than 12 years old who commit crimes, the law gives them an exemption and recommends to hand them over to their guardians," pointed out Al-Barman.

Setting up a private jail is a crime according to the Yemeni penalties' law, he said, and anyone who does so is to be punished with one year in jail.

If the owner of a private jail detains someone without legally-acceptable reason, the penalties' law dictates that he serves a five-year sentence in prison, said the lawyer.

If the reason is legally justifiable, he is to serve a three-year sentence.

Social care centers

The lawyer recommended applying the law for such children and putting them in social care centers.

"I visited social care houses and found them proper for children," said the lawyer.

"In these houses children follow rehabilitation programs, through lectures and training in some skills such



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Although the Safe Childhood Center has space for around 800 children, less than 40 children are currently being sheltered there.



In 2000, UNICEF estimated that 30,000 children in Yemen work and take meals on the streets every day. The Central Statistics Organization plans to conduct a new survey this year, according to the Yemeni government.

"When we tried to go and see the sheikh, but men around the house said he was absent," she said.

"I knocked on the doors of the Ministry of Interior represented by the General Administration for Women and Children, but they could not help either," she continued.

The authority of the sheikh is more powerful than that of the government, she explained.

"Those private detention cells are out of the control of the Ministry of Interior and only run by tribal sheikhs," she said.

After negotiations with the family of the stabbed man, they asked for YR 300,000 (USD 1,500) in compensation to release the child.

The child's family is very poor and was not able to afford this big amount. Nidhal's mother did everything in her power to collect the money, while her son and family's main breadwinner languished in the sheikh's private cell.

"Some cases that we received at the center were very badly abused," added Al-Jawfi. "Some of them were cuffed with chains on their hands and legs."

Al-Jawfi explained that, from her observations of the received cases, she found that children became either unresponsive or aggressive.

"Some of the street children who were detained in these places were brought to the center in a miserable psychological state," said Al-Jawfi. "Some had even become unable to tell me their names."

A crime

"There is a law called the juveniles' law, which defines the age of the juvenile as up to 15 years old," said Abdurrahman Al-Barman, a lawyer at HOOD, National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms.

"This law stipulates specific actions with regards to juveniles who commit crimes," the lawyer explained.

as sewing, as well as teaching them religious duties and the Holy Quran," explained Al-Barman.

He indicated that juvenile offenders in these social care centers are tried in a special juveniles' court during their stay.

"The judge in this court also studies special courses in order to deal with such issues in a different manner that respects a child's dignity and innocence," he explained.

Protecting children's rights

"We have received many complaints of children who were detained in private jails," said Ahmed Al-Qurashi, director of SEYAJ, an organization working to protect child's rights.

"As for SEYAJ's role in this issue, when any case comes to us, we immediately contact the Ministry of Interior to arrest those behind the detention and file the case with the attorney general,"

said Al-Qurashi.

"The first case was a 16-year-old from Hodeida," said the director.

The boy came to the organization's building in Sana'a with chains in a bag to show how he had been cuffed, he explained.

"He had been detained in a private jail by a sheikh in Hodeida for one week for a personal disagreement," he said.

street children offer them a safe haven away from the streets and the trouble they might get into there.

The Safe Childhood Center in Sana'a, for example, was established to shelter innocent children who fall victim to several forms of violence on the street.

But, although the center's building can shelter around 800 children at the same time, less than 40 children are currently living there, due to a lack of financial support and staff, according to its manager Abdullah Al-Amari.

"Children come to the center because their relatives or policemen call us," said Mohammed Al-Rawhani, a psychologist who works at the center.

Due to a temporary lack of resources, visits to the streets to find children to help have at the moment been suspended, said Al-Amari and Al-Rawhani.

What is more, children stay at the center longer than expected, making it difficult for it to welcome more cases.

"The child is supposed to reside at the center for only three months to be rehabilitated before returning home," said Al-Amari, explaining that children are provided with food, bedding, education and entertainment.

"Some children have been here for one year, although it is not the center's job to keep children away from home," he added. "Our mission is to enable street children to return to their families."

The roots of the problem

A recent study by the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood pointed to migration to cities, poverty, unemployment, high fertility rates, and lack of social services as factors for the rise in number of street children in Yemen.

The study also highlighted the state's abandonment of support to the poor as contributing to the presence of the country's children in the street.

According to 2004 census, the

Yemeni population is around 22 million people with population growth rate reaching 3.2 percent, one of the highest rates in the Middle East.

In 2008, 45 percent of the population was illiterate, according to the government. Illiteracy has been shown to compound poverty and unemployment.

According to government statistics, unemployment increased from 13.7 percent in 1999 to 16.3 percent in 2004. Although the labor force increased at a rate of 4.3 percent per year, the number of jobs increased by only 3.7 percent per year.

Statistics for street children in Yemen are outdated, but a 2000 United Nations' Children's Fund report estimated their number at 30,000, and United Nations' reports indicated that the number of street children is on rise.

New survey expected

"The only official statistics date back to 2000, and after that the Child Labor Unit signed a contract with the Central Statistics Organization to carry out a survey in all governorates to come out with the real number of street children in each governorate alone," said Muna Salem.

The survey was expected to be conducted at the end of 2007, but was delayed because the International Labor Organization (ILO), that was to fund the survey, disagreed with the proposed method and asked that it be similar to that of other surveys in the Middle East.

"But Yemen's geography is different from other countries in the Middle East and needs a special method," said the manager.

In 2007, the government contracted the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) to conduct a survey on street children. After discussions on who was to support it financially, the ILO eventually committed itself to funding it.

The CSO is expected to begin the survey in October this year.

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1st Edition 2009/2010

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Never underestimate the appetite for change

Buy in is crucial, no project can work without a conviction from the top, says international media consultant David Brewer who collaborated with Lebanese newspaper An-Nahar to launch one of the first web TV channels in the Arab world.

APN: Describe the preparation process for to launch AnnaharTV? How does one go about planning for such a project, what are the issues to take into consideration, concerns you had? How was An-Nahar different (or not) from other projects you have worked on?

David Brewer: Wadih and I drew up a proposal in a couple of hours. He had already assessed the market and the target audience. His aim was to take an established newspaper with a clear editorial proposition to a new, online, young YouTube generation, and continue to uphold the editorial principles of An-Nahar in a new format. The idea was to both test a new concept in the country and to reach out with a business proposition that not only informed the public debate at a new level, but also opened up new revenue-generation opportunities.

I have worked on many models where newspapers have diversified into new areas, but this was the first time I had worked with a publisher in

setting up a new web TV offering.

In many ways it was straightforward because there was total buy in to the idea from senior management, and the new offering already had a solid editorial proposition. The only element missing was working out how that translated to the new format, working out the staffing and technological issues, and drawing up a project plan. I was impressed with the speed of implementation.

APN: Describe the media landscape that Annahar operates in? Is understanding the context important?

David Brewer: From an outsider's perspective, the landscape is one with a solid traditional media heritage with a loyal older audience, and an increasingly vocal and technologically-savvy younger generation who are familiar with new technology and are turning to other outlets and devices in order to access information. Wadih understood that a modern media house must find ways to distribute information on



whatever device its audience may wish to turn to. It was a visionary move which appears to be timely and paying off.

APN: What solutions did you offer An-Nahar? Were there any sticking points or risks you identified and how were they resolved?

David Brewer: There were no sticking points, Wadih took on board all I told him and developed his own solution based on my recommendations. I shared with him systems I have introduced for both publishers and broadcasters. These included how to set up a converged newsroom where all jour-

nalists work for all outlets and multiplatform authorizing, and where content is written only once for distribution on multiplatforms. We also dealt with issued journalism as part of the process of informing the public debate with balanced, objective, impartial and accurate journalism, and how to ensure that material was available to the widest audience.

APN: What advice would you give other papers attempting to start a web TV channel? What kind of investments does it require?

David Brewer: Investment depends on two things, ambition and innovation. You can spend a fortune with a labor-intensive operation. Or you can create a sustainable offering that covers its costs, which is what I believe Wadih has done.

APN: Having a newspaper do web TV is an adaptive challenge to say the least. How do you get staff, owners, and audiences to buy into the project, to see the benefits and not feel threatened?

David Brewer: Buy in is crucial. No project can work without a clear business case and a conviction from the top that the strategy is not only correct in terms of the editorial remit, but that it serves a clearly defined audience. The business case may be that it extends reach and supports the brand in a wider sense and thereby helps sales in other areas, or that it is a clear revenue-generation model in its own right. These calculations will vary depending on the territory, the audience, the technological advances in those areas, and the economic climate.

Winning hearts and minds is always the key to all changes in a media organization. We must never underestimate the appetite for change. They key is being clear that the project has been thought through, that the objectives are clear and that everyone in the media organization will benefit through its implementation. Journalists afraid of new roles and responsibilities can often be won over with training that will help them become multi-skilled and thereby enrich their resume and position them well for future employment.

APN: What are we learning from the pioneers in the field?

David Brewer: We know there is a growing and demanding audience in

this field. Early signs are that the advertising market knows this, too. In fact, there are cases where the media is failing to move fast enough to take full advantage of this. If a newspaper has a clear editorial proposition and is already well-established in the traditional media field, and if that newspaper is in an area where a younger generation is turning to new platforms, then they should spend four hours locked in a room with their sales and marketing team thinking through how to exploit any opportunities to extend reach and increase revenue through new platforms. Key to this is finding ways to do it all with existing resources. That is clearly the best way forward. However, if the existing team is already working flat out producing the print run, then it may be, as in the An-Nahar case, worth hiring a small, young, can-do team to deliver a tailored product.

APN: Finally, why should newspapers start web TV channels?

David Brewer: They should only start a web TV offering if they feel there is an audience they can serve and if they feel the market can support it. Journalism should be platform-neutral. The format and delivery system doesn't alter the journalistic essentials.

Keep up with trends, but preserve your soul

"Our pages were gray and unattractive", says Mourad Rouane, technical director for Algerian newspaper El Watan. "Today they are enjoyable and easier to read thanks to a visual facelift and overhaul of our editorial processes." APN interviewed Mourad Rouane to have more insight about the changes El Watan has been going through and it's new editorial and layout strategies.

APN: What was your assessment of the situation at El Watan, and what were the challenges you were facing?

Mourad Rouane: As we began the project with Denis Polf and WAN, we were in fact in a transitional stage. A few years earlier, we had developed a new graphic charter and entirely remodeled the layout of the newspaper. However, the old reflexes of our journalists remained unchanged: the articles were too long, there were not enough photos, no computer graphics, and our pages were gray and sometimes unattractive. We needed to disrupt the habits of our writers and the editor-in-chief to try to produce a more dynamic, more attractive paper for the reader.

APN: How did the journalistic environment or context in Algeria influence the way the El Watan newsroom functioned?

Mourad Rouane: Almost all Algerian newspapers suffer from a lack of flexibility in information processing and in visual presentation. El Watan had a reputation for being text-heavy. Our articles were too long and too dense, and although the quality of the writing was faultless, this

nevertheless had consequences for the graphic layout and originality of our pages.

APN: What solutions were proposed?

Mourad Rouane: French media consultant Denis Polf, when working with us at El Watan, advocated a range of measures for the editorial, technical and subediting departments. We tracked each of our articles in all its phases, starting from programming to writing, illustrations and graphics all the way through to the layout, to better understand its path.

APN: How were these solutions received and implemented by the editorial team?

Mourad Rouane: The solutions offered by Polf were immediately attractive to our writers, and they saw these solutions as another way of presenting information. Our journalists were on board from the outset and this was keenly felt throughout the production process. The biggest challenge was to make sure the changes remained permanent. The reporters were likely to take some time in fully applying the advice of Mr. Polf, but there was a risk they would quickly fall back into their old

habits. Fortunately, this has not been the case, and the changes are now well established.

APN: How has newspaper changed? Are you satisfied with the results?

Mourad Rouane: We are totally satisfied with the results because they are visible in the newspaper every day. To cite one example, Mr. Polf had advised us to make our articles less dense, and instead of having one long bloc of text include subtexts, boxes, figures or epigraphs, to prioritize graphics. We have since applied his recommendations to the letter, and the visual presentation is much improved, and our pages are more enjoyable and easier to read.

APN: What advice would you give other newspapers in the region contemplating such an overhaul?

Mourad Rouane: The first and most important step is to know your readers and to follow them over time. Readers' habits are changing more than we think. There is always the faithful hard core of course, but all newspapers hope to attract new and potential readers. Any reorganization will have an effect on the quality. One must also make an effort to keep up with trends in graphic design and visual presentation. Each period has its way of presenting information and each newspaper has its own style of journalism. The

key is to combine the two while preserving the newspaper's style and soul.

APN: Do editorial overhauls always improve the journalistic product?

Mourad Rouane: Our motto at El Watan is to always strive for the best and to never fall into complacency. It is obvious that an editorial reorganization invariably affects the quality of journalistic writing. But when the writing itself already is high quality, things can only get better.



Vacancy: Livelihoods Officer (Al Tadhamon)

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Aden Office, is seeking a livelihoods officer to implement a project in collaboration with the local NGO al-Tadhamon. The project is for provision of vocational training to refugees and host communities in the Basateen area in Aden. The position is based with al-Tadhamon in Basateen, Aden.

Main Responsibilities

- Lead the implementation of a vocational training project in close collaboration with al-Tadhamon.
- Provide guidance and training to al-Tadhamon staff.
- Produce accurate and timely reporting of activities against job description.

Qualifications

- Bachelors Degree preferably Masters Degree from recognized institution or university in relevant field e.g. social science, international development, human resource development.
- Experience from similar positions in the field of income generation;
- Ability to plan and prioritize own work programme under tight deadlines, as well as work on own initiative
- Strong interpersonal skills demonstrated by the ability to lead and gain the assistance/cooperation of others.
- Strong beneficiaries orientation including the ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with counterparts/donors and other department of the association
- Computer skill in Windows (word, excel, power point etc)
- Excellent oral and written communication skills both in Arabic and English and Somali will be an extra benefit.

While working from al-Tadhamon's office in Basateen, the Livelihoods officer will report directly to DRCs country manager for Yemen. We encourage both men and women to apply for the position. We encourage both men and women to apply. All applications (CV + cover letter) should be sent to DRCJobsyemen@gmail.com

Closing date is 15th September 2009



Vacancy: Livelihoods Assistant

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Aden Office, is seeking a livelihoods assistant to support the organisation's activities with refugees and members of host communities to be self-reliant. These activities mainly take place in Basateen, Aden. The DRC is a private independent, non-governmental organization working with refugees and host communities throughout the World.

Duty station: Aden, Basateen.

Main Responsibilities

- Implement activities in the field of income generation and vocational training in the area of operation (Basateen).
- Monitor and report on implementation of activities.

Qualifications

- Experience from similar positions in the field of income generation;
- Willingness to work directly with the beneficiaries in the field.
- Experience from participatory processes an advantage
- Spoken English is essential.
- Knowledge of Somali language is an asset
- Experience from working both with the local and Somali population in Aden preferred

The livelihoods assistant will report to the DRC livelihoods officer. We encourage both men and women to apply for the position. All applications (CV + cover letter) should be sent to DRCJobsyemen@gmail.com

Closing date is 15th September 2009



Vacancy: Livelihoods Officer

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Aden Office, is seeking a livelihoods officer to lead the organisation's activities in support of individual refugees and members of host communities to be self-reliant.

Duty station: Aden

Main Responsibilities

- Lead, supervise and facilitate the smooth running of the daily activities in the livelihood sector, as specified in the relevant project documents.
- Supervises the livelihood assistant
- Liaise and coordinate ongoing projects with external partners, such as vocational training institutes in Aden.
- Search for new income generation opportunities for refugees and host communities and supervise the smooth start up and running of selected IG projects.
- Produce accurate and timely reporting of activities against planned objectives.

Qualifications

- Experience from similar positions in the field of income generation;
- Willingness to work in the field.
- Ability to plan and prioritize own work programme under tight deadlines, as well as work on own initiative
- Fluency in oral and written English
- Experience from reporting and proposal writing
- Must know how to use internet, MS Word, MS Excel, and Power point.
- Experience with working both with the local population in Aden and the Somali population preferred

The Livelihood officer reports to the country manager. We encourage both men and women to apply. All applications (CV + cover letter) should be sent to DRCJobsyemen@gmail.com

Closing date is 15th September 2009



Vacancy: Accounts Assistant

The position of Accounts Assistant is to assist the Finance Officer on daily routine. He will be responsible to ensure that proper financial procedures and practices are followed and adhered to by all Field Offices. This position will aim to meet the following objectives:-

- Settling petty cash statements with Field Offices
- Maintain and Handle Inventory check for Assets in the field offices and Aden
- Ensure that financial procedures in the Field Offices are always in accordance with the Financial principles and practices of DRC HoA;

Duty station: Aden with 20% travel to field offices.

Main Responsibilities

- Handling payments to suppliers, Government offices, Staff salaries in Field Offices.
- Assisting Finance Officer with daily activities (Scanning, Filing, Labeling etc...)
- Ensure that proper authorization has been obtained before any payment takes place
- Ensure that all vouchers are properly coded (project no., budget line and G/L account)
- Processing all payments timely.
- Assist the Finance Officer in Maintaining and reconciling cash and bank balances on a daily basis
- Reconciliation of advances and settlements
- Maintenance of a proper and transparent filing system of all documents relation to finance.
- Handling Payroll for Field offices
- Any other task as given by his direct Supervisor

Qualifications

- B.A in accounts/Finance
- Minimum two years working experience
- An absolute flair and understanding of financial matters
- Fluent in written and spoken Arabic and English.
- Good public relations and interpersonal skills.

The Accounts Assistant reports to the Finance Officer. All applications (CV + cover letter) should be sent to DRCJobsyemen@gmail.com

Closing date is 15th September 2009

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Sa'ada Thoughts is a series of reflections on life and people in Sa'ada from an independent perspective, written by a nurse from the Philippines who has been working in Sa'ada for two years. He could be reached at levy9ph2000@yahoo.com.

Rainy days are over...

By: Marion Patrick T. Lavilla, R.N.

If Sana'a gets more rain showers these months, Sa'ada gets the least. Before, I thought rain was a blessing from unseen beings or tears from God. When I was a child, my sisters and I would gather in our garden and light candles and start the rain dance. Although it was merely child's play, it always worked and there was rain or it would drizzle. I grew up in the country and the smell of moist earth and grass reminds me of home.

This is the only time of the year Sa'ada gets frequent rain showers. Summer in Yemen is the time for harvests and the souk gets flooded with a lot of products: grapes, pomegranates, cacti, guavas, apples, oranges and so forth. Who would think Sa'ada is a dust bin? Who would think the last few months I will be spending here I won't be able to see it because of the uprising and upheavals? I can't believe months of planning are ending up in the drain. If it were not for the situation we are in, I could have taken pictures of freshly picked grapes, the prickly spines of the cacti and the like.

I also can't believe some of the foreigners I met in the souk are today either missing or dead. When I heard of their demise, I was speechless and shocked. Not long ago, I shook hands with one of them. A month after their loss, the government started bombarding those people they think capable of such inhumane acts. I thought they caught the perpetrators, but they came out empty handed because they handed the other foreigners over to a tribe. Until now, there is no news about those who are missing.

I thought the rains were over by the last week of July, but scattered rain showers flooded the compound until August. It was a great sight. It kept on raining until the second week of August. I had to take a video of one instance when the rain looked like the rains in my tropical country. The rain drops were big and it soaked me and my friend. The puddles it made were like landmines I was afraid to step over it because my uniform would get dirty. It was really fun.

Nevertheless, most days I had nothing to do but stay inside the compound. I had to find something fun and exciting to do. During one of those days, I chatted with a friend in Sa'ada who had travelled to Malaysia to study. I had to turn on my camera and show him a picturesque moment of children playing outside of an internet station. Their colored umbrellas were turning clockwise and counter clockwise. I told him not to take a shower in the rain because in the middle of shampooing your hair the rain might stop and you wouldn't be able to finish what you were doing.

Unlike the showers in my tropical country, here in Sa'ada it would rain for more than an hour. But one should be careful of soaking him or herself under the rains because you might get sick. Tropical storms are feisty; you might get hit by the roof of your house or an electric post might fall on you. Most of us in the compound were afraid to go out because other than the rain, someone in a silver van without a plate number might kidnap us.

The rest of August is very wet because other than the rain, the war field is soaked from the bloody battles. Before, the war in Sa'ada would bring truck loads of cadavers. The morgue cannot accommodate their numbers so they have to be placed outside until the military decided to transport them. The site was unexplainable: bodies were laid under the rain or sun without heads or limbs, and most of them were unidentifiable.

This year more soldiers were wounded and they would come in great numbers. Meanwhile, other cases would be ignored. The whole area would be cleared and the patients triaged – a medical term identifying and prioritizing patients according to the extent or degree of their injuries or disease. Because the waiting time for other cases would take more than an hour, some people would decide to leave without being treated.

This year, more cannons are being fired and more missiles are being launched, meaning more sleepless nights for most of us. I have been working here for two years and have gotten used to the loud bangs. I am worried about the tiles inside my bathroom because there has already been an incident of them cracking in the middle of the night; goodbye to my effort of scrubbing them during my day off!

I don't know when the explosions are going to stop. Now, Ramadan has started and I hope all goes well during this holy month. Although I am not from Sa'ada, I am in solidarity with everyone else during the fasting and feasting. It is a promise I made to my Yemeni friend in Malaysia.

Sectarian conflict in Yemen

By: Ali Abdul A'al
Newsyemen

Reports have been contradictory on the clashes between Salafis and Houthis in Sa'ada, to the north of Yemen. While the public media expatiated upon it, the conflict was officially denied by the Houthis who dubbed such news as "attempts to make the fight in Sa'ada seem sectarian." Such a declaration was an attempt to remove the suspicion of sectarianism from their battle against the government and to confirm that their conflict with the state is political in the first place.

The latest skirmishes broke out, according to independent sources, on Tuesday, Aug. 25. The first clashes took place next to Al-Fateh, an Islamic school that is run by Salafis, when Houthi elements tried to prevent people from performing taraweh prayers in a Salafi mosque. The fight is considered the most violent between Zaidi Houthis (Shiite) and Salafi tribes (Sunni) in Dammaj. The two sides used all available small and mid-sized weapons, and the result was 20 dead and dozens injured.

According to various sources, a cautious quiet settled in the area but new clashes are expected any minute. "The problem that pivots on a sectarian basis," Yemeni journalist Mohammed Al-Ghubari told alisamiyon.net, "still exists between the two sides." He indicated that Salafi leaders said they were ready to take up arms and fight those revolting against the ruler. Although the Houthis have grown into a significant power, Al-Ghubari said that any party entering the fighting arena will probably be able to obtain what is necessary for them to engage, such as weapons.

Bordered by Saudi Arabia in the north and Oman in the east, Yemen is facing a separatist movement in the south and a Shiite insurgency in the north which Iran is accused of supporting. The insurgency is a mixture of sectarian, tribal and geographical elements, partly due to the fact that Sa'ada, the battlefield, is adjacent to Saudi Arabia. Observers connect the readiness of Sunni powers there to fight against Shiites with this

geographical closeness.

Prof. Ahmed Al-Dhaghshi, an Islamic historian, believes that the political connection between the Salafis and the Saudi regime is a factor in the escalation of the confrontation. Saudi Arabia has expressed its fear that instability in Yemen may result in its becoming a launching pad for attacks against the kingdom, as was the case with Al-Qaeda.

The clashes followed the Salafis' announcement of their support for President Ali Abdullah Saleh in the face of calls for separation and their readiness to fight to defend unity if necessary.

On the sidelines of the General Salafi Forum that was held in the presence of 800 dignitaries, Shiekh Mohammed Al-Mahdi, a member of Al-Hikma Charity, said, "Salafis are ready to take up arms in defense of unity if forced to." He said that they do not approve of revolting against the ruler, even if he is oppressive. However, he declared their opposition to oppression in all forms. Omar Salem ba Wazir, another Salafi leader, said that "like others, Salafis exist on the field," and called for support from President Saleh, but not from his party the GPC.

Nevertheless, the matter of taking up arms does not seem to be settled among this group since some of them have grave reservations against it. Sheikh Hussien Shubala from Al-Ihsan Charity said that such a stance should be subjected to consideration and consultation from scholars.

"Salafis are not a single legion," he said, "to take up arms. And if, Allah forbid, should there be a commotion, there should be meetings and consultations to reach a sound decision."

Such a view was attributed by Al-Dhaghshi to the relative distance of these persons from the authority. He asserted that the Salafi-Shiite difference is old and that, in the case of Yemen, tribes continually kindle this disagreement. He said he did not find the conflict unusual because Sa'ada is a center for conventional Salafis in Dammaj and Wade'a, the hometown of Sheikh Moqbi Al-Wade'i, who was the founder of Salafism in Yemen.

This is not the first encounter

between Shiite and Sunni groups. In late July 2009, ten people were killed in a fight between the Houthis and a group belonging to Islah, a Sunni Islamic party in Al-Jawf, a governorate next to Sa'ada, which is considered by some to be a backyard for the battle between the state and the Houthis. The engagement started when both sides claimed a mosque belonged to them.

While the Houthis referred to their good relations with Islah, they considered the incident a barefaced assault against them. They also said there are tribal efforts to contain clashes between Islah and the Houthis. Two days later, Houthis assassinated Col. Aidarous Al-Yafe'i and two of his guards in an armed ambush at Al-Mahathir, Sa'ada.

The Salafi-Shiite situation is open to possibilities for reconciliation and is based on a regional struggle that is nurtured by all sides. However, the government reached a verbal agreement to the effect that the Houthis should open roads and stop mobilizing in the mountains. In return, the government should call off military operations.

From Najaf, Iraq, Muqtada Al-Sadr, the Shiite leader, called for all sides to join hands to solve the problem. "I realize that all peoples of the world and humanitarian organizations, be they the Islamic Conference Organization or the Arab League, aspire to see security settled despite their impartiality when the crisis was aggravated and thus intensified," he said.

Tribesmen belonging to the Houthi family initiated an intermittent insurgency against the Yemeni government in 2004 under the pretext of economic and religious grievances. They accused president Saleh, who is Zaidi, of practicing favoritism towards Sunnis.

The insurgents belong to the Zaidis, a Shiite sect whose imams ruled Yemen until the 1962 revolution. The chief of the insurgents, Abdul Malik Al-Houthi, signed a peace agreement with the government in 2007 through Qatari mediation, but the agreement was frequently violated. Saleh recently set strict conditions for ceasing the current war, but they were rejected by the Houthis.



By: Khaled Fattah

The war in Sa'ada: roots, branches and the harvest

The sixth major round of military confrontation between Yemen's central government and militant followers of Al-Houthi in the rugged northern mountains reminds us of how intra-state conflicts can be immune to concerted attempts at intervention.

Since June 2004, clashes with the Houthi rebels in the war-ravaged and impoverished Sa'ada governorate have escalated and subsided, both confined to Sa'ada and spreading to other areas, repeating its previous pattern and changing its form.

Conflict resolution strategists often argue that the longer the conflict, the more likely the factors that sustain the conflict are to be different from those that provide the initial trigger.

However, in the middle of the current storm created by the sixth war, a retrospective panoramic view of the previous five confrontations reveals the following four concrete findings.

First, with every new round of confrontation, clashes increase in their intensity, scope and repercussions, and the politics of the conflict become more internationalized. Second, in between each confrontation, new grievances are provoked, thereby multiplying the points of conflict.

Third, in addition to imposing a heavy burden and suffering upon tens of thousands of the civil population in Sa'ada and other governorates, diverting scarce resources into military operations, and distracting Yemen's state institutions from complex and pressing economic ills, the five year-long hostilities in Sa'ada had given a supportive hand to other national security threats in further damaging the fragile tourism sector, and in motivating investors to run away from Yemen's economic life.

Fourth, the results of the confrontations suggest that the total crushing of the rebellion and full enforcement of the legitimate will of Yemen's central state over its internationally-recognized territory cannot be achieved by soldiers, war planes, helicopters and tanks alone.

These findings push us to pose an urgent question about the roots that feed the conflict. Are these roots internal or external in nature?

Because detecting the roots, genesis and dynamics of complex intra-state conflicts such as the one in Sa'ada is a Herculean task for a journalistic column, my departing point for an answer is as simple as this: Like all types of conflicts, interests are at the centre of the enduring conflict in Sa'ada.

On the peaks and spectacular escarpments of Sa'ada, all sorts of interests overlap at multiple levels: short-term and long-term interests, individual and group interests, ideological and political interests, outcome-based interests and process interests, tribal and sectarian interests, national and regional interests, ambitions-based interests and revenge-based interests.

What is currently happening in Sa'ada is not a surprising civil war between two parties. Instead, it is an anticipated militarized dispute between constellations of interests - internal and external.

Where we stand determines what we see. In attempting to understand the mechanisms of the current war in Sa'ada, I like to stand in a position that allows me to observe and analyze the contextual determinants of the war. In other words, I prefer to pay my attention to structural factors.

In my view, there are two main structural factors behind the war in Sa'ada. These factors have not been addressed in the media coverage of the war. The first of these factors is state weakness. Empirical evidence shows that weak states are more prone to end up in intra-state conflicts than strong states.

The second structural factor is the status of Yemen in the continuum of democracy. Since the end of the 1994 north-south civil war, state-society relations in Yemen have been frozen in the so called in-between mode of governance, which is neither authoritarian nor democratic mode. Such a prolonged consolidated semi-democracy is troublesome, particularly in terms of conflict propensity.

In light of these structural factors, the focus of regional and international actors should be on strengthening the capacity of Yemen's state institutions. The Yemeni state should be assisted in establishing for itself as a set of institutions capable of practicing unchallenged control of the territory within its defined boundaries.

Such a measure is essential for maintaining security and order in the southwestern corner of Arabia. To command a broader legitimacy among the population, the Yemeni state should be guided towards guaranteeing the minimum levels of socio-economic well-being and physical security of its citizens.

On the democracy front, on the other hand, Yemen is badly in need of moving away from the prolonged in-between mode of governance. The basic democratic deal in Yemen's state-society relations should be that people will always have their say, and in return they will remain loyal citizens.

Khaled Fattah is an academic researcher and political analyst. He can be reached at KF62@st-andrews.ac.uk



By Hamid

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Let Afghans lead Afghan reform

By: **Jamie F. Metz** and **C. Christine Fair**

Although the outcome remains uncertain, Afghanistan's presidential election has demonstrated that the Afghan people yearn for more accountable leadership. But it is no less clear that this aspiration is far from being met, and that the country's poor governance is laying a dangerously weak foundation for international engagement.

The United States and its allies cannot succeed in Afghanistan unless the Afghan government itself succeeds. Despite the US Congress's appropriate calls to establish benchmarks for American progress in Afghanistan, too few people are calling for the Afghan government to articulate its goals for

improving governance and accountability, and how it plans to meet them. Until it does and international support is conditioned on Afghan progress in realizing goals set by Afghans, the country's state institutions will continue to lose credibility. Meaningful success in Afghanistan will become elusive at any level of funding or international troop presence.

Today, many parts of the Afghan state are rotting from within. Systemic corruption can be found at all levels. A large number of government officials, including members of President Hamid Karzai's own family, are alleged to be involved in trafficking narcotics, timber, gems, and other illicit goods. Karzai's pardoning of drug traffickers with indirect ties to his re-election campaign also raised fundamental questions about his government's commitment to the rule of law. Afghans themselves are not solely to

blame for this state of affairs. The US and the international community focused far too little on building a suitable structure of governance after the 2001 intervention. In the name of short-term expediency, too little was done to sack corrupt governors and police, or to counter involvement by high-level officials in the narcotics trade.

Whatever the causes, official corruption is creating a situation in which many Afghans fear the rapaciousness of the government nearly as much as they dislike the Taliban, which can now credibly claim the ability to provide security and swift justice in the areas they control, albeit at a very high price.

All things being equal, Afghans would prefer security under any regime other than the Taliban. Democracy and the rule of law could conceivably be an effective alternative to what the Taliban offer, but the government cannot credi-

bly claim to provide either, not to mention basic services, on a consistent basis. And, because the international community still pays the government's bills, many Afghans assume that donors support endemic corruption.

Given increasing public wariness about Afghanistan in the US and elsewhere, and the countries' overwhelming reliance on international largesse, it would be tempting to follow the usual route by developing internationally-generated goals and then engaging with Afghan leaders to explore how best to achieve them. Such a process will not succeed. Corruption can be addressed only if the Afghan government itself takes primary responsibility for addressing it.

The best way to help make Afghanistan's government more accountable to its people over the long term is by working to strengthen Afghan democracy, but this level of

accountability is still far off – and Afghanistan desperately needs better governance now.

To foster accountability in the near term, the international community should call on the next Afghan administration to establish its own goals for good governance and lay out benchmarks to measure progress. If the international community believes that these goals are correct, assistance should continue to be provided as long as the benchmarks are being met. If they are not, assistance should be scaled back to avoid having international funds continue to support corrupt practices.

Afghanistan is a sovereign state, and its government has the authority to do what it wants. But the international community is not obliged to finance official corruption. Internally generated reform is the only reform that can work, and it cannot occur if Afghan officials take international assistance

for granted or see themselves as subordinate actors in their own reform process.

Unless adequately addressed, official corruption will fatally undermine conditions in Afghanistan and make the continuation of international support unsustainable and success impossible. The time has come for the Afghan government to take the lead in fighting corruption, and for the international community to make clear that it will not provide a blank check for anything less.

Jamie Metz is Executive Vice President of the Asia Society and Project Director of the Asia Society Task Force on Afghanistan-Pakistan. Christine Fair teaches at Georgetown University. Both served as observers during the Afghan elections. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2009. www.project-syndicate.org

The quality of mercy

By: **Peter Singer**

The recent release of Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi, the only person convicted of blowing up Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, sparked outrage. Around the same time, the Philadelphia Eagles, an American football team, offered a second chance to former star Michael Vick, who was convicted of running a dog-fighting operation in which unsuccessful fighters were tortured and killed. And William Calley, who commanded the platoon that massacred hundreds of Vietnamese civilians at the village of My Lai in 1968, has now broken his media silence and apologized for his actions.

When should we forgive or show mercy to wrongdoers? Many societies treat crimes involving cruelty to animals far too lightly, but Vick's penalty – 23 months in prison – was substantial. In addition to imprisonment, he missed two years of his playing career, and millions of dollars in earnings. If Vick

were never to play football again, he would suffer punishment well beyond that imposed by the court.

Vick has expressed remorse. Perhaps more importantly, he has turned words into deeds, volunteering at an animal shelter and working with the Humane Society of the United States to oppose dog fighting. It is hard to see what good would come from not allowing him to complete his rehabilitation and return to doing what he does best.

Megrahi was convicted of murdering 270 people, and sentenced to life imprisonment. He had served only seven years when Kenny MacAskill, the Scottish Justice Minister, released him on compassionate grounds, based on a medical report that Megrahi has terminal cancer, and only three months to live. The question of remorse has not arisen, because Megrahi has never admitted guilt, and did not drop an appeal against his conviction until just before his release.

Doubts have been raised about whether Megrahi is really near death. Only the prison doctor, it seems, was

prepared to say that he did not have more than three months to live, while four specialists refused to say how long he might have. There has also been speculation that Megrahi's release was related to negotiations over oil contracts between Britain and Libya. Finally, some question whether Megrahi really was the perpetrator of the crime, and this may have played a role in MacAskill's decision (although, if so, that would have been better left to the courts to resolve).

But let us leave such questions aside for the moment. Assuming that Megrahi was guilty, and that he was released because he has only a short time to live, does a prisoner's terminal illness justify compassionate release?

The answer might depend on the nature of the crime, the length of the sentence, and the proportion of it that remains to be served. For a pickpocket who has served half of a two-year sentence, it would be excessively harsh to insist on the sentence being served in full if that meant that he would die in prison, rather than with his family. But

to release a man who served only seven years of a life sentence for mass murder is a very different matter. As the victims' relatives point out, in planning his crime, Megrahi showed no compassion. Why, they ask, should we show compassion to him?

MacAskill, in a statement to the Scottish Parliament defending his decision, refrained from quoting from the best-known speech on mercy in the English language – that of Portia in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* – but Portia's words would have fitted the core of his statement. Portia acknowledges that Shylock is under no obligation to show mercy to Antonio, who is in breach of his agreement to him.

"The quality of mercy is not strained" – that is, constrained, or obligatory – she tells Shylock, but rather something that falls freely, like rain. MacAskill acknowledged that Megrahi himself showed no compassion, but rightly points out that this alone is not a reason to deny him compassion in his final days. He then

appeals to the values of humanity, compassion, and mercy as "the beliefs we seek to live by" and frames his decision as being true to Scottish values.

We can reasonably disagree with MacAskill's decision, but we should acknowledge that – unless there is more going on than appears on the surface – he was motivated by some of the finest values we are capable of exercising. And, if we believe that Megrahi was not sufficiently punished for his crime, what are we to make of the treatment of former Lieutenant William Calley?

In 1971, Calley was convicted of the murder of "no less than 22 Vietnamese civilians of undetermined age and sex." He was also convicted of assault with intent to murder a Vietnamese child. Yet three days – yes, days – after his conviction, President Richard Nixon ordered that he be released from prison and allowed to serve his sentence in a comfortable two-bedroom house. There he lived with a female companion and a staff to assist him. After three years, he was released even from this form of detention.

Calley always claimed that he was following orders. Captain Ernest Medina, his commanding officer, ordered him to burn the village down and pollute its wells, but there is no clear evidence that the order included killing non-combatants – and of course if such an order were issued, it should not have been obeyed. (Medina was acquitted of murder.)

After decades of refusing to speak publicly, Calley, who is now 66, recently said that "not a day goes by" when he does not feel remorse "for what happened that day in My Lai." One wonders if the relatives of those murdered at My Lai are more ready to forgive Calley than the relatives of those killed at Lockerbie are to forgive Megrahi.

*Peter Singer is Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University and Laureate Professor at the University of Melbourne. His most recent book is *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty*. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2009. www.project-syndicate.org*

The re-birth of Japanese democracy

By: **Ian Buruma**

Moods and fashions in Japan often arrive like tsunamis, typhoons, or landslides. After more than 50 years of almost uninterrupted power, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has been buried in a general election. Once before, in 1993, change came when a coalition of opposition parties briefly took power, but the LDP still held on to a majority in the Diet's powerful lower house. This time, even that last bastion has fallen. The center-left Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) took more than 300 of 480 seats in the lower house. The LDP rules no more.

The world, fixated on China's rise, was slow to pay attention to this seismic shift in the politics of the globe's second largest economy. Japanese politics has a dull image in the world's press. Most editors, when they cover Japan at all, prefer stories about the zaniness of its popular youth culture, or the wilder shores of Japanese sex.

The main reason for this is, of course,

that Japanese politics was dull, at least since the mid-1950s, when the LDP consolidated its monopoly on power. Only real aficionados of arcane moves inside the ruling party could be bothered to follow the ups and downs of factional bosses, many of whom were from established political families, and most of whom relied on shady financing. Corruption scandals erupted from time to time, but these, too, were usually part of intra-party maneuvers to rein in politicians who got too big for their britches, or who tried to grab power before their time.

The system worked in a fashion: LDP faction bosses took turns as prime minister, palms were greased by various business interests, more or less capable bureaucrats decided on domestic economic policies, and the United States took care of Japan's security (and much of its foreign policy, too). Some thought this system would last forever.

Indeed, it has often been said, by Japanese as well as foreign commentators, that a de facto one-party state suits the Japanese. Stability, based on soft authoritarianism, is the Asian way, now

followed by China. Asians don't like the messy contentiousness of parliamentary democracy. Look what happens when Asians are foolish enough to import such a system, as in South Korea or Taiwan. Instead of civilized debate, they have filibusters and fisticuffs.

But, notwithstanding the occasional bust-ups, Korean and Taiwanese democracies seem remarkably robust. And the argument that Japanese, or other Asians, are culturally averse to political competition is not historically true.

In fact, Japanese history is full of strife and rebellion, and Japan was the first independent Asian country with a multi-party system. Its early postwar democracy was so unruly, with mass demonstrations, militant trade unions, and vigorous left-wing parties, that a deliberate attempt was made to squeeze politics out of the system and impose the boredom of a one-party state.

This happened in the mid-1950's, not for cultural, but for entirely political reasons. Like Italy (perhaps the closest European parallel to Japan), Japan was a front-line state in the Cold War.

Domestic conservatives, as well as the US government, worried about the possibility of a left-wing, even Communist takeover.

So a large conservative coalition party (much like the Italian Christian Democrats), funded to some degree by the US, was put in place to marginalize all left-wing opposition. This involved some strong-arm tactics, especially against the unions, but it worked mostly because the middle class settled for an informal deal: increased material prosperity in exchange for political acquiescence. The "LDP state" was based on the promise, given by Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato in 1960, that family incomes would soon be doubled.

Increasingly marginalized, the opposition dwindled into an impotent force, mere window-dressing to a one-party state. But one-party rule breeds complacency, corruption, and political sclerosis. In the last decade or so, the LDP – as well as the once-almighty bureaucracy that ran the system – began to look incompetent.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi gave the LDP a last breath of life by

promising to reform it in 2001. Whatever he did was not enough. The patience of Japan's middle-class, rocked by economic crisis, finally cracked.

The victorious DPJ may not immediately set off any political fireworks. Its leader, Yukio Hatoyama, is an uncharismatic scion of yet another established dynasty – his grandfather, Hatoyama Ichiro, took over as prime minister in 1954 from Yoshida Shigeru, who was the grandfather of the last LDP Prime Minister Taro Aso.

The DPJ's aims are excellent: more authority to elected politicians, less bureaucratic meddling, more independence from the US, better relations with Asian neighbors, more power to voters and less to big business, and so on. Whether Hatoyama and his colleagues have the wherewithal to achieve these aims remains an open question.

But it would be wrong to belittle the importance of what has happened. Even if the DPJ fails to implement most of its reforms in short order, the fact that Japanese voters opted for change will invigorate their country's democracy.

Even if the system were to become something like Japan's democracy in the 1920's, with two more or less conservative parties competing for power, this would still be preferable to a one-party state. Any opposition is better than none. It keeps the government on its toes.

A firm rejection of the one-party state will also reverberate far beyond Japan's borders. It shows clearly that the desire for political choice is not confined to a few fortunate countries, mostly in the Western world. This is a vital lesson, especially at a time when China's economic success is convincing too many leaders that citizens, especially but not only in Asia, want to be treated like children.

*Ian Buruma is the author of *Murder in Amsterdam: The Death of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance*. He is a professor of democracy, human rights and journalism at Bard College. His latest book is the novel *The China Lover*.*

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Sharia laws and democracy

By: **Yamin Zakaria**
yamin@radicalviews.org

In comparing two systems, two major components need to be assessed. Firstly, the laws, and secondly is the consistent application of the laws upon the subjects.

How does one conclude that a certain law is just? Is there a trade-off between having severe punishments or serious crimes? Is it better to punish a criminal using the principle of 'an eye for an eye' or should one 'turn the other cheek' and show forgiveness? Is it a choice between applying the harsh penal codes of the Old Testament or the lenient approach taken from the New Testament? The truth lies somewhere in between the two extreme approaches.

Going further back to a more fundamental point, the definition of a crime is largely subjective as it varies between nations. For example, the perverse act of homosexuality is sign of progress in western democracies, whereas it is considered a crime under Sharia laws. Another example is the business of slandering, this is often projected as entertainment and a manifestation of free speech, but under Sharia law, this sort of conduct is regarded as undignified, and clearly forbidden.

Even in areas where there is concurrence, like theft, robbery, murder, rape etc the same question arises, what is the correct level of punishment that fits the crime? There is no scientific answer for this. It is ultimately dependent on ones underlying beliefs. For example,

some would argue that a thief should be whipped in public, and some would say he should be forgiven and others would say he should be imprisoned. Therefore, to scream Sharia laws are barbaric as the media often does is irrational, superstitious and fanatical like the medieval mindset that once flourished in Europe.

A legal system does not become outdated with the passage of time as laws govern human nature, which does not alter. Sharia Laws are after often ridiculed as medieval, but democracy is ancient! Indeed, bulk of the criticism of Sharia laws is based on the 'twin-towers' of ignorance and medieval prejudice, as the following two examples will illustrate.

• One of the issues often raised is the myth that Sharia laws oppress the

non-Muslim minorities. The rights of non-Muslim minorities are fixed and permanent. The majority Muslims could not alter these rights without contradicting Islamic law. Rather, the rights of minorities are insecure and subjected to be altered anytime in any system where man is the legislator. This is what has surfaced post 9/11, and the various pieces of information continue to unfold regarding the liberal-fascists that arbitrarily imprison people, and subject them to inhumane torture.

• Democracy is projected as the rule of the masses but in reality, the masses are rather subjected to rule of the powerful elites. In theory, anyone can stand for power but in reality, only those with financial backing can qualify to compete. Power in democracy is heavily skewed, which

is really represented through democracy. Under Sharia laws, the masses are far better represented and heard, where the power is more distributed evenly. The ruling elites are not the product of large businesses or some aristocratic class. It is Sharia laws that can really represent the interests of the masses that the people are always demanding in a capitalist-democracy.

As for the consistent application of the laws, abuse or misapplication can take place in any system. However, in a divine system, that scope is severely limited as the major principles and laws have already been legislated and cannot be altered. Whereas contradicting basic principles of democracy is often visible, and increasingly seen through the conduct of the US and other Western powers

post 9/11.

At times, the contradiction is at a fundamental level. Israel is projected as the only democracy in the Middle East, yet it endorses a religious identity that contradicts the secular notion of democracy, which treats all the citizens as equals regardless of their religious identity. Arabs, be they Muslim, Christian, Agnostics, Atheists are expelled daily, whereas any Jew from any part of the world has the key to the houses of disposed people, is this still a democracy?

In a democracy, your rights can be given and taken away instantly. An innocent citizen can be incarcerated for years, and subjected to torture. Under Sharia laws, Muslims and non-Muslims alike can argue for their rights under the divine laws, which cannot be modified or abolished.

The Supply of IT Equipment & Office Furniture for The Food Security Information System Project



EuropeAid/129071/L/SUP/YE

The Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Yemen intends to award a supply contract for Supply of IT Equipment & Office Furniture in the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Food Security Information System Project, Sana'a and Hodeida, Republic of Yemen with financial assistance from the Food Security programme of the European Communities. The tender dossier will be published on the EuropeAid website:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>

The deadline for submission of tenders is 17th of October, 2009 at 11:00 hrs. Possible additional information or clarifications/questions shall be published on the EuropeAid website:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>

PROCUREMENT OF IT & PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TRAINING SERVICES

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

UNDP hereby solicits Expressions of Interest for;

1. IT Training Courses such as; ICDL, CCNA, CCNP, GIS etc
2. Professional Skills Training Courses such as; Strategic Management, Human Resources Management. etc .



UNDP invites qualified potential Training Centers to express their interest in supplying the above services. The expression of interest should specify the name and address of company, contact person, relevant supply experience, financial statement, list of professional staff, list of Training equipments, if any, and at least three reference letters/contract and must be received by UNDP no later than **15 September 2009**. It should be noted that UNDP is not obliged to invite to participate in the subsequent bidding process any particular potential supplier who had expressed interest in this project.

Only vendors prevailing from past experiences delivering the above will be considered. Interested potential suppliers should forward their expressions of interest, labeled "EOI IT and/or PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TRAINING SERVICES" including the documentation listed above.

Request for Quotation (RFQ) and any subsequent purchase order will be issued in accordance with the rules and procedures of UNDP.

Interested potential suppliers should forward their expressions of interest with indications of relevant experience to the following address:

UNDP

EOI IT and/or PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TRAINING SERVICES

P.O. Box: 551

Off sixty road, near Alawqaf complex

Sana'a, Yemen

Attn: Ms. Amal Ali

E-mail: procurement.ye@undp.org

Vender Registration website: www.undp.org.ye/procurement.php

Fax: + 967 1 448841

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Embassy of Italy in Sana'a official informs that a selection procedure has been opened to recruit a **CONSULAR EMPLOYEE**

Job aim: to support Embassy's various activities, particularly in the Consular Section, providing timely and accurate oral/written translation in the following languages: Italian/ Arabic/English

Essential competences and skills:

- Excellent written and oral communication skills in Italian, Arabic and English;
- Flexibility and capacity to work in a dynamic environment;
- Ability to interact with people;
- Administrative skills;
- Good knowledge of informatics main tools;
- Secondary school degree or higher;
- Driving license valid for Yemen;
- Yemeni citizenship or foreign nationality with at least 2 years of residence in permit.

Candidates can obtain a reference model for their application form contacting the Embassy of Italy in Sana'a. For a detailed job description and any other inquiries please contact the Italian Embassy in Sana'a — Haddah Street 131 PO Box 7269 tel 01 432587/8/9, or downloading from: www.ambsanaa.esteri.it

Closing date for application is **October 3rd, 2009**.

The Italian Embassy in Sana'a is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR)
Project Management Unit (PMU)
Higher Education Development Project II (HEDP II) (P110733)
PHRD Grant No. TF 093102 & PPF Advance No. Q-682-0

Request for Expressions of Interest

Technical Assistance (TA) for Establishing Accounting System for the Higher Education Development Project

The objective of this consultancy is to provide for an accounting system of financial management and reporting for the Higher Education Development Project (HEDP). To the maximum extent possible. The system will be designed to comply with requirements of World Bank Procedure 10.02 dated August 1997 and Financial Monitoring Reports (FMR) guidelines issued November 30, 2002 (now the name of Financial Monitoring Reports- FMRs becomes Interim Financial Reports- IFRs). It will include records, procedures and supporting internal controls to cover all activities in connection with accomplishment of the objective of the Project operations as agreed with Bank. It should be founded on pc-based accounting software to be acquired by the Project. The software and adequate support and maintenance service should be available in the Republic of Yemen.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR), Republic of Yemen has received a PPF grant from the International Development Association (IDA) and a PHRD grant from the government of Japan and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this to payments under the contract for the above —consulting service.

The Project Management Unit now invites eligible Firms to indicate their interest in providing the service for Establishing Accounting System for the Higher Education Development Project. Interested Firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the service, profiles, description of similar assignments, experience in similar assignment, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc. and experience in Yemen.

The selection of the Consulting Firms will be made in accordance with the procedure set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, May 2004 and revised in October 2006. Interested consulting firms may obtain further information during working days Sat. —Wed. From 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the address below to which the expression of interest must be delivered by September 19, 2009.

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR)
Higher Education Development Project II
Alriadh St., next to Alroni Building
TEL:00967-1-471196 - 468466, FAX:00967-1- 471195 or to
Email: The Project Director: info@hepyemen.org



البطولة الرمضانية الأولى المفتوحة للبولينج

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Labour Office (ILO)** invite **Yemeni Nationals** to apply for the following position with its **Joint Project Support to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in Labour Market Information and Employment Policy**.



Post Title: National Economist

Duration: one year renewable

Duty Station: Sana'a

Responsibilities:

- The National Economist will ensure the effective provision of inputs and delivery of outputs under the project and provide technical advice towards the development and execution of the project under the guidance of the CTA. He/She will ensure that the objectives stated in the project document are attained within the stated times and ensure compliance with ILO financial and operating procedures;
- Identify and liaise with national and international experts/consultants to support activities relating to labour market information and analysis in Yemen.
- Draft, edit or translate documents, including briefing notes, technical and non-technical reports, news releases, official correspondence, statements and speeches and other public information material;
- Review, analyze, summarize or translate information on employment and labour markets and their wider context in Yemen, including technical and non-technical reports, statistical information, media reports, background information and official correspondence;
- Undertake research and prepare analytical reports on selected subjects within the area of technical competence, in particular on employment, skills development and youth labour market issues in Yemen;
- Brief ILO specialists, project experts, and visiting consultants and officials and provide relevant information on project related matters; assist in interpretation between Arabic/English for the CTA and visiting missions (if required) and participate in policy dialogue and technical consultations on labour market and employment issues;

Qualification:

- Advanced university degree in economics or another quantitative social science with an emphasis on statistics and econometrics.
- At least three years of professional experience in a relevant occupational area.
- Excellent command of Arabic and English.
- Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Excel and Internet.

Interested candidates are requested to submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Human Resources Unit and response will only be made to short listed candidates. UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448892/E-mail: (hr.ye@undp.org)

The deadline for receiving applications is Thursday, 24 September 2009.

UNDP is an equal opportunity organization and qualified female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.



Invitation for General Bid for the Second Time No. (11) for the year 2009

The TV and Radio General Corporation declared its interest in inviting for general bid number (11) for the second time with a hundred percent governmental funding for the year 2009 for:

Importing, fixing, licensing, testing, operating and guaranteeing TV cameras and two mobile montage units with peripheries.

All the interested importers and specialized companies must apply with their written request for this bid during the official work time to the following address:

**The TV and Radio General Corporation
General Administration for Projects
Tel: (01/ 230752)**

Cost for buying the bid documents (US\$ 250) non refundable.
The deadline of selling the documents is: 3/10/2009.

The bids must be presented in a red wax sealed envelopes to the bids and tenders committee's secretariat at the corporation. The names of the bidding company and of the project along with the tender number and the bidder's name must be written on the envelop, which should contain the following documents:

1. An unconditional bank guarantee of (US 7,500\$) valid for 120 days as of the date of bid opening or a cashable check.
2. A copy of valid tax certificate for the year 2009 (feign bidders with no existing business activities in Yemen may furnish a copy of equivalent VAT registration document from their home countries).
3. A copy of valid insurance certificate for the year 2009 (insurance certificate is required only from firms with employees in Yemen who are entitled to benefit from the Public Enterprise for Social Security in Yemen).
4. A copy of valid registration and classification for the year 2009.
5. A copy of valid Zakat certificate for the year 2009.
6. A copy of valid commercial registration valid for the year 2009.
7. A copy of valid profession license certificate for the year 2009.
8. A copy of valid sales tax registration certificate for the year 2009.
9. Interested applicants in this bid may review the tender documents before purchasing it during the official working hours in this bid for twenty days starting from the date of the first announcement

The deadline for receiving the proposals is at 11:00 am on Saturday 10/10/2009 at the corporation's main premises.

Republic of Yemen

**Ministry of water & Environment - Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
Water Sector Support Program (WSSP), National Irrigation Program (NIP)
Announcement for Posts of NIP**

**(IDA Grant Number: H449-RY)
(Open for Yemenis only)**

The Water Sector Support Program (WSSP) is designed to support implementation of Yemen's National Water Sector Strategy Investment Program (NWSSIP) through substantial improvement to five water sub-sectors including irrigation; WSSP would be implemented during five years period (2009-2014), with a total cost of US\$340 million to be co-financed from the Government of Yemen and Donor Partners (DPs) consisting of IDA of the World Bank, Germany, and the Netherlands.

The Republic of Yemen has received a financing grant from the International Development Association (IDA) in the amount equivalent to \$90.8 million (being its share through pooled financing) to be disbursed over five years 2009-2014, towards the cost of implementation of the WSSP. This includes contribution of US\$68.9 million (IDA share US\$51 million) for the implementation of the irrigation program. Implementation of this program will be carried out by the Irrigation and Land Reclamation Sector of MAI through establishment of a National Irrigation Program (NIP) and associated agencies and programs.

It was agreed that the tasks under NIP will be implemented through a Program Management/Implementation Arrangement comprised of an executive secretary, financial and procurement specialists with required secretarial support. This program will be headed by a Director who will be supported with two heads of units in the fields of surface irrigation and groundwater irrigation.

The WSSP intends to apply part of the proceeds of this grant to payments under the contract to cover the costs of appointment of three national consultants for the posts of director of NIP and two heads of units in the fields of surface irrigation and groundwater irrigation.

The Deputy Minister of MAI for Irrigation and Land Reclamation now invites qualified applicants to fill in three posts. The posts with their terms of reference (TOR) and other requirements are given here-under:

Director of NIP

Terms of References (TOR)

Under the supervision of the subsectoral NIP Committee, chaired by The Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI) for Irrigation Sector and Land Reclamation, and observing the legal, administrative, financial directives, and adhering to the project's rules and procedures, to be included in a Project Implementation Manual (PIM), the nominated Executive Secretary scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following during the life of the NIP/MAI under the context of WSSP:

- (a) Review and update all project related documents;
- (b) Coordinate and supervise the process of designing and implementing the entire NIP program and associated capacity building and institutional development including support to WUAs
- (c) Facilitate a conducive environment involving MAI, NIP, NWRA, and Basin Committees, Local authorities to coordinate efforts and streamline activities within basin and local /district water plans.
- (d) Act as NIP/MAI Coordinator for all program aspects during effectiveness and implementation (including procurement, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental management, and anti-corruption action plan/communication/safeguards actions);
- (e) Manage the team at the Executive Secretariat of NIP unit which will include two Advisers for Procurement and Financial Management and three assistants as required and according to their respective mandates;
- (f) Prepare quarterly and annual progress reports about activities of NIP. These reports are to be submitted to Deputy Minister of (MAI) for Irrigation Sector and Land Reclamation and copied to the Executive Secretariat (ES) of WSSP.
- (g) Lead the effort in preparation of NIP/MAI Annual Operating Plans consistent with the Project Appraisal Document and the Financing Agreement(s);
- (h) Assist in preparing and finalizing the NIP/MAI Annual Operating Plan for the 1st year and subsequent years;
- (i) On an annual basis, review the aforementioned plans and furnish same to the WSSP Executive Secretariat within one week thereafter;
- (j) Develop TORs for various management consultants to be hired to support the NIP/MAI
- (k) Ensure that the PIM, Annual Operating Plans and all Financial and Procurement arrangements are followed in NIP/MAI ;
- (l) Ensure the delivery of program investments, consolidating of the existing Groundwater and Soil Conservation Project (GSCP), Sana'a Basin Water Management Projects (SBWMP) and the ex Irrigation Improvement Project (IIP) within the program
- (m) Ensure the alliance of Agricultural and Fisheries Production Promotion Fund (AFPPF) activities within the NIP/MAI
- (n) Hold monthly meetings of the sub sector NIP Follow up Committee and attend the periodical meetings of the Irrigation Sector Directors headed by the Deputy Minister /MAI for Irrigation and Land Reclamation.
- (o) Conduct overall project progress reviews and site visits at the request of implementing authorities in MAI.

Qualification and Experience

The candidate is expected to have the following:

- (a) At least M.Sc. Degree or equivalent in Irrigation Engineering or Water Resources Management.
- (b) Experience of at least ten years related to the assignment of the post or in management of agricultural/ irrigation projects involving fields of irrigation design, construction and supervision of irrigation works and supervision of implementation of consultancy services in irrigation and water resources development studies. Experience in working with project financed by foreign agencies (e.g IDA, Arab Funds) or grants from donor countries, will be preferred .
- (c) Good knowledge and experience in computer applications with skills in at least Microsoft Office..
- (d) Good Knowledge of writing, reading, and speaking Arabic and English language.

Duration of the assignment

A contract for one year will be signed with the successful candidate and will be initially on probation during the first three months.

Head of Surface Irrigation Unit/NIP

Terms of References (TOR)

Under the supervision of the Director of NIP (MAI) and observing the legal, administrative, financial directives, and adhering to the project's rules and procedures, to be included in a Project Implementation Manual (PIM), the nominated Head of Surface Irrigation Unit scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) Assist the NIP Director in implementing the approved plans and programs and revise studies and technical designs regarding surface irrigation works in spate irrigated Wadis.
- b) Directly supervise the performance of employees and consultants and contractors working in the field and ensure quality of work and regular submission of reports on progress achieved and problems encountered and make sure that interim payment certificates of contractors are submitted to the Head Quarters of the Program on time to facilitate review and prompt payment. Also participate in issuance of handing over certificates of completed works by contractors.
- c) Work with Water Users Associations and Local Councils to solve any dispute likely to negatively affect smooth implementation of work.
- d) Supervise O&M works and establishment of MIS/GIS system in spate irrigated Wadis under NIP/WSSP.
- e) Supervise implementation of water harvesting techniques and watershed management activities of a number of wadis under NIP.
- f) Facilitate implementation of Irrigation extension activities (Irrigation Advisory Services) through the staff available in the irrigation and land reclamation sector branches or in cooperation with the General Department of Extension and Communication in MAI.
- g) The candidate should implement any tasks entrusted to him by his supervisor the director of NIP.

Qualification and Experience

The candidate is expected to have the following:

- (a) At least B Sc degree in irrigation or civil engineering or equivalent field.
- (e) Experience of at least ten years related to the tasks of the post and working in spate irrigation schemes and Wadis design, Experience in working in irrigation projects financed by foreign agencies (e.g IDA, Arab Funds) or grants from donor countries will be considered an advantage to the candidate.
- (f) Good knowledge and experience in computer applications with skills in at least Microsoft Office and should be familiar with computer applications in his field of work..
- (g) Good Knowledge of writing, reading, and speaking Arabic and English language.

Duration of the assignment

A contract for one year will be signed with the successful candidate and will be initially on probation during the first three months.

3. Head of Groundwater Irrigation Unit/NIP

Terms of References (TOR):

Under the supervision of the Director of NIP (MAI) and observing the legal, administrative, financial directives, and adhering to the project's rules and procedures, to be included in a Project Implementation Manual (PIM), the nominated Head of Groundwater Irrigation Unit scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) Assist the NIP Director in implementing the approved plans and programs and revise studies and technical designs on the ground in the field of on farm water management.
- b) Directly supervise the performance of employees and consultants and contractors working in the field and ensure quality of work and submit reports regularly on progress achieved and problems encountered and make sure that the completion certificates of contractors are submitted to the Head Quarters of the Program on time to facilitate review and prompt payment.
- c) Work with Water Users Associations and Local Councils to solve any dispute likely to negatively affect smooth implementation of work.
- d) Supervise implementation of on farm water management activities and field irrigation studies.
- e) Supervise installation and operation of modern irrigation systems in agricultural fields irrigated by wells.
- h) Facilitate implementation of Irrigation extension activities (Irrigation Advisory Services) through the staff available in the irrigation and land reclamation sector branches or in cooperation with the General Department of Extension and Communication in MAI.
- f) The candidate should implement any tasks entrusted to him by his supervisor the director of NIP.

Qualification and Experience

The candidate is expected to have the following:

- (a) At least a BSc degree in irrigation techniques ,irrigation agronomy, on farm water management or equivalent field..
- (b) Experience of at least ten years related to the tasks of the post and working in groundwater irrigation schemes including design, construction and supervision of field irrigation works and supervision of implementation of on farm water management studies. Experience in working with irrigation projects financed by foreign agencies (e.g IDA, Arab Funds) or grants from donor countries will be considered an advantage to the candidate .
- (c) Good knowledge and experience in computer applications with skills in at least Microsoft Office and should be familiar with computer applications in his field of work..
- (d) Good Knowledge of writing, reading, and speaking Arabic and English language.

Duration of the assignment

A contract for one year will be signed with the successful candidate and will be initially on probation during the first three months.

The applications for each of the above posts will be evaluated by a committee according to Guidelines for Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers of May,2004 and revised on October 1st 2006.This will be based on criteria of to what extent they are meeting the TOR, qualifications and experience requirements mentioned above.

Only responsive applicants will be short listed for interviews by the evaluation committee in order to finalize selection of the best candidate.

Interested applicants who strictly meet the above requirements are requested to submit their applications with CV's and supporting documents during working hours to the address shown below on or before 12:00 noon on 10th October, 2009.

**Eng.Ahmad Mohsin Al-ashlah
Deputy Minister MAI for Irrigation & Land Reclamation Sector
Al-Methaq Street, Besides Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation
P.O Box No. 2805, Sana'a
Telephone No.: 01- 253477, Fax No.: 01- 561216, E-mail Address : alashlama@yahoo.com**

The absence of zakat's impact on Yemen's economy

By: Ali Saeed

Zakat, alms Muslims are required to give to the poor, provide the government with a significant amount of revenue, but the funds are often mishandled despite a 1999 law intended to regulate and streamline the practice, according to academics and officials.

"Unfortunately, local councils, which now are authorized to collect zakat duties do not distribute revenues to the poor and the needy," said Dr. Mohamed Jubran, professor of economics at Sana'a University. "Most of zakat revenues that local councils collect are spent as rewards and travel expenses for councils' members."

Zakat makes up less than .18 percent of Yemen's GDP, according to an online study by Studies and Economic Media Center this year.

"In general, zakat has a big role in any society, but in Yemen, its role is scattered and unclear in terms of its impact on Yemen's economy," said Jubran.

Although there is an administration for zakat duties in Yemen which collects the duties and submits revenues to the government, Jubran thinks that the role of zakat in Yemen's economy is still absent.

"We notice that the amount that the General Administration of Zakat Duties gathers is very little and does not exceed 10 percent of duty amounts that should be collected," pointed out Jubran.

According to information from the General Administration for Zakat

Duties in Sana'a, the government spends more than twice as much providing for poor families than it collects in zakat revenue.

The total 2008 zakat revenue in Yemen was YR 8 billion (USD 40 million) and the Social Welfare Fund alone spends around YR 20 billion (USD 100 million) on poor families in the country.

"Collecting zakat duties is also done by individual efforts from some charitable organizations that distribute it as aid to needy families," said the professor. "But the distribution is done inaccurately, which leads some families to get aid from more than one organization, whereas other poor and needy families receive nothing."

In general, zakat has a big role in any society, but in Yemen, its role is scattered and unclear in terms of its impact on Yemen's economy.

Charitable organizations also collect zakat duties in Yemen because the law allows merchants retain 25 percent of the money they are required to pay, in order to personally distribute it to the poor.

Charitable organizations also collect zakat duties in Yemen because the law allows merchants retain 25 percent of the money they are required to pay, in order to personally distribute it to the poor. Jubran suggested establishing a specialized corporation that is authorized to collect and distribute revenues to avoid duplication in distribution.

The professor said this measure would reduce poverty.

According to 2008 UN statistics, 45 percent of the people in Yemen live on less than USD 2 a day. Extra zakat revenues can then be used to help unemployed young people that lack direction.

Additionally, Jubran said that if zakat revenues were distributed efficiently, there would be income redistribution flowing money from rich to poor. Zakat will activate the economy because poor families will spend more money.

"The current authority of zakat duties does not do the task properly as evidenced by the fact that there is no tangible impact of



zakat on Yemen's economy," said the professor.

"If zakat duties were collected correctly, zakat revenues would have reached around YR 100 billion (USD 500 million)" said Jubran.

A study by the Studies and Economic Media Center about the reality of zakat authorities in Islamic countries also pointed to failings within collection systems.

All Islamic countries have weak collecting systems, including Yemen, it says. The study attributes the weaknesses to bad performance of officials and flimsy legislative structures.

Mohammed Kawkaban, the general manager of the General Administration for Zakat Duties in Sana'a, admitted that challenges deter the improvement of collection performance.

"Performance of any foundation is connected with the level of awareness and efficiency of its employees," he said. "Frankly, the employees of the General Administration for Zakat Duties in Sana'a and its branches are still not qualified."

"We need to organize specialized training courses for our employees in zakat accountancy, how to deal with zakat payers and training courses for all employees including managers in Islamic law of zakat," said Kawkaban.

He recommended building a network to facilitate counting the zakat revenue. The total amount collected in Yemen has not been accurately counted for seven years, he added.

He suggested awareness campaigns because many people are ignorant of zakat issues and some of them think that people only one have to pay one duty and the end of Ramadan, and are not aware of other kinds of zakat, such as commercial item zakat and income zakat.

According to Kawkaban, the total revenue from zakat in Sana'a is increasing since in 2008 reached over YR 5 billion (USD 25 million) whereas in the first half of 2009 alone reached over YR four billion (USD 20 million).

Zakat Al-Fitr

Zakat al-fitr is required at the end of Ramadan from every Muslim who has the sufficient food, according to the Yemeni law.

According to Islamic literature, companion to Prophet Mohammad Ibn Umar said, "The Prophet (PBUH), imposed a payment of one sa'a [2.5 kilograms] of dates or one sa'a of barley or one sa'a of wheat as zakat al-fitr from every Muslim, young and old, male and female, free and slave."

The purpose of zakat al-fitr is to purify Muslims from indecent acts or

speech they may have committed while fasting, as well as to help the poor.

According to Islam, it is important that this zakat is paid before the Eid Al-Fitr prayers take place at the end of Ramadan. Some Islamic schools say it must be paid in foodstuff. However, Yemeni law allows people to give money instead of the required amounts of food, as long as the value is equal.

Some religious scholars also say that Zakat Al-Fitr can be given as money equal to quantity of foodstuff. That means if you are the head of a family of seven, you have to give eight sa'as of wheat, or the most served food in the country, or the value of this quantity.

Muslims all over the world are obliged to pay this kind of zakat. In some Arab and Islamic countries, it is the responsibility of the government to collect this zakat and in other countries non-governmental charitable organizations do this job.

In Yemen, it is the government that does this task through the General Administration for Zakat Duties.

Zakat al-fitr revenues increase yearly because, unlike other zakats, every Muslim who is not poor is required to contribute, and the Yemeni population is growing rapidly.

In 2008, zakat al-fitr in Sana'a revenues were about YR 272 million (USD 1.3 million) compared to about YR 187 million (USD 935,000) the year before according to

Kawkaban, general manager of the administration.

Zakat on commercial items

Another kind of Zakat required by

Islam applies to wealthy Muslim merchants. Traders are obliged to pay charity out of their commercial revenues, and in Sana'a, most zakat revenue is commercial.

Merchants are obliged to pay 2.5 percent of the value of commercial items they own for a full year. For instance, if he or she has commercial items worth YR 600,000 (USD 3,000), and one year of ownership passes and he or she still owns the property, YR 15,000 (USD 75) must be paid.

Zakat of livestock

In Islam, farmers are required to give animals that can be utilized, including camels, cows and sheep.

The animals have to have a minimum value, owned for one year for the farmer to be required to pay. The animals also must be grazing, as apposed to doing work such as plowing, watering, and carrying weights or riding.

Zakat of sheep

Farmers who own 40 to 120 heads of sheep for the entire year, which are grazing, are required to give one sheep as zakat. Farmers that own 121 to 200 have to give two sheep. If they own more, they have to give one more sheep for every hundred that they own.

Zakat of camels

People that have five camels or more are required to and if he or she does have less than that, no charity is imposed.

If a Muslim farmer owns five camels for the entire year, he or she is required to give one sheep for every five camels - up to 25 camels. Farmers that own 25 camels must give bint mukhadh (a 1-year-old female camel). And if it was reached 36 camels he or

she must give bint laboon (a 2-year-old camel). The required donation continues to increase, with the amount of camel's owned by the farmer.

Zakat of cows

A farmer that has 30 or more cows and is also required to contribute livestock.

If the Muslim farmer owns 30 to 39 cows, he or she must give one, 1-year-old calf. If he or she owns 40 to 59, the duty is a cow that is two years old. If he or she owns 60 to 69, the duty is two calves.

However, this kind of zakat in Yemen can be paid with money that has the same value as the animals.

Who is entitled to be given the zakat?

Yemeni law says that zakat revenue must be distributed to the poor, the needy, those employed to administer zakat, recent converts to Islam, to free the captives and slaves, debtors, in the cause of Allah, and to travelers.

Special administration against those who refuse to pay

In the General Administration for Zakat Duties, there is a special administration for those who underpay or refuse to pay zakat duties, according to Kawkaban.

"This administration sends a letter notifying him to pay the duty and gives him one month as an extension," explained Kawkaban.

"If he or she, after this extension, does not pay, the administration again gives him extra month but if he refuses to respond, the administration refers him to prosecution," added Kawkaban.

"Many cases have been referred to prosecution," said the manager.

The purpose of zakat al-fitr is to purify Muslims from indecent acts or speech they may have committed while fasting, as well as to help the poor.

According to information from the General Administration for Zakat Duties in Sana'a, the government spends more than twice as much providing for poor families than it collects in zakat revenue.

Duty of sheep Zakat		
Number of sheep from	To	Duty
40	120	One sheep
121	200	Two sheep
201	399	Three sheep
400	499	Four sheep
500	599	Five sheep

Zakat duty of camels		
Number from	To	Duty
5	9	One sheep
10	14	Two sheep
15	19	Three sheep
20	24	Four sheep
25	35	One male or female camel that is 1 year old
36	45	One female camel that is 2 years old
46	60	One female camel that is 3 years old
61	75	One female camel that is 4 years old
76	90	Two female camels that are 2 years old
91	120	Two female camels that are 2 years old

Zakat duty of cows		
Number from	To	Duty
30	39	One calf
40	59	Mussina (cow that is two years old)
60	69	Two calves
70	79	Mussina and one calf
80	89	Two cows that are two years old
90	99	Three calves
100	119	Mussina and two calves
120 +		Three mussina or four calves

Extension for the Submission of the Deadline for the Prequalification of Contractors for Amran Aden Highway Project Section-I, Sana'a-Dhamar-Bait Al Komani, (6-lane, Dual Carriageway, 95 km)

The Ministry of Public Works and Highways, Roads Sector, wishes to extend the submission deadline for prequalification documents for Amran Aden Highway Project Section-I, Sana'a-Dhamar-Bait Al Komani, (6-lane, Dual Carriageway, 95 km) Until 11:00 AM Wednesday, Sep 30, 2009 instead of the previous deadline of Sept 6, 2009.

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والتمويلات
Development of Credits & Finances



How are the Arabs seen?

By: Mubeen Esam
Mibo_time@yahoo.com

To be considered a small thing is better than nothing, because a small thing may have intrinsic factors that help it to be improved in the eyes of others. Currently, America and Europe view the Arab world as somewhat less than a small thing – they regard the Arab world as nothing at all.

Is the Arab mind structurally different from others? Why do others regard us as silly? Europe and America's view of Arabs is bad and gets worse day by day. Is the Arab world really silly? That's what we should find an answer to. Then we should project this answer to the Western world.

The west has such a negative view of Arabs because a lot of Arabs migrate to Europe and America and work at entry level positions as waiters, waitress, car washers and street sweepers. Some even become beggars, thieves and so on. In the wake of this, Europeans and Americans think that Arabs are competing against them for low-level jobs and think that the level of education in the Arab world must be extremely low. Also, some migrants practically advertise their educational and religious differences which creates hostility towards all migrants.

The Arab world is near Europe geo-

graphically, but it's far away educationally. Why? Most Europeans and Americans don't know that there were a lot of Arab philosophers and intellectuals in the past, particularly during the Middle Ages. We as Arabs should improve the media's role so as to give the West a true picture about the Arab world. If the media continues to play the same role without progressing or changing, the west's bad view of the Arabs will become worse. Why do Arabic channels, books and novels present the Arabs as nomads who ride camels or terrorists who are illiterate educationally, morally and religiously? It's no wonder that the west views us as such! In their mind, the Arab world consists of brutal nations that encourage terrorism. However, we are not like that in reality; we are totally different. We are kind and generous and are pioneers of education. We hate terrorism as well.

One of the main reasons for the spread of this negative view is because of the strict Islamic people who care for the poor. This care helps them to become extremely popular, but this group represents only themselves and not the whole Arab world. Today, Europeans and Americans think that all Arabs are strict Muslims, although most of those who adhere to strict Islamic teachings actually stray from the true Islamic principles that the majority Muslims follow. Accordingly, the west

regards us all as terrorists. I think if I were an American or a European, I would have the same bad view of Arabs.

Furthermore, the infinite conflicts and skirmishes among the Arabs themselves strengthen and even prove the horrible view of the Arab world in the others' minds. I think Arab nations nowadays have fragile political, economic, social, religious, educational and moral systems. Consequently, the Arabs blame, accuse and abuse each other. This is found at every level of society. If a man drinks a cup of tea with his friends in a café and leaves them afterwards, they immediately gossip him and talk about him badly. Additionally, the Arabs always give their reasons for the current disgraceful situation in America and Israel, but they're generally wrong when they point the finger at someone else. Arabs must mend themselves and their own education system and should not rely on or blame anyone else.

The way I see it, the education process in the Arab world consists of a classroom full of varying levels of students, teachers and textbooks with different aims and content. Overseeing it all is a strict administration with fragile minds that lead in such a way that students won't complain about what is going on in the schools and the classrooms or even try to rise above such a terrible system.

Arabs always talk about their glorious past. However, such talk doesn't improve the present, which is regrettably disgraceful. Why do we talk about the past more than the future? Why don't we talk about how to improve our present? Most Europeans and Americans have no idea about the Arab past, so when we talk about our past history and what we were then, they laugh at us because they think we're liars or crazy. The minority of them know about the Arabs' past history, perhaps because some of them studied it in Arab universities or read about it. But they certainly didn't learn about it from the media. Nowadays the Arabs only talk about their current political policies, in which they always fail. They can't see themselves in other fields, such as technology or medicine – few even try.

In the end, the west collectively sees us as a group of terrorists which intends to destroy their happiness and their world. On the other side, we see the west as a group of immoral people that have bad habits like sex and drugs. Each side has incorrect knowledge about the other, so each side must correct and improve the role of its media in order to transfer the truth of the past and the present to the next generation. I appeal to the concerned authorities to improve education in the Arab world because it's the only key that can open the door of development.

Through The Mind's Eye

By: Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy
majed_thabet@hotmail.com



Ramadan will be missed

We all practice Ramadan traditions, but we don't realize its good features until it is over. Ramadan's true meaning starts to unfold in its last days and nights. Though some people don't look forward to the month, most now wish the whole year was Ramadan. The most outstanding features of this holy month are fasting during the days, praying in the mosques and staying up late at night.

Fasting is the first feature that colors Ramadan with a feeling of spirituality, tranquility as well as sympathetic values. Actually, it has a religious as well as a social value. The religious value lies in the awards that Allah gives fasters who refrain from eating and drinking from the dawn prayer to the sun set prayer. In addition, they also fast from other desires and lusts.

To illustrate the point, fasting includes refraining from smoking, sexual intercourse, and other worldly deeds. The social value of fasting, on the other hand, lies in the feeling of hunger that people feel to recognize how the poor people suffer when they do not have enough to eat.

This feeling also creates a sense of equality between the rich and poor people because they are all fasting. Fasting, thus, is not only a deprivation of eating and drinking, but has great values of social and religious significance.

Ramadan is also distinguished for the regularity and frequency of praying in the mosques. Praying is a religious duty, not only in Ramadan, but also in all the months of the year. However, during Ramadan, fasting creates an atmosphere for people to pray on time in the mosques. Unlike the other months, people find it easy to regulate their prayers in the mosques.

Moreover, people in Ramadan practice more Sunna (of the Prophet) prayers like Taraweh prayers and night prayers. These prayers are commonly practiced as a means of having more awards during Ramadan than the other months. During Ramadan, therefore, people do best to regulate prayers so that they can pray on time in the mosques.

One more feature of Ramadan is altered schedules. In Ramadan, people stay up late at night, and sleep either in the morning or afternoon. This makes the nights of Ramadan full of activities and people stay up awake up to the dawn prayer. Shops are open and people are on the streets or stay at home watching T.V., sitting with family members, or visiting friends and relatives. In contrast, people sleep at night in the other months of the year and do their activities in the daylight hours.

These are the most common features which make Ramadan very distinguished from the other months. Sorrowfully, we do not realize and enjoy these features until Ramadan is over. Now, we feel sorry about the departure of this dear month, and miss it immediately when it is over.

Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy is a contributing opinion writer from Taiz. He holds an MA in English, and is the former editor of Taiz University's English-language magazine.

In Ramadan...business as usual for doctors

Dr. Yasir hameed
yasirmhm@yahoo.com

At the sunset, the street seemed deadly empty apart from few cars racing to get home to break the fasting of another day of Ramadan, the holy month.

In contrast to that emptiness, the Emergency Room (ER) in our clinic was crowded with patients and relatives. There was a road traffic accident just half an hour before sunset.

The casualties were four, two badly injured.

So for doctors, the business never ends even in Ramadan.

I work as a general practitioner in a private clinic in Taiz. This is my first Ramadan in Yemen and I am exploring how patients' presentations and management differ from any other month of the year.

First of all, the time schedule of our work changes. The clinic opens from 11 to 3 pm, and then from 9 to 1 am. The ER is opened 24/7 as usual.

In the first shift, the number of patients hardly exceeds three or four, the city really seems sleepy after a sleepless night.

However, the work load increases during the second shift.

The cases we see are mostly presented with digestive complaints. These

include problems like indigestion, heartburn, vague abdominal pains, nausea, etc...

These symptoms are of course aggravated by bad quality of food or the addition of the chili (besbas) the most essential ingredients of Yemeni food.

Of course the Qat, or the evil seed as some call it, plays a tremendous role in aggravating these problems.

Other complaints which we see in Ramadan are seen all year round; these include infectious diseases (like rheumatic fever, malaria and typhoid) and non infectious conditions (like Diabetes and Hypertension).

Fasting has great benefits, both spiritually and health related. The problem

is that many people don't follow a healthy life style to enjoy this experience.

This is especially true for patients suffering from chronic illnesses like diabetes and hypertension.

Ideally any patient with such chronic condition should pay a visit to his doctor prior to fasting in order to get advice and negotiate on treatment dosages and frequencies.

This will avoid the patient any unnecessary disturbances that may affect their health seriously during fasting.

Finally, I wish you a blessed and healthy fasting throughout this holy month.

Our dainty cake is not for you alone

By: Majed Al-Kotamy
For the Yemen Times
majedahmed1985@yahoo.com

I recently found myself spontaneously writing this article in order to uphold the penetrative words uttered by Mr. Abdul Salam Al-Ansy in a special interview broadcast on Suhail Channel two weeks ago on Aug. 8.

"I'll say my word about this matter, and then whoever wishes to pout can pout as he likes. I don't care!" said Al-Ansy. The broadcaster had asked him to depict the nature of the current Yemeni situation and to acquaint the viewers

with the core of those disagreements spreading throughout the political Yemeni household.

"All the friction and continuous discordances in the Yemeni domain are caused by two main problems," Al-Ansy said. "On one hand, there is friction between the opposition represented by the Joint Meeting Parties and the ruling General People's Congress. On the other hand, there are tremendous disagreements amongst the JMP themselves. All and sundry are for the dividing of the Yemeni dainty cake."

"All of those factions are seeking more power and special privileges," Al-Ansy added. "They are rushing to

acquire their own share of this abundant country's resources. Not a single one of them works faithfully to serve Yemen, his own homeland. Not one tries to maintain or strengthen the sturdy unified principles, no one looks to change for the sake of changing, and no one considers the national interests and makes them his own."

Abdul Salam Al-Ansy, a key member in the ruling party, is a very beloved man and figure highly respected by the GPC and the JMP alike. Yemenis inside and outside the country admire him for his matchless honesty and true national stands. He is regarded as one of the prominent founders of the GPC. But as is

usual in this country, he was partly excluded from attending the board of decision makers in the GPC and was eliminated as an effective member of the ruling party due to those good traits he possesses. In fact, many of the good men in this country who served Yemen and sacrificed in order to fix presidential orders and uphold the revolutionary unified system were excluded in this way.

According to Al-Ansy himself, he has recently broken away from the party line because he has become old enough to deal with the upcoming issues rising in the Yemeni domain. He commented ironically that "nobody can take away his age or the ages of others. I may not be

appropriate for this complicated period of time, yet I am still a son of the GPC. I'll continue to be a loyal citizen to the president Ali Abdullah Saleh, the GPC and my dear country of Yemen forever."

I was really very affected and astonished by those words which truly revealed the deep gap between the ruling party and the opposition and between the government and its adversaries inside

and outside Yemen.

All in all, I admired this man and his frank speech that didn't discriminate against a special faction or any political party. By removing such a sophisticated person from the country's political platform, Yemen has lost one of its most decent and faithful heroes – heroes whose numbers are declining day by day.

The bitter truth

By: Dhia Abdussamad Oshaish

Do we as Yemenis realize what patriotism really means? A Yemeni, from a patriotic perspective, will automatically say, "My country is a beautiful green one and has a deep-rooted culture." It seems that we are parroting and echoing these words without judging or weighing them.

If we cast a more examining look at the current scene of Yemen, we will

unmistakably get closer to reality. Yemen is definitely suffering from too many major problems. Some are natural like rapid desertification and drought which are caused by water shortages. Others are man-made, and those, surely, are countless.

This overly positive tendency in thinking is a result of continued passive education. Our students in schools are being spoon-fed information rather than being taught how to properly self-criticize and use logic. In other words, our students'

minds are being turned off. We Yemenis are brought up only to praise and admire our forefathers for their outstanding doings. It seems that Yemenis today were created only and solely to be proud of things they have never done or had a hand in.

The Yemeni media, which is out of touch with the reality they should face, is another main reason behind this self-deception. They keep filling our minds with an imaginary glamorous and heavenly Yemen. As a result, our people wonder if there is anything left

to be worked on or improved!

I don't want to sound too gloomy by saying that Yemen is one of the poorest countries regarding its resources, but that unfortunately is the bitter truth. Nevertheless, such a fact should never shatter our dreams of a better future. This is the goal we must aim for. Before that, however, we should see our true reality through clearer glasses and learn what patriotism really means. This, I believe, is the first and the key step towards a better future for Yemen.

There is no point in comparing them

By: Abdourahman Robleh
douleh582004@yahoo.com

I read Maged Thabet's article entitled 'To marry educated or uneducated women?' Part Three' published on 6 Aug. 2009, but I did not have a chance to read his previous articles about the same subject. I do not know how you presented this idea previously, but I think there is no point in comparing between educated and

uneducated women.

It goes without saying that an educated woman is far and away better than an uneducated woman. Mothers teach their children while the father is absent. She not only concerns herself with what they eat, but also about what they feel. Children need someone who understands them. Educated women can read a lot of books about how to raise children. That will enable them to raise their children in the best possible way.

For instance, my son could count from one to ten in Arabic, English and in my mother tongue, and he is only 2 and a half years old. He also knows the Arabic and English alphabets, with only a few mistakes. All of this progress is not because of me but because of the efforts of his mother who devotes her time to the wellbeing of her son. I sometimes see my wife reading a leaflet of medicine to make sure about the side effects and the date of expiration. That is the simplest

thing that an educated mother could do.

I do not say that life is a bed of roses with an educated woman. Like any couple, you might have ups and downs in life, and personal differences could play their role. There might be some issues that you do not see eye to eye on, but after all you can discuss such issues with an educated wife and can come to an agreement with her – something almost impossible with an uneducated wife.

Do not fight in my name!

By: Naji Gazali
naji734@gmail.com

I am fed up with the government's ongoing war on those Yemenis in Sa'ada who chose to take up arms against the government. Killing women and children by shelling villages where suspected supporters of the Houthis are located is not an excuse but a shame and a crime nobody of which nobody should be proud or even take part.

Seeing the president and the two sheiks of Hashed (Al-Ahmer and Kahlhan Abu Ahwarb) support such shelling is tragic because it sends the same message that Al-Houthi does. It shows that we are still loyal to our tribe more than to the country we claim to be a part of.

The minute you give the upper hand to one group or tribe over another, you are destroying everything about the republic that we claim to have achieved. The Sa'ada issue should be resolved in courts and negotiation, and not on the battlefield.

I would like to remind our government that when Eritrea occupied part of Yemen, we exhausted all channels and avenues to solve the matter peacefully. We did not send our air force or navy to redeem our dignity and reclaim our islands by force until the French and the World Court declared the Eritrean claims to the islands to be illegal. They handed the islands back to us

and today we continue to have good diplomatic and trade relations with Eritrea.

Yet our might against and amongst ourselves is fierce. Any calls to halt hostility between Yemenis and to go back to the negotiation table for settlement is considered unwise and unpatriotic. I wonder what it means to be patriotic and to love your country when your country, your government and your leader threaten your life.

It is true we need to have our country unified from north to south and east to west, but unity does not mean having control over the geography of the land. It means an acceptance of the hearts and minds of Yemenis. The only way the government will have the hearts and minds of all Yemenis is when all Yemenis are treated equal, not through empty words and propaganda, but by having the law and Constitution implemented in such a way that honors our rights and responsibilities.

When the government decides to fight in our name, we should authorize such fighting first. Yemen is going down the drain while most of us sit back and watch. For those of you watching elements of violence in our government, in the Houthi faction and elsewhere, what are you doing is not just digging your own grave but rather 20 million graves of innocent Yemenis who have never authorized any of this.

As a Yemeni, I do not authorize you to fight in my name.

باسم محمد عبده الشيباني
Basem M.A. Alshaibani

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Cartoons and a tale to celebrate Literacy Day in the world's newspapers



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The World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) is providing the world's newspapers cartoons to celebrate International Literacy Day which was on Sept. 8.

The cartoons were donated by some of the world's leading cartoonists, including Jim Davis, creator of Garfield, the world's most widely syndicated comic strip cat. French cartoonist Michel Cambon, and artists working with Cartoon Arts International, which represents political cartoonists from 75 countries also contributed. The cartoons are being provided with the help of the National Cartoonists Society, King Features Syndicate, Universal Press Syndicate and the New York Times Syndicate.

Besides the cartoons, the WAN-IFRA is providing the newspapers with an eight-part serialized story for publication around International Literacy Day, to help parents and teachers instill a love of reading in young people.

In many countries, teachers use newspapers to teach both children and adults how to read, and we constantly hear of new ways newspapers are working with, or even creating, libraries, said Aralynn McMane, Director of Young Reader Development at WAN-IFRA.

The story, called "The Fly on the Wall Journal," is a tale for 9 to 12 year olds about a group of insects who must learn to cooperate to create a newspaper to spread the news in City Park. The story will be published in the culture page of the Yemen Times, starting next issue.

Behind the story is a serious objective- to help teachers and parents show children that reading and learning are fun. The companion lesson plan includes reading comprehension questions, writing exercises, science facts and exercises that teach children about newspaper journalism, and offer ways to learn about the local newspaper.

Some 774 million adults lack minimum literacy skills world-wide. One in five adults is not literate, two-thirds of which are women. Seventy-two million children do not go to school, and many more attend irregularly or drop out, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which established International Literacy Day in 1965.

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