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War in Sa'da Wrests Away Children's Minds

By :Sadam Al-Ashmori

SANA'A, Dec, 6 — Dhifullah Ahmad, watches sorrowfully as his small children, Mohammed, 10, and Ashraf, 7, show no reaction to anything surrounding them, nor choose to interact with those around them, which causes him to be even more distraught. Ahmed said that his two children were enjoying their childhood until the war began. "My two kids used to play with their peers and study in school like all little kids. They are out of their minds now," he commented sadly.

Ahmed, is a farmer from Al-Saqin district in Sa'ada, who was forced to flee with his family due to the fighting between the army and the Houthi rebels on August 14. He has now joined the countless displaced people in Khiwan camp.

"One day I was out of the house on some business. When I came back, I

found some of the rebels were sitting in an adjacent house. I heard the sound them firing their machines guns like thunder," he said. "My house got damaged due to the confrontation of the rebels against the army. I was barely able to rescue my children, who were buried under debris. They could not breathe well and they were in shock. My son cannot speak a word now; he cannot even recognize what is he eating; sometimes he eats whatever he finds on the ground," he stated.

Children have been deeply affected by the conflict and will certainly continue to feel its impact for many years to come, said The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Yemen, which estimates that there are 75,000 children in Sa'ada who are directly affected. Many are traumatized and need special psycho-social help, according to Nasim Ur-Rehman, Chief Communications and Information Officer at UNICEF.

Ali Naji, who used to be a teacher in Harf Sufian, and has now become joined the ranks of the displaced, noted that the experience of displaced children has changed their behavior and temperament. "The change is the result of the psychological suffering they have endured from

the fear of war and not being provided with housing, food and the basic means to protect themselves from rain and the elements in the camp," he pointed out.

Abdurabuh, one of the displaced, complains about everything the refugees face. "Everything is two and three times more expensive than places which are not affected by the war. How is that happening?! We cannot find enough quilts in this cold weather, either," he said. "My twenty nine -year- old brother went crazy; I may go crazy too if the situation does not being so aggravating!" he yelled.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor commenced a campaign to teach children under the age of twelve how to react in emergency cases and how to keep themselves away from conflicts.

The Administrator of the Social Defense Authority and the Coordinator of the Psychological Support Program, Mr. Dabwan, affirmed that the campaign targets 6000 children living with their 2,300 families within the refugee camps in Sa'ada, Amran and Hajjah.

"The campaign is aims to distribute 240,000 pamphlets and stickers that show people with children how to react in case of an emergency and aims at protecting kids from exploitation and conflicts," he said.

Dabwan concluded that the campaign would last until the end of 2010 within a long- term program.

According to a field study by Siyaj Organization for Childhood Protection, Sa'ada children suffer severe psychological and behavioral problems resulting from the bad experiences of the ongoing war in the province. Completed near the end of November 2008, the study involved 1,018, mostly male children. The armed conflicts have left severe psychological and behavioral disorders among Sa'ada children, coupled with affecting their present and future, their families, their neighbors and their education.

Field researchers found that children suffer from psychological problems including depression, anxiety, involuntary bedwetting, and great fear associated with the sounds of lightning or bullets being fired at wedding ceremonies.

About 45.5 percent of respondents suffer fear from natural phenomena, especially those linked with the sounds of bombs. For them, these sounds bring back the bad memories of the war and they link them unconsciously with the war's explosions and gunfire.

Similarly, 21.6 percent of respondents reported cases of involuntary bedwetting and this percentage is above the average that should not exceed 15 percent for those who are older than three years.

It is also an important indication that the children's psychological state is deteriorating and this makes it difficult for them to control their physical functions. Five percent of these children have even reported cases of involuntary urination while awake.

Some children fell unconscious when hearing the sounds of gunfire and explosions or similar sounds, even if these sounds have been caused by thunder and lightning; 4.8 percent fainted while 3.3 percent mentioned that they rarely suffered from such problems. This seems to be unnatural especially when these children belong to a tribal society where hearing the sounds of gunfire and bullets is very common.



Poor families from Sa'ada are forced to flee from their dwellings and lose their income sources. Displaced Children try to support their families in whatever way they can. they fetch water and collect wood,

There has been a slight increase in the percentage (16 percent) of children who feel like crying, and this is a strong indicator of the negative impact of war on children, particularly in societies that consider children's weeping to be shameful. The results also indicate that children have acquired aggressive behaviors against others, as 35.3 percent mentioned that they have aggressive attitudes towards their peers or their relatives. Further, 21.5 percent suffer from introversion and feelings of wanting to be alone.

Over 63 percent noted that they often have disturbing nightmares, which is quite a high percentage and could affect the children's present and future. Roughly 45.5 percent of respondents also reported a great deal of fear related to the war and fear of its renewal.

"My life has become so grim with no joy, nor safety," said Ahmed with a quivering voice, looking at Mohammed and Ashraf, who show no reaction at all. This is the reality for the children of Sa'ada and their parents.

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Yemeni-Saudi forces attack Houthis from Saudi Arabia

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Dec. 5 — A relative tranquility was seen on the ground in Sa'ada and Amran governorates, but aerial bombardments fell around the clock from Yemeni and Saudi planes. The air raids targeted villages used as hide-outs by Houthis.

Al-Watan Saudi journal said that the Saudi forces are to proceed with air and cannon shelling against all Houthi dens. Houthis have been under attack

since last Friday. The attacks use the F-15 planes and the Abachi to prevent Houthis from crossing the border into Saudi Arabia.

The journal said that the explorative "Super Puma" departed from Jizan Airport last Thursday on a mission to catch Houthi sneaking into Saudi Arabia.

The Houthis confirmed that the Saudi air and land forces used the helicopters and jet air planes to attack areas like Al-Hosama, Bani Sayah, the mountains of

Dokhan, Al-Romaih and Al-Moudwed.

The Houthis released a statement that claims they are victims of the unfair and unjustified aggression executed by the Saudi forces against Yemen. They warned the Saudi forces to stop the raids and the aggression against Yemen, and against them.

The Houthis also called for volunteers to defend Yemen against what they call the "foreign aggression."

"During the war, many villages, homes and public and private property

were damaged along with damage that happened to the people, their farms and their cattle," reads the statement. "More than 5000 Saudi missiles and more than F-16 600 air raids have been used against us, not to mention the Abachi and the dozens of cannonballs."

Houthis said they targeted three Saudi tanks and caused much damage to the Saudi army during the confrontation last Saturday on the mountain of Al-Modood. They said that Saudi forces are getting ready to march in collaboration

with the Yemeni forces.

The Houthis also said that the Saudi forces continue the land and air raids, targeting the Razeh area and mountains of Al-Dokhan and Al-Modood.

Mohammad Abdulsalam, a Houthi spokesperson, said in a release to Al-Jazeera last Saturday that attacks by the Saudi and the Yemeni forces in the mountains of Al-Rumaih and Al-Ghawia nearby Al-Makheet were aborted.

Abdulsalam said that Saudi Arabia's use of the clause "defending our southern

boarders" was a lame excuse to sneak into Yemen. Houthis also accused Saudi forces of using prohibited phosphorous bombs and the poisoned gas in the war. They argue that Saudi forces have mercilessly destroyed the natural life in Sa'ada.

A tribal source said that armed Houthi rebels have settled in mountainous areas like the Khab and Al-Shighf provinces. They also took control of the mountain of Tharfa. In addition to this, they set up a check-point to inspect travelers.

The Turning Point Program Increases number of trainees

By: Shatha Al-Harazi For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Dec. 5 — The British council conducted program called Springboard under the slogan of "Women can dream and their dreams can come true." Dr. Billques Al-Ward, a pediatrician who attended the program, said that the program proved to be effective for many women and it changed their lives to the better. She attended the program and said she was able to see the change it made in her life.

"Before the program, I had no idea about my potentials and no idea how to direct them. I wanted to attend the course but the work in my clinic was so stressful and busy that I had to stop working for some time to attend the course. Instead, the course gave me a dose of challenge and I managed getting back to my work in the clinic," Al-Ward added.

Ishraq Al-Hamadani, who works for the Central Auditing Organization, said that she heard how beneficial the program was, so she decided to attend. "Before attending the program, I thought that I was perfect in every aspect of my life. I overestimated myself. Now, I know my potential well and I can specify my dreams and make them come true," she said.

A human sources coordinator, Al-Anod Al-Ansi, said she is not the kind of person who usually attends such courses due to her busy work schedule. "The courses deserves to be attended for the great benefit they offer. The courses I attended inspired me in every possible way," Al-Ansi added.

Samah Abdulqader, a new student in the School of Medicine, said that she could not make up her mind about what she would study at college. Yet, she found the program very inspiring and though the stress her family put on her shoulders and trying switching her wish away to join another college, she did it and joined the college she had ever dreamed of.

Maiadad Saleem, a student in the department of Politics and Economics, finds such courses very important because they develop her skills and enhance her potential. "I met many new people during the course, which is something I truly value. I became more confident and more daring. I advise every girl to attend the courses," she said.

Najween Ahmad said that the Springboard program enriched her life and her confidence. She became more determined and it opened her eyes to the world and to people. "Now I can say I am able to raise my society to a better place by working collectively with people in my environment," Najween said.

The program helped Arwa Ahmad take the most important decision in her life. She got rid of a job she had been working for over sixteen years.

Huda Saleem, the General Director of the Springboard program and a trainer, said that the program targets not only women but also the whole society. A study conducted by the Springboard program showed that women become more effective in their society when they work within a supportive environment.

"We are celebrating the 21st anniversary of the program on May.

I call on all governmental, local and international organizations to finance the program. We want to prolong this successful program so that many women increase their abilities, and raise up their societies," Saleem added.

The Springboard project provides personal development opportunities for women in the Middle East by facilitating the development of sustainable organizational links between the UK and countries of the Middle East. It also challenges public perceptions of the role and contributions of women to Middle East and UK societies.

The program includes topics such as identifying values, confidence-building, setting goals, managing feelings and promoting a positive image. It is presented in Arabic to help Arab women realize their potential, and achieve better positions in both their personal and professional lives.

The program is designed for women of all backgrounds and ages. More than 30 women participated in the workshops, and they were encouraged to take more control of their lives by identifying practical and realistic steps toward their goals.

British Council Yemen ran its first Springboard women's self development program in September 2007, with 20 participants coming from different organizations and backgrounds throughout Yemen, including NGOs and British Council staff.

The Springboard program was first launched in Saudi Arabia in 2004, and has been introduced in Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE and Yemen.

Development Initiatives in Higher Education, on the Move

By Aziz A. Alhadi For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Dec. 5 — The Yemeni Ministry for Higher Education has been closely coordinating with donors to foster cooperative partnerships with experts from the East and the West in order to improve the quality of higher education in Yemen and allow more opportunities for Yemenis to study abroad.

The past weeks have witnessed a stream of development activity in the Higher Education sector as the Minister of Higher Education announced the commencement of the second phase in implementation of the development action plan of activities programmed under the National Strategy for Development of Higher Education in Yemen, which was approved by the government in 2006.

Recently, discussions were held between the Ministry and a number of development partners regarding renewed funding from a number of multi-lateral and international donors including the World Bank and the governments of The Netherlands, China and Japan, supplemented by increasing Yemeni governmental support, to ensure continuation of the numerous developmental initiatives currently underway across the educational sector.

In comments at the conclusion of the government-sponsored, Third Higher Education Conference under the theme, "Quality Assurance and Accreditation in the Developing World," which was held in mid-October in Sana'a with nearly 300 participants from Yemen, a number of Arab countries, Europe and the Far East, Dr. Saleh BaSira, Minister of Higher Education, spoke very pointedly about the current problems and pressing challenges facing the nation's universities emphasizing the Ministry's determination to implement a multi-faceted effort to improve the quality and relevance of university programs, while pledging to support priority needs of the universities in terms of the enhancement of skills, program development, infrastructure, equipment, facilities and the completion of the sector's master plan for Information Technology, which is now in its second phase.

Dr. BaSira also announced the imminent establishment of the Higher Council for

Accreditation and Quality Assurance, which will be charged with the Licensure of Institutions, the development of program standards, promoting a "culture of quality" in the sector and eventually, conducting program evaluations and granting accreditation.

Renewed funding and new opportunities

The Second Higher Education Development Project successfully concluded a workshop last month to further develop a pilot project named the Quality Improvement Fund (QIF) mechanism. Under its introduction, Yemen's public universities will compete for funding from the \$7 million provided under an IDA/World Bank grant of \$10 million slated to fund the second phase of the Higher Education Development Project.

In opening remarks at the start of the workshop, Dr. Mohamed Mottahar, the Vice-Minister of Higher Education and the creator of the Quality Fund concept, elaborated on the Ministry's plan to oversee the development of the QIF into a mechanism to focus on improving the quality of university's programs.

He also stated the Ministry's priority of ensuring that the university's development plans are coordinated with the Ministry and other national agencies to ensure "targeted development" of university infrastructure and qualitative improvements. This workshop and a number of other pre-project activities are being funded by the Bank and a grant from the Government of Japan, administered by the World Bank. Fifty participants from Yemen's eight public universities participated in the workshop to refine the preliminary proposals in order to enhance the quality of some 13 university programs, including programs in specializations ranging from Class Teacher Training to Mechatronics.

According to Dr. Mohamed Sirhan Al-Mekhlafi, Project Director, to qualify for funding, university proposals must demonstrate consistency with a number of criteria including compatibility with the priorities of the National Strategy, societal needs, relevance, and feasibility. In addition, only programs in applied engineering, the sciences, education and medicine are being considered in this first

round. A new program of support from the Netherlands was formally announced during a recent visit by a delegation from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC). The new program, nicknamed "NICHE," will fund capacity development programs in both the higher education and technical education sub-sectors over a period of five years.

Since 2004, the Netherlands has funded some 13 projects at Yemen's universities, technical institutes, community colleges and the Ministry of Higher Education. These have included specialized centers in the area of Water and the Environment, Gender Development, Graduate Business and Public Management, Medical Teaching and Information Technology among others. The latest project is funding the development of two technical graduate programs for professionals at the University of Taiz administered by T U Delft University, scheduled to begin classes in January.

Last month a team of academics and technical experts from the Netherlands, the Philippines, India and Sweden arrived in Taiz to finalize preparations on the two new graduate programs in IT Management and Engineering Management. The two programs seek to provide senior and mid-level professionals with a rare opportunity to update their knowledge on technological developments whilst simultaneously enabling them to integrate modern management methods in the practice of their professions. This program also formally inaugurates Taiz University's long-term plan to develop into a technical university in-line with the Ministry's plan to promote specialization at Yemen's universities.

With funding from the People's Republic of China, work on the project to establish the core infrastructure needed to host the Information Technology (IT) Network for Higher Education began this month at the Universities of Aden and Sana'a, with the arrival of some 15 containers of specialized equipment and a team of experts from China.

Finally, a "sister" Yemen-government funded project to establish the infrastructure for the IT network at Taiz University entered its second phase.

News Yemen Web site resumes publishing



The News Yemen Web site was hacked on the day of Eid, November 27 and it resumed publishing on Saturday December 5. The Web site is demanding to free the Internet business from the state monopolization to have secure environment for electronic media.

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, Dec. 6 — The News Yemen Web site resumed publishing Saturday night after it was destroyed by a virus on November 27, the day of Eid Al-Dha.

The Web site now temporarily publishing its content in an older version and is currently working on four tasks:

First, the news agency is working on formatting the homepage to enable editors publish new stories. They are also contacting the host company of the Web site in the USA to work with a team from the Yemeni Ministry of Telecommunication to reveal the body who sent the virus to the Web site. Also, they are working to restore their lost archives. Finally, they are redesigning the Web site to be more secure against viruses. The news agency has lost YR 40 million (USD 195,000) and they are losing more every day due to the damage, according to Nabil Al-Sofi, the publisher and editor-in-chief of the Web site.

The administration of the Web site is accusing the Yemen Net, a governmental Internet service provider of damaging the Web site.

"Yemen Net and the Ministry of Telecommunication are the only authorities who can reveal the body that destroyed our five years work," said Al-Sofi. But, the general manager of Yemen

Net, Amer Haza'a, said that the company can't be held any accountable for the damage because the Web site is being hosted by a company outside Yemen.

However, Al-Sofi insisted that Yemen Net knows the body that damaged the Web site.

"Yemen Net is Yemen's gateway to the Web, and is able to tell the identity of the person who committed the hacking," said Al-Sofi.

"It is the only body that does know the password that the Web site's engineers and editors use in contacting with the host company," he added.

The Minister of Telecommunication, Kamal Al-Jabri and Haza'a met with Al-Sofi on Saturday. The minister pledged to seek assistance from international experts to reveal the identity of the person who hacked the Web site.

Following the damage of the Web site, the administration of the Web site accused directly the Yemen Net Administration and stated that Yasser Al-Emad, an IT employee at Yemen Net is the person who sent the virus.

"It is a disaster for the electronic media in Yemen, and what adds insult to injury is that we discovered the virus was sent by Yemen Net under the name of Yasser Al-Emad who works in the information technology department at the company," said a press release by the Web site.

Although the Web site agreed with the American host company to republish with the same domain name, the host company expressed its concern for the safety of its other Web sites based in Yemen, according to the News Yemen Web site. The Web site demanded the Ministry of Telecommunication allow other Internet service providers to operate in Yemen. Currently the industry is monopolized by the state through the Yemen Net administration.

"We are demanding that Internet service be freed from the hands of the state, in order to develop the Yemeni society and connect with the world," said Al-Sofi. "Now, we are working in a frustrating climate that threatens our efforts, security and even our business."

The News Yemen Web site was established in May 3, 2005, with eight journalists in Sana'a and 13 correspondents in the governorates.

Before the site was damaged, it produced more than 30,000 articles. All of them were lost.

Around 40 million hits were registered to the Web site, 68 percent of them from inside Yemen and the rest from outside.

The Web site is addressing press freedom organizations and the business community to support them in trying to build a Yemen that secure for electronic media.

Awareness campaign to fight breast cancer in Sana'a

By: Shadha Al-Harzi

SANA'A, Dec. 5 — The National Cancer Control Corporation has started a campaign to encourage early breast cancer detection, as this is the most prevalent and dangerous form of cancer threatening the rural and mainly illiterate areas of Yemen. The campaign is set up in cooperation with AWAM, the Youth Media Forum and the Yemen Journalist Syndicate. The activities of the campaign include distributing pamphlets and stickers among girls and women in schools, universities, clinics, shops and women's organizations, in addition to a broadcasting program and press reports.

The one-month campaign, started in November, with many women responding to the campaign, despite the perception that there is shame for women who detect the disease. "The proportion of women who reacted positively and came for early test was satisfactory," said Dr. Mona Al-Rai from Al-Hyat Early Detection of Breast Cancer Center.

The campaign emphasized the fact that studies show early detection of breast cancer can reduce fatalities by as much as 14 to 20 percent. Self-examination, periodical clinical check-ups, and finally

undergoing a mammogram at the right age, should all, hopefully, lead to early detection. As women between 40 and 50 are in a higher-risk group for developing breast cancer, they should undergo the mammogram once every two years, and women over 60 should do so once a year.

Al Hyat Early Detection of Breast Cancer Center diagnoses breast cancer at no charge to the patients. Dr. Maysoun Taher, of King Hussain Medical Technology Institute, confirmed that the center received about 200 cases from different areas like Ibb, Al-Jawf and Hadramout. "At the center, we only diagnose cases for free using many methods including the mammogram. When we discover a tumor or growth, whether benign or malignant, we send the patient to a specialized remedial center, where they receive free treatment or, in some cases, surgeries," Taher added.

According to Dr. Ali Al-Alashwal, the deputy director of the National Tumor Center, cancer in Yemen is likely to develop due to many factors such as malnutrition, obesity, smoking, and environmental pollution. "The factors that increase the development of cancer may be different in Europe, it can develop due the postponement

of childbirth or because women do not breastfeed their babies," he said.

According to Rai, that there are no certain methods of preventing the disease, but she recommends eating healthy foods, avoiding pollutants and self-examinations monthly. "We at the center believe that raising awareness among women, is itself a way of prevention. We have comprehensive programs such as awareness-raising lectures in universities or in the same center in the presence of a large number of women, and I consider this a way of prevention," she said.

The country is making its efforts to control breast cancer, yet greater efforts are needed order to stop cancer from spreading. "Support from various charities can help women buy the very expensive medications," Al-Ashwal added, confirming that the National Tumor Center needs more financial support from the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry, he claims, has not raised the needed money since 2005 when the Center used to receive 200 cases. However, the center now receives about 400 cases monthly and this number will most likely increase over time, which means that funding and spreading awareness are both needs which are set to grow.

In Brief

SANA'A

Turkish surgical team arrives

A Turkish Surgical team arrived in Sana'a on Friday in a visit to do surgical heart operations for children at al Thawrah Hospital in Sana'a city.

It is scheduled that the team in cooperation of Yemeni doctors would offer treatment for heart patients who could not offer to receive treatment abroad.

Yemeni-Sudanese Committee to hold maiden meeting

Arrangements have got underway for the first meeting of the Yemeni-Sudanese Committee.

The meeting would take place early next month and jointly chaired Prime Minister Ali Muhammad Mujawar and Sudan's Vice President Ali Osman Taha, the September 26 website reported on Thursday. However, the venue for the meeting has not been disclosed yet.

The two countries have recently decided to boost their joint ministerial committee to a supreme committee chaired by Foreign ministers of both brotherly states.

Strengthening the bilateral relationship and signing cooperation deals in areas such as economy, trade, fish, sports and education would be high on the agenda. The regional latest developments and issues of mutual interest would be addressed as well.

On the other side, the Yemeni-UAE Committee is to hold on 16-17 December its second meeting in the UAE capital of Abu Dhabi. The meeting would be co-chaired by Foreign ministers of the two countries Abu Bakr al-Qirbi and the Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The appropriation of pledges the UAE had made at the 2006 London Donor Conference for supporting development in Yemen would be discussed besides other topics. Signing cooperation deals is expected in the meeting.

ADEN

Italian trade delegation to visit Aden

An Italian delegation of Investment Authority would visit Aden city during

this month to see chances of investments in Aden Free Zone (AFZ).

Director of local economic development in Aden Jamil Anor told Saba that the visit of the delegation came in response to an invitation from Aden governor Adnan al Jafri to the authority to visit the city and see available opportunities of investments.

He added that the delegation would sign an agreement of cooperation with Aden commercial and industrial chamber to carry out several investment projects in the province of Aden.

2,760 tourists arrive in Aden seaport
Some 2,760 tourists from different nationalities arrived on Friday in Aden seaport on board of an Italian tourist ship.

The governor of Aden inspected arrangements of welcoming the tourists and programs prepared for them in the province.

The governor asked the authorities of the seaport to offer all services and facilitates for the tourists.

On the other hand, around 392 tourists from European countries visited several historical and tourist sites in Taiz province.

Two phases of ACT expansion cost \$850mln

Dubai and Aden Port Development Company (DAPDC) is planning to expand and develop Aden port and Aden Container Terminal (ACT) in two phases at a cost of \$850 million, under the partnership agreement between Gulf of Aden Port Corporation and Dubai Ports World.

According to DAPDC's statement, the company is currently completing arrangements for expanding the quay and backyards of ACT.

The statement pointed that the expansion will be 400 meters as a first phase, followed by expansion of about 900 meters in the second phase, bringing the total length of the berth in the future to 2000 meters to the west from the existing terminal.

This important economic step aims to raise the ACT's capacity and inserting support equipments and purchasing

a gantry crane for handling containers in the yard, the company indicated.

BAIDHA'A

Fire ravages cloth market in central Yemen

A huge fire has broken out at a cloth market in central Yemen, with an estimate of YR 70 million in losses.

Some shopkeepers were sleeping inside their stores when the fire started on Thursday night and reported hurt.

According to the Alshawa website, the fire ravaged all shops and goods at the market in the province of Baidha'a.

The cause of the blaze is still unclear, with some traders blaming an electrical fault.

Others confirmed there was a power outage when the fire broke out and complained a doer was behind the incident.

The website quoting eyewitnesses reported the fire fast spread, devastating every thing at the market within minutes.

It took firefighters a few hours before they brought it under control.

MAREB

180 kg of drugs seized in Mareb, suspects run away

Police seized on Friday 80 kg of hashish in Yemen's province of Mareb, almost 130 km northeast Sana'a.

The drugs were found in a Peugeot car.

Two suspects who were driving the car, however, ran away before police arrived at the car location.

A hunt was launched for them. The seizure comes within the crackdown on drugs traffickers after the trade gained momentum in recent years.

Over the last year and this year, the authorities seized tonnes of drugs and many traffickers, most foreigners.

Some of them went on trials, receiving in some cases death sentences, after convicting them of trafficking drugs into the country.

HODEIDAH

VP inspects Hodeidah port

Vice President Abdu Rabo Mansour Hadi paid a visit on Wednesday to Port of Hodeidah.

During his visit, he got acquainted with the work progress in the port's projects and the growing trade movement in the port.

Accompanied by Hodeidah Governor Ahmed al-Jabali, Hadi toured the port docks and was briefed on the volume of movement in the port which recently witnessed increasing by 30 per cent due to simplifying the procedures and speeding lading and unloading services.

Hadi affirmed the necessity of exerting more efforts to develop the port performance and to cope with the developments in the trade movement and the growing investments.

Man shoots dead two sons, wounds wife in western Yemen

An old man has shot his family in Yemen's western province of Hodeida killing his two sons and wounding his wife.

The sons Mohammed, 19, and Fuad, 24, were immediately killed and the wife, in her 40s, got four shots in her left shoulder and she was taken to hospital in critical condition.

The 60-year-old man was arrested shortly after the incident, according to the Interior Ministry's website.

Initial investigations

IBB

SC chairman inspects Ibb tourism resort project

Chairman of Shoura Council Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani along with governor of Ibb Ahmed al-Hajari inspected on Saturday a project of Ibb Tourism Resort.

The first phase of the project contains a hotel, 26 chalets, a hall for parties, health club and mosque at sum of \$ 10 million. Abdul Ghani expressed comfort for works in the project which is considered on the big tourists projects in the province.

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Their News

Charity concert to support medical sector

The Diplomatic club of Yemen chaired by Dr. Azza Ghanem the spouse of H.E the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Russian Federation are organizing a charity concert and lunch to support medical sector in Yemen.

The event will include:
Folkloric Russian Dances and Songs.
Traditional Yemeni Dances and Songs.
Delicious Russian Foods.
You can also buy Russian sweets, oxygen cosmetics and souvenirs and many

interesting things.
This event will take place on Thursday, 10th of December at 13:00 hours.
It will be held in the Sheraton Hotel (Kawkaban Ballroom).

Important:
The concert will start at 14:00 hours sharp, so participants are kindly requested to be on time.
Tickets will cost you about 3000YR or \$15.

نتقدم
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إلى فخامة الأخ/
علي عبدالله صالح
رئيس الجمهورية
وإلى الشعب اليمني الكريم
بمناسبة عيد الأضحى المبارك
والذكرى الـ ٤٢ ليوم الجلاء في الـ ٣٠ من نوفمبر
كل عام وأنتم بخير
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JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE CAPITAL (8)

“Why?” “How?” The riddles of travelling

By: Judith Spiegel

“No, you will not get a travel permit because you want to leave today and this is not possible. You should have come 24 hours ago, now I cannot call the minister of interior”. “But I was here last night and explained you that I need a letter from my school that says that I want to travel, which I could only get this morning”. The police officer sighs and decides that I may want to speak with the colonel, who holds office on the upper floor.

After just another day in the capital, sometimes it is nice to travel a bit. To go away and see what else is there. To be confronted with new things, other people and above all with curious things and situations which raise questions. There are many of those. And most of them arise even before the actual travelling, when visa and travel permits need to be taken care of.

The colonel: “How are you?”. I am very fine, but I would even be better...” He fills in: “if you would get your travel permit” Which was exactly what I wanted to say. “The problem is”, he explains, “that I cannot call the minister now”. We are heading towards qat-time so I can see the problem, although I do not quite see the point of calling the minister in the first place. Nevertheless, it would be highly appreciated if the travel permit is issued. After another ten minutes, during which nothing significant happens, it is. No calls to the Minister are required after all. The only thing I must realize, the colonel emphasizes, is that now I will travel



independently. Huh? Never mind, I decide to take this enigmatic condition for granted.

At the checkpoints no one seems to be bothered with the level of my independence. In fact, the only thing one is interested in is the country where you are from. Why? To call the right embassy in case you never show up at the same checkpoint again? Or just out of curiosity? According to an officer at the Tourist Police it is because your nationality is not on the permit since this might attract kidnapers. But how would that work? Would the kidnapers first ask for your travel permit and then decide to take you away or not, depending on which country you are from? The of-

ficer explains: “it is for your safety”.

So far so good for travelling in Yemen. How is leaving the country and coming back to it? Let’s try and go to Cairo for a few days. Questions galore at Sana’a International Airport. For one, the security gates beep permanently. In most countries this would mean a thorough check of either the gates or the beeping people going through them. Not so at Sana’a International Airport. The beeping is simply ignored. Then there is the riddle of the cigarettes. Why are cigarettes almost twice as expensive at the airport than outside in the streets? The answer of the sales woman is one to cherish: “because they are tax free”.

buy visa at the bank!” At the bank? O well, never mind, at the bank, I buy a visa for 15 USD.

Five days later, I am back in Yemen. Or actually, back at the airport, at the customs, where an annoyed officer barks: “where is visa?!” This time, I know the answer. “Here it is, on the first page of my passport, three months valid, no problem.” But it is a problem. My visa is a one-entry visa. And although I was assured by more than one kind advisor that this is no problem, it now is. I must buy a new visa. For 60 USD. “Why is it 60 USD here, and only 30 euro at the Yemeni embassy in my home country?” Again, an answer is quickly given: “because”.

I do not have 60 USD on me. The important visa man shrugs and says that this is not his problem. Why is there no bank next to the visa office? I know there are at least 4 ATM’s in the arrival hall so why not one here? The answer of the important visa man is along the same line, it is just not his problem. Meanwhile, I can see my lonely suitcase doing some independent travelling on the con-

veyor belt.

After a while another custom official understands the problem and the solution.

He is willing to walk with me to the ATM in the arrival hall. He keeps my passport in his breast pocket to prevent me from running away without a stamp. Once the money is there, so is the visa. That is, there is a sticker and a stamp saying that registration must take place within two weeks. And then, I’ll have the right to stay another 3 months. Good, but let’s first make it a multiple entry visa. I mean, I pay more than I did for the one-entry one so can we at least make it a two-entry one this time? “No we cannot do this, for this you have to go to the Yemeni embassy in your country.”

Finally outside, the taxi driver wants 2000 YR to go to the Old City. But why is it 1000 YR from the Old City to the airport and twice this amount the other way around? He smiles and agrees on 1000. He calls me his friend and takes me home. Just like that, without any further questions from my side.

Another interesting thing of Yemeni travel materializes in the plane. Descending towards Cairo airport people decide it is time to call their families and friends to say that they are almost there. The Yemenia-crew does not seem to be bothered by this. Why are we always told to switch off all electronic equipment until the aircraft has come to a complete stand still? Actually, why are we always told the same thing regarding staying seated with your seat belt fastened? The Yemeni passengers do not seem to be bothered with this either.

At Cairo airport the custom officer shouts “visa, where visa?”. Good question.

He provides the answer: “you must



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Words of Wisdom



Many countries hold elections. Even when these are not rigged, they tend to cement the old patron-clientele relations in a new grab. The reason is that the people in power use their connections (and state funds, media, bureaucracy, etc.) to achieve the election results they want. The result is that they create docile parliaments. Elections thus end up enabling those in power to hold on to it.

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951 - 1999)
Founder of Yemen Times



OUR OPINION

Explaining "Houthism" to the world

During my Eid holidays in Jordan friends kept asking me one question all the time: "So what's this Houthi issue you have going on in Yemen?" sometimes they would ask innocent questions that to Yemenis would sound trivial but they really got me thinking. Questions like "who is wrong and who is right?" or "what do they really want?" or even "How can the armies of two countries - Yemen and KSA - not succeed in finishing a war with a group of armed gangs?"

It is very difficult to explain the conflict in Sa'ada to people outside Yemen. In fact, it is difficult to explain it anyway, although we here in the country pretend to understand what it is all about since we got used to hearing about it, or for many being part of it.

This war in Sa'ada albeit being the sixth of its kind, has put Yemen on the global map. For all the wrong reasons of course, but still now people around the world are taking interest in our country. They are asking questions and many journalists and researchers are visiting to explore and understand more. If there is a bright side to the war, it is this fact. Even the United Nations has finally made of the displaced persons an urgent matter and has issued an appeal after another in order to raise funds and protect innocent civilians. It took the world five wars to realize that Yemen has a problem, but like they say better late than never.

While trying to explain Houthism to the world, Yemenis have to talk about other aspects of Yemen. The problem in Sa'ada is not isolated from the other problems whether other conflicts such as the southern or central plateau movements or general issues such as poverty, unemployment, discrimination against women and so on.

When explaining our problems to the world, we have to explain to them that we have a president that has been ruling us for the last thirty years and whose son is likely to take over soon. That one in two women are not educated because the culture does not encourage women to mix with men even if they are the teachers in schools. That most Yemeni young men and women chew qat for more than five hours a day doing nothing while the unemployment rate is more than 35 percent. That children in tribal areas are taught to use arms and are proud to carry them and do not hesitate before shooting someone.

We have to explain to the world why the electricity is not regular even in the main cities, and why people get detained without trial all the time.

To be honest, the Sa'ada war has put Yemen in the world's map and made Yemenis who interact with the world more fragile when it comes to talking about their country. I feel profoundly sad when I have to answer to the world about Yemen, I wish I could brag about my country but unfortunately all the things to positively talk about are the doings of my great great grandparents while this generation has nothing to be proud of. And for all those reasons I am sad.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

USA rejects war in Sa'ada

By: Mohammed Al-Ahmadi
Al-Ghad Newspaper

Although the USA does not approve of rebels in the Sa'ada governorate, it does not approve of the war launched by the Yemeni government against the rebels, either. This attitude may be explained by understanding the United States' wish to cleanse Al-Qaeda dens from the borders of Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Thus, the Yemeni army may lose its capacity to fight against the Al-Qaeda den headed by the Yemeni Abu Baseer al-Ohaishi in the northern borders of Yemen and the southern borders of Saudi Arabia.

In the same context, an American official source in the Department of State said that despite the concern the USA shows about the war in Sa'ada, the USA is sure that Iran has nothing

to do with Houthi rebels. The source said in a press release for CNN that the Department of State is in contact with Yemen and Saudi Arabia in order to reduce the stress on both governments.

According to the US, Houthi rebels are not terrorists. This release has led a trusted Yemeni source to accuse the USA of being selfish and only thinking of its own interests. The USA has called for a cease-fire and demanded both sides to stop fighting. "Houthi rebels are responsible for the damage and for all the attempts that targeted Yemen and Saudi Arabian security," the source said. The Yemeni source said that the US government is not going to believe what is out of its interests and it does not want to confess that Iran is the only source behind the war in Sa'ada. "Its confession of Iran being the only weapon- sponsoring side for Houthies may make things

more stressful, especially with its affairs with Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq," the source added.

The current situation might suggest clashes in Yemeni-American relations since Yemen tries its best to get rid of Al-Houthi rebels in the north and the USA wishes only to focus in its own interests. The situation starts to get worse, especially when the Department of Defense, represented by Walt Whitman, has denied signing a military contract with Yemen. However, he did not deny the American-Yemeni consultations regarding the relations between both countries.

In the same context, Dr. Abu Bakr al-Kerbi, head of the Foreign Ministry, has announced in the Egyptian al-Ahram daily that Yemen did not ask the USA for any military help for its war with the rebels adding that he cannot deny the cooperation of Yemen in the US-led war on terror.

Sex discrimination against educated women

By: Suad Al-Saba

As we know, the changes of the modern era have forced women to work, and they have forced men to accept the fact that women share the workplace with them, even if this irritates some men.

In our country, there are equal laws in pay, qualification, rights, and job duties between men and women, but sex-based discrimination is still a huge obstacle. What really hurts is that many Yemeni women are equal, and may be better than men in job performance, but male colleagues treat them differently. For example, job duties are distributed among men first, and then to women. The woman does not get her rights unless these rights bring her sadness.

Gender-based discrimination occurs in institutions like universities, which are supposed to be unique in their high level of justice. This is not based on imagination. It happened to me in reality. A few days ago, a situation occurred between me and one of the decision makers which made me feel bitterly disappointed because I discovered that higher education's directors do not have a different view about women. I am a founding member of a professional academic association, and we just held some elections that turned into nomination to identify the council

members. Despite the fact that I am one of the active founding members I was asked to lead the women's committee just because I am a woman. When I objected I was told to head the public relations committee. After struggling and arguing my fellow academicians and professors decided that my credentials qualify me to lead the scientific committee. They pretend to believe in women's skills and abilities, and act as if they are civilized. When men made a decision, they disregard women, even though they shared an important role in the decision-making. Decision-makers prefer to have male colleagues, even if they are less competent than women, because they believe that men are better and stronger. They also believe that men have higher prestige in Yemeni society.

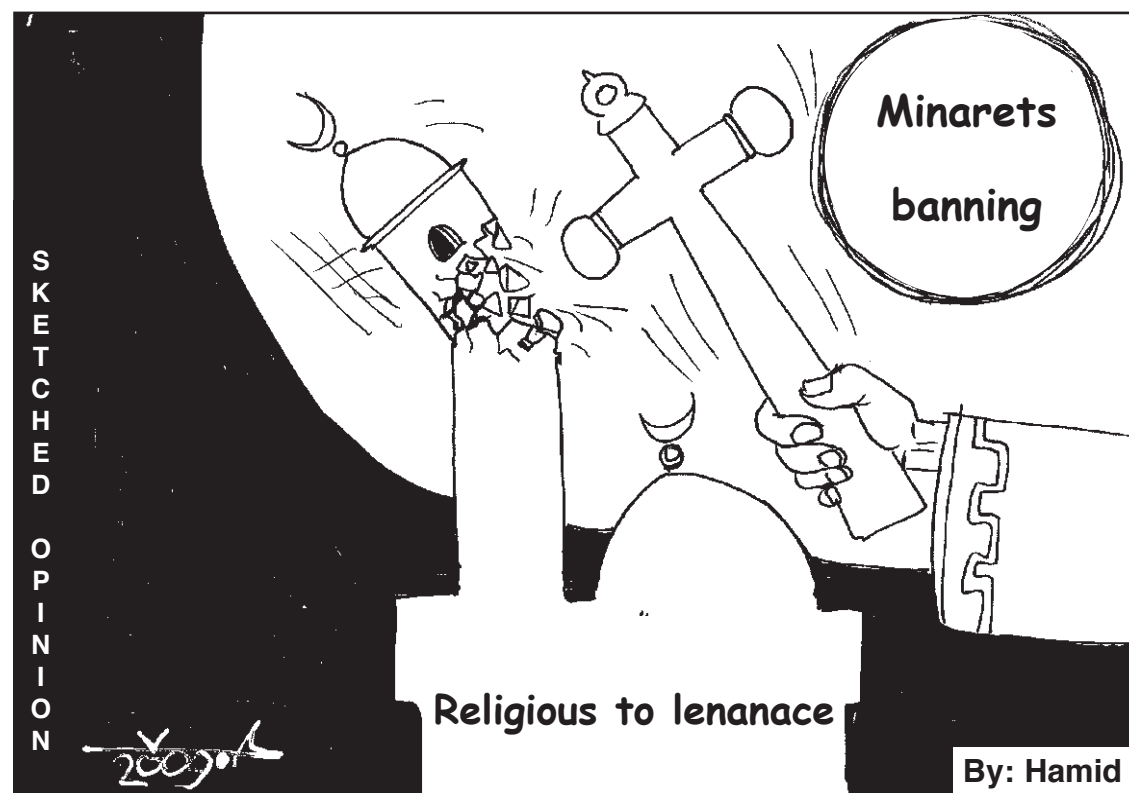
I am convinced that real participation between men and women in making decisions is rare. Yet, if it happened, it would be accepted by men who have a good mentality, who are devoid of cultural complexes that support discrimination against women.

Discrimination against women is stuck in the Yemeni citizen's mind, and it is practiced by many men unconsciously, even if they hold of higher education degrees. Higher education does not change their ideas about woman. As a result, their behaviors towards women do not change. What really hurts is that sexual discrimination is practiced by highly educated people who are supposed to be at the top of our enlightened leaders. But, unfortunately, I have found that illiterate men treat women more fairly than educated men.

Sexual discrimination in the workplace comes in different forms. It begins by hiding information from women, and it ends by exclusion of women from making decisions. If there is an exception which enables women to take part in making decisions by political force, they will take more time, not to develop her performance, but to convince their male co-workers that they are able to make developmental decisions. Then, they also take more time to convince their colleagues to execute their decisions. If those men supported women and understood that working requires mutual cooperation rather than oppression, they would not conduct themselves so unprofessionally.

When a man and woman come together in an institution, it should not be based on gender. It should be based on humanity. Men also should see women as a partner in production and note that they have equal abilities and skills.

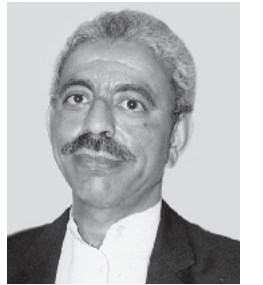
When justice develops in any corporation, women will be treated according to performance and commitment criteria. This corporation will be a pioneer in production and be a good role model for morality. This is what we hope to see in all service and production institutions.



COMMON SENSE

How the West Won: Hate and Hate and More Hate First the Hijab; then the Minarets and Now the Prayer Call

"Sometimes I think we get so embroiled in our own religious strife that we forgot that there are real enemies out there trying to get rid of us altogether", said Faiza to her teacher as the class was discussing the rise and fall of the Ottoman Empire.



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

Another student rose up to contest what Faiza was saying, but she would not let him even start as she said: "They first said they do not want Moslem women to wear scarves over their heads, now they say they do not want Moslem mosques to wear minarets! What is wrong with these Gentiles? For centuries, Moslems have allowed Christian Churches to exist in their midst, even at the height of Moslem hegemony over the world. Not once did we tell them to take those crosses off their chests. The fact that so many Christian communities exist within the heart of the Moslem World is testimony to the tolerance that characterized Moslems throughout the ages for the last 1500 years."

The other student, Huda, finally cut in: "Believe me; you should never expect Christians to open up their hearts to you; look at the ugly bloodstained history of the bearers of the Cross. Have we forgotten how many Moslems were killed by the Spanish Inquisition, which was extended to as far away as the Philippines, not to mention the Indian population of the American continents (who were not even Moslems)? Even before that, did you know that the Crusades slaughtered some 90,000 Moslems, when they took over Jerusalem and stacked their skulls into pyramids. Just read The Arabs, by Sir Anthony Nutting, former British MP and Foreign Minister. There you will see some interesting perspectives on the rise and fall of Saracen culture, in its different formats."

Faiza came back into the discussion: "You do not have to go back that far to see Christian atrocities against Moslems: Have you all forgotten the atrocities against the Moslems of Bosnia Herzegovina, the Moslems of Chechnya and now China? Do you know what the British Prime Minister, John Major said, when asked why Europe and particularly Great Britain watch almost in entertainment, while the Serbians were mercilessly carrying out the worst ethnic cleansing campaign of modern times, which even the Zionist mobs of Stern, Irun and the Haganah could not even surpass in the bloody early days of the Zionist State of Israel? He said flatly and without any inhibition: 'We simply cannot allow for a Moslem state to exist in the midst of Europe!' Had it not been for a merciful glance from Former President Bill Clinton, the Sava and Bosna Rivers would be rivers of blood today and former Bosnian Serb President Radovan Karadzic would be dancing for joy over the bodies of raped women and girls of Sarajevo in celebration of Christmas every year."

The teacher thought that the conversation was getting out of control: "Now, remember students, do not become excessively hateful of those who have little convictions to start with and keep your conversations narrowed down to the issue of the building of minarets in the Moslem houses of worship in Europe."

Huda remarked: "Look teacher, the Moslem World needs to wake up fast, if we have any hope of avoiding any further massacres. We should not count on President Barack Obama to come to our rescue, no matter how many nice speeches he makes. As it is Obama can't even get the Israelis to stop building settlements in land that is forcefully and illegally occupied by Zionist thugs of the likes of Benjamin Netanyahu."

"I might add", Faiza cut in continuing, "that the Americans DO have the power to stop those settlements and even get the Zionists in Tel Aviv to pray towards the Vatican if they wish. After all, does not the United States provide Israel with US \$ 10 million per day in various forms of military and economic support, without which Israel would be a mirage of Zionist wishful thinking?"

Another student Batool said: "While we are on the subject of minarets, do you know that the Israelis are now promoting for legislation to ban the Adhan or Islamic call to prayer in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Israeli part of Palestine. So then what will our fellow People of the Scriptures think of to complete the elimination of the Moslem World altogether?"

Don't worry Huda, said Faiza: "As long as we have Moslems like Hassan Nasr Allah Recep Erdogan, and Abdulla Badawi, another Salah Eddin is bound to rise to our salvation. Nutting states in his book, The Arabs, that no matter how much the Moslems may retract in power and prominence, somehow they come back with strong resilience. Maybe that is why the West is really worried about Iran and is certainly not willing to have Turkey join the European Union. So keep your scarves on ladies and keep building those minarets, we are bound to take our rightful place in the world, no matter how much these tyrants in our midst seek to keep us under their iron fists and serve the interests of those who want to see us become extinct once and for all."

Hassan Al-Haifi has been a Yemeni political economist and journalist for more than 20 years. He may be blogged at: <http://com-senfromyem.blogspot.com/>

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P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a, Yemen

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Letters: yteditor@gmail.com

Advertisement: ads@yementimes.com

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf

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Managing Editor
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Editorial Staff

Ali Saeed
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Offices

Aden Bureau:
Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed
Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596
Fax: +967 (2) 347056
Email: [ytaden@y.net.ye](mailto:ytagen@y.net.ye)

Taiz Bureau:
Imad Ahmed Al-Saqqaf
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156,
Telefax: +967 (4) 217157
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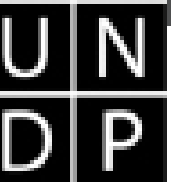
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- Is responsible for the accomplishment of MSF standards both in Sana'a and the field projects.

Skills:

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- Excellent spoken and written English (native Yemeni) able to produce reports in English.
- Computer user: Word, Excel, Database systems
- Strong security awareness
- Background in purchasing, warehouse management, logistics and vehicle management.
- Technical background would be a plus

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Request for Expression of Interest for Conducting Knowledge, Attitude, Behaviour & Practice in HIV/AIDS (KABP)



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Level: NGO/ research institution to undertake a KABP study among general population in Yemen.

Type of Contract: Three months

Duty station: Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

This study is an attempt to assess knowledge, attitude, behavior and practices of general population and youth on HIV/AIDS. The selected NGO/ research institution will conduct a **KABP** study among general population in Yemen (rural, peri-urban and urban populations) using quantitative and qualitative methods. The NGO/research institution will work along side the international consultant in preparation of study protocol, instruments, training, data collection and analysis, and report writing.

Expected deliverables

The NGO / research institution should deliver a comprehensive report in English and Arabic as per agreed time frame. The NGO / research institution should also deliver the raw and processed data preferably in SPSS or Excel format. .

UNAIDS will be expecting interested and qualified NGO/ research institution to submit 1) Capability document of the organization with experience and profile of professionals in the concerned field. 2) Sealed Technical proposal and 3) Sealed Financial Proposal by **Wednesday 16, December 2009**. Applications received after **Wednesday 16, December 2009** will not be considered.

- All applications should be sent to amal.almureisi@undp.org

NGO/ Institution -Scope of Work

In working closely and along side the international consultant the NGO/ institution scope of work will include:

1. Providing interviewers with previous and required experience in field work.
2. Assisting international consultants in training.
3. Pilot testing the questionnaire.
4. Assigning supervisors to monitor and follow up on field work.
5. Collecting, editing, compiling & entering the data.
6. Providing periodic update and feedback on field work to research committee.
7. Recruiting personnel for data entry.
8. Submitting descriptive data analysis to consultants.
9. Submitting a draft & final report including background, methods and results.
10. Submitting filled in formats (Which will be the property of UNAIDS).

Additional detailed tasks

Printing of questionnaires provide computers/laptops and software for data entry.

Double data entry, cleaning data based on communication with consultants.

Transportation of data collectors in teams.

Have to keep in contact with us by email.

Report of refusals and replacements.

Alternative Medicine in Yemen between failure and success

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

With the spread of diseases and poor health services in Yemen, people are turning to alternative medicine to cure themselves. There are many laboratories working in this field across the country. Some of the people who practice this type of therapy have special education in this branch of medicine and hold degrees, but others got this job by practicing, or inherited it from their fathers.

"I've been practicing this profession since I was a child with Dr. Abdul-Aziz Farhan, and then with others in 1994," said Abdullah Yarim, who owns and runs the Jibal Al-Yemen Center for Honey, Aloes and Natural Products on the Al-Raqas and Hayle crossroad.

"I studied books from famous Arab specialists in this field in the past, like Ibn Sina, Da'ood al-Antaki, Ibn al-Bitar and for other big specialists. Then I started preparing medicines using these references and gave them to patients, who benefited from them."

Finding success early on, Yarim decided to study this science in the UAE-based Arab Institute for Prophetic Medicine and Herbal Sciences, where he learned from academics, professors of alternative medicine, and sheikhs. He returned to Yemen to work with large groups practicing this business.

Emerging new laboratories for preparing medicines from herbs.

In addition to those people who practice the profession of selling medicines prepared from herbs in some Sana'a streets, there are more than 12 laboratories and stores preparing and selling medicines in Sana'a alone.

During the last decade, centers practicing alternative medicines have spread in Yemen, particularly in Sana'a. There are the big centers which have become more famous and visited by many people daily. These centers are led by the Suqutra Center for Alternative Medicine, Al-Shefa'a for Honey and Medical Herbs, Jibal Al-Yemen Store for Honey, Aloes and Natural Products, and Al-Ushb Al-Akhdhar Center.

Alternative Medicine is not new in Yemen

Alternative medicine is sometimes called popular medicine, and is not new in Yemen or in the whole Arab and Islamic

region. In the past, especially after the rise of Islam, renowned scholars like Ibn Sina Ibn Al-Bitar, and Dawood Al-Antaki had proven success in curing people.

Arab and Muslim people improved this kind of medicine and wrote books about it, bequeathing the science to future generations. Alternative medicine started in Yemen in ancient times, and was the sole form of treatment people depended on even in modern ages until the end of Yemen's revolution in 1962, said Dr. Kamal Al-Shamiri, the Director of the Program of Popular Alternative and Complementary Medicines in the Ministry of Health. Modern medication rose in Yemen only after the revolution.

No limited specializations

While there are some specialists, most of these centers sell herbs or natural products to people with different diseases. Yarim said he does not cure all cases, and he specializes in curing some diseases, mainly internal diseases. He also administers medicines to patients who suffer from stomach diseases, renal diseases, prostates, skin diseases and some women's diseases. Others, like Abdul-Salam Al-Dhumain, the Director of Al-Ushb Al-Akhdhar Center (green herb center) claims to treat all diseases, according to brochures distributed to people and papers posted on walls in some popular areas.

20September.net reported a speech to Al-Dhumain in a press conference as saying the center has succeeded in curing 13 cases of different heart diseases, 200 cases of prostates diseases 270 cases of sterility (among men and women), 300 cases of stomach diseases, 74 gangrene cases, and 15 of baldness.

Resources of medicines

According to Yarim, Yemen, Syria, Egypt, India and the Horn of Africa are the main sources of medical herbs. Al-Shamiri and the director of Suqutra Center both say Yemen is the basket of rare medical herbs because of its natural environment.

Traditional laboratories are not under governmental control

The people who work in this field have ordinary rooms, like kitchens, without modern equipment. In these places, they cook or prepare the herbs they collected and put them in plastic bottles and then put labels on them and sell them to patients in their stores. "These

laboratories are not improved and not modern. They contain primitive tools for preparing herbal components to be sold as medicine," said Dr. Kamal Al-Shamiri, the Director of the Program of Popular, Alternative and Complementary Medicines in the Ministry of Health.

Why people return to this medicine?

Some people say they return to this kind of medicine because they do not trust doctors in Yemen. According to the director of Suqutra Center, who asked not to reveal his name because he refuses to speak to media, people return to these centers fearing side effects of chemical medications. He also believes that doctors failed to cure dangerous diseases and some specialists have succeeded in curing certain skin diseases.

"I myself was suffering from a dangerous disease before I started treating patients. I went to many doctors but they failed to cure me. Then I returned to alternative medicine and cured myself. After I succeeded in curing myself, I decided to cure others to provide humanitarian services to these people," he said.

People returned to alternative medicine fearing of side effects of modern medicine and the high percentage of poisonous substances in it, said Dr. Kamal Al-Shamiri. People, not only in developing countries but also in developed ones, are returning this time to alternative medicine because they find it necessary to do so.

No law controlling this business

The Ministry of Public Health and Population does not control the business and does not even have a law to organize this kind of medication. "We went to the ministry ourselves and presented our products to officials there, but they responded to us 'we have neither a laboratory nor law to organize this work'," said Abdullah Yarim, the Director of Jibal Al-Yemen Store for Honey, Aloes and Natural Products.

Three months ago, a committee from the ministry inspected the market and visited laboratories which produce herbal medicines including their laboratory, and approved their work. They made some observations and focused only on the purity without paying attention to measurements and qualities of the products. "Those people who visited these places are from the municipality and not from the Ministry of Health,"

said Al-Shamiri. But he confessed that they do not have a law to control the people who practice this profession. He even said that the ministry lacks a laboratory to study these products.

"There are false practices and there are unqualified people who have caused suffering to people because we started (the process of supervision) too late," he said. "Now, we have a database on the spread of alternative medicine and on the people who are involved in this business." He unearthed striking information when he said, "Did you know that 50 percent of those who practice alternative medicine are illiterate?" He complains about the negligence those who practice alternative medicine.

Some patients benefited, others not

Director of the Suqutra Center and Yarim affirmed that many people have benefited from this kind of medicine, and many others have not benefited. Al-Shamiri himself affirmed this, saying there are people who benefited from the alternative medicine but in the opposite there are people who damaged their health when they came to people who do not know anything about medicine.

Specialized physicians' view points

In a survey conducted by the Program of Popular, Alternative and Complementary Medicines in 2006 asking physicians' viewpoints about alternative medicine in Yemen, particularly the governorates of Sana'a, Taiz, and Ibb, nearly 70 percent of doctors in Taiz did not approve of alternative medicine in Yemen. They justified their negative answers by saying that this kind of medication has not been studied, and so there were may fatal problems which could result from poisonous herbs given to people as medicine.

Good results, promising future in alternative medicine

According to Al-Shamiri, some kinds of alternatives medicine, like repairing broken bones in legs or hands, popular midwifery, and treating rheumatism in natural saunas have achieved success. "This kind of medicine has provided health services to people in remote areas who are deprived from government health services," said Al-Shamiri. He confirmed that there is a future for alternative medicine, and that his department and program is in cooperation with World Health Organization to



This weekly column to spread health awareness in the world, presented by Dr. S. Siva who is currently working at Aden Refinery Company's Hospital. Lifestyle diseases and Cancer prevention are his special interests. Complementary Medicine and Naturopathy are his passions.

The benefits of beets

I found 'beets' available now in Aden market.

Beets are cheap, easy to cook, tasty and rich in anti-oxidants.

Lets see the benefits of eating beet.

I Aden you find beets which are small to medium sized. Beets can seem rather intimidating, with a rugged, dull exterior. But the rough peel hides a colorful, nutritious, and tasty gem - when cooked, beets' texture changes from crunchy to soft, and the sweet taste is a pleasant bonus! If you have only ever tried canned beets, it is worth giving fresh or cooked-from-scratch beets a try, since their taste is quite different. Beets belong to the same family of plants as Swiss chard, and those who have seen the two side by side will notice the striking similarity of the leaves.

Nutrition Tidbits for Beets

One cup of boiled sliced beets contains:

Calories: 75 kcal

Fat: 0.3 g

Carbohydrates: 16.9 g

Protein: 2.9 g

Fiber: 3.4 g

Glycemic Index (GI): Medium (56 to 69)

Beets are packed full of various nutrients, such as folate (which is important in prevention of neural tube defects in the growing fetus), manganese, and potassium. And their

deep purple hue is due to a powerful set of pigments called betacyanins, which appear to be powerful cancer fighters.

Some studies show beets to be helpful in reducing inflammation and protecting against heart disease.

When buying fresh beets, look for small or medium-sized "bulbs" that are firm, with smooth or taut skin. Avoid any with soft spots. Besides those with purple shades, you can also find yellow or orange-hued varieties. If the beets are sold with their greens attached, separate the leaves from the roots and use them up within a few days (they're great stir-fried). (In Lulu market you find beets without leaves). The roots will keep for a couple of weeks in the refrigerator. When you peel beets, wear gloves because the pigment will stain. If you want to maximize the nutrient retention, cook the beets unpeeled and in as little water as possible (such as by roasting them in the oven), then peel them after they're cooked.

Include More Beets in Your Diet

If you use a juicer, include beets as one of the ingredients in your homemade juice drink

Smear cut beets with olive oil and grill it in the oven gently. Sprinkle a bit of salt and pepper

Add them raw or cooked to salads

Add grated raw beets to soups

Beet Halwa, (learn it from an Indian friend) which is a delicacy.

improve this kind of health specialization.

He revealed that the program has a database on this specialization and has a list of herbal medicines. It has held several workshops and prepared a draft law to monitor this health business. He said there is a future plan to establish a college for alternative medicine in Sana'a, supported and financed by Yousof Al-Badr, the Director of UAE-based Arab Institute for Prophetic

Medicine and Herbal Sciences.

Obstacles facing Alternative Medicine

Al-Shamiri complains that the Ministry of Health is not cooperative with his program and does not provide any material support to do his duty as required. "I do not even have an office to manage my work."

He stressed that the main obstacle facing alternative medicine is legislation and absence of laws.



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Drama in Yemen : Absence of script, Overacting, and bad Direction

By: Mohammed Ghoath
For the Yemen Times

Drama is considered to be the mirror which reflects societal issues. Yemeni Drama aired on T.V. is supposed to follow the same rule. However, after deep analysis, viewers realize that the drama in Yemen is suffering itself. Thus, it can not give accurate reflection.

A Survey was conducted by the Survey Center at the University of Sana'a about the programs in 2008. It revealed a dismal turnout on television, in particular on Yemeni channels, during the month of Ramadan, which is considered to be an affluent season and a competitive market among Arab satellite channels.

Approximately 78 percent of the 2,500 participants in the survey, which covered seven Yemeni governorates, said that they watched Yemeni channels, while 22 percent said that they did not. More than 22 percent said that the Yemeni programs were boring, with stale direction, or badly shot.

This Ramadan, about seven local television series- mostly comedy- have graced Yemeni television screens, compared to only four last year. Al-Saeeda scheduled two home grown series, while Al-Yemen claimed the lion's share with five.

Despite Yemen adding five different television channels, competition has brewed between the state's first satellite channel, Al-Yemen, and the private satellite channel Al-Saeeda. Both are racing to attract a larger audience, especially during Ramadan, when television becomes the typical mode of entertainment.

The channel's producers have been busy, but how do their creations fare in the eyes of the Yemeni public? While some Yemeni viewers express their disappointment at "the poor performance of the Yemeni cast," others said that, this Ramadan, Yemeni series have shown notable progress. Yemen

Times did a survey among Yemeni audiences, directors, set designers, and actors.

"No doubt, there is progress," said Moaner Hamoud, 23. "You can see the high cost of production, the good shooting, high comedy matrix, nice television shots, decent performances, and also locations where they shoot," added Moaner. The 5th season of Kini Mini (Nonsense), which aired on Al-Saeeda channel, and Elajak Andi (I have your treatment), which aired on Al-Yemen, are Moaner's favorite shows. "These two series handle issues related to Yemeni reality," he said.

Unsuitable timing

Umm Mohammed spends many hours during Ramadan watching television, but complained about the timing of Yemeni shows. "Besides the daily power cuts, the schedule of these is not convenient at all," she said.

Most of the episodes are shown between 19:00 and 23:00 pm, which is time of prayer for men and housework for women," she said.

More courageousness

Umm Mohammed and another educated women commented positively about Yemeni programs during Ramadan, pointing out that screenwriters have become more daring in highlighting current political and social issues. Kidnapping children and foreigners, tribal issues, women's rights, expensive dowries, family and social class conflicts were among many other topics he cited that are tackled in Yemeni drama and comedy episodes.

Different dialects

Yemeni viewers noticed that different dialects were used by the cast while acting. Lamis and Ahmed have different opinions about this. "It is very nice to hear different dialects in one show," said Lamis, 25. In the past, the whole cast spoke mostly Sana'ani, as if they were addressing only the audience in

Sana'a. Others disagreed with Lamis, including Wasim, 31, who was upset by the Bedouin accent of the characters in Hamak (My concern is your concern). "Yes, it is the first Yemeni Bedouin series, but the actors should rehearse more to be able to perform the Badawi characters," said Wasim, who said that he did not like to watch this show any more. "Not just this show, when the actors do not speak their dialects they seem artificial and clumsy," he said. "I have started watching other Arab channels."

Yemeni drama stars

Although most criticism focused on the performance of the Yemeni cast, few could actually remember the names of the actors and actresses.

Instead, most viewers referred to the names of the characters played in the series. "We see them on the screen only in Ramadan, so we hardly remember their names," said Kifah, 21. However, most spectators were able to name some more famous comedians. Last year, Al-Saeeda took the first step in bringing these comedians from the stage to the screen and gave the chance to Al-Adhru'I, a local comedian, and his group to perform their sketches on screen. Both the Yemeni public and critics admired and approved the show.

This Ramadan, Al-Adhru'I and Qahtan are performing on Al-yemen in Elajak 'Andi. As for Al-Qarni, he is to be found on Al-Saeeda as the main character in the Bedouin series Hami Hamak. "However, these comedians, especially Al-Adhru'i and Qahtan, turn out to be less critical of the government", said a disappointed Osama. "I still watch them, though not all the episodes."

Mohammed Al-Hubaishy, one of the distinguished writers of Yemen who has a number of drama series such as our lost bet, Kini Mini (Nonsense), and Manana Faina. "I think, that we are not suffering from a shortage of drama scripts, but from poor script handling," said Al-Hubaishy.

Most mistakes in Yemeni dramas

take place when the actor or actress, are overacting in front of the camera, without real attention to the roles they play. That indicates that the actor or actress has no training and qualification in the acting field. This is maybe because of the absence of a specialized technical institute for qualifying and training actors," he added.

Seasonal drama

Mona Al-Asbahay, an actress, said that production of Yemeni drama is confined to Ramadan, while the rest of Year there is no production. Mona pointed out that the break in drama production for the rest of year is affecting the livelihood of actors. "Some actors have a hard time because they may have only a month to read the script," she said. "Bad acting is also a reflection of the difficult circumstances which the actor faces in their real lives," she added.

Many channels. Healthy competition

Ahmed Al Hawry, Deputy Manager of the youth satellite Saba channel, put forward his viewpoint on Yemeni Drama, saying, that Yemeni Drama lacks a lot of meaningful dramatic elements, such as nice scripts and successful direction and production. In addition, Yemeni drama came later than other Arab Drama.

Dr. Fadhle Al-Olofay is a director, and has run one of the private drama production companies for five years. He spoke to Yemen Times about causes for the difficulties that make the Yemeni local drama unable to compete with other Arabic drama: "There is no infrastructure for drama, such as academic institutes to train good actors, and good authors. "We have no professional drama writers to be able to compete with other productions," he added.

Al-Olofay said that the involvement of private advertisement companies in sponsoring some of these dramas, contributes positively to encourage writers and producers to storm this field



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Yemen studies "green" plastic bags alternative

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

When driving between Yemeni cities, both sides of the road, and even the fields will appear to you like farms of plastic. Colorful plastic bags are everywhere; on trees, the soil, hills and even in the mouths of hapless animals.

Plastic bags damage the soil, water and plants because they are composed of many harmful and carcinogenic chemicals and they do not disintegrate and dissolve quickly, but rather can take up to a thousand years to decompose. Four out of every five bags handed out at the grocery store is made of plastic.

The increased consumption of plastic bags, especially by qat sellers in cities and rural areas, is a true environmental catastrophe and has destructive effects in both the short and long term in Yemen. To reduce these effects, the government plans to adopt new regulations on the manufacture and sale of plastic bags. The authorities concerned with the environment are studying alternatives prior to releasing new law.

This month the Environmental Protection Authority of the Ministry of Water and Environment has discussed the alternative of d2w plastic additives with plastic bag manufacturers, environmental organizations and representatives of British company, Symphony Environmental.

Oxo-biodegradable bags degrade completely, regardless of location or environmental conditions, and have a pre-programmed lifespan. They are injected with a small amount of an additive called d2w. The additive creates a chemical reaction whereby the additive attacks the carbon bonds in the material. This leads to a lowering of the molecular weight and eventually to a loss of strength and other

Photo by Khaled Al-Hilaly



The increased consumption of plastic bags, especially by qat sellers in cities and rural areas, is a true environmental catastrophe

properties.

Unlike normal plastic bags, which take around 1,000 years to biodegrade, oxo-biodegradable carriers disintegrate into nothing more than water, carbon dioxide and a very small amount of biomass.

"The length of time it takes for oxo-biodegradable plastic products to degrade can be 'programmed' at the time of manufacture and can be as little as a few months or as much as a few years," said Michael Laurier from Symphony Environmental, at a lecture in London. "They can be vacuum-packed for delivery and will not degrade in the absence of air, until needed for use."

"If collected, oxo-biodegradable

plastic products can be recycled, composted, incinerated with energy recovery, or land filled, but if not collected they will degrade and disappear, leaving no harmful residue," Laurier said.

"Symphony Environmental provides the most economical and environmentally friendly solution to the problem of plastic pollution," said Winston Pryce general manager of Eco-Polymers, exclusive distributor in the Middle East and some African countries.

"An increasing number of countries are using d2w additives," he added.

He explained how banning plastic is not possible and how

other alternatives like paper and jute are, "neither economically nor environmentally better than plastic." He added that paper and Jute take between twelve to fifteen years to biodegrade but they are both environmentally unfriendly because of the entire process of their production from cutting down trees to processing and handling "the environmental footprint is massive," he said.

"We have no choice but to continue to live with plastic, so we must find ways to minimize the damage that it causes to the environment," said Pryce

"The only available solution is the oxo-biodegradable plastics," he added.

Hilal Al-Riyashi of the Environment Protection Authority, said in the past manufacturers used to complain that they had to change the machines' molds when producing plastic bags with thicker microns. Now they can add the d2w additives without changing equipment or assembly lines.

"We encourage everyone to help protect the environment," Al-Riyashi said.

Yasser Nasser from Ahmad Plastic Factory said plastic manufacturers don't have to worry and try to cover up their activities from the eyes of environmental activists because d2w is environmentally friendly.

"As oxo-biodegradable bags are made with the same machines as ordinary plastic," said Nasser, "there is only little additional cost, about YR 35 or {17cents}."

Local factories produce 40 percent of the local market demand for plastic bags. The remaining 60 percent is imported through smuggling and some don't meet standard specifications, or come without a trademark in addition to having a thickness of only up to about 15 microns, which is considered against the government decree prohibiting manufacturing plastic bags with a thickness of less than 60 microns.

The estimated consumption of plastic bags in Yemen is 60 tons per year, according to a study conducted by Abdulwahab Al-Awj, a professor of geology at Taiz University.

In Taiz only, eight plants produce plastics, including bags. There are also an unknown number of small nonregistered production plants, which have no specific brand. Clearly, these plants and their products will be much harder to control in terms of quality and accountability, but at least if a large portion of the nation's plastic bags are being made with biodegradable materials, then that will go a long way towards controlling the issue of this one type of pollution.

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