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Yemen examining its policy of offering Somalis automatic asylum

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, Dec. 23 — The Yemeni government is reviewing the policy of automatic asylum, enjoyed by the arrivals from Somalia, to adopt a new policy of examining each case separately to find out who deserves the status of a refugee and who is an illegal immigrant according to a statement by Ali Muthana the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs on Sunday.

"The open-door policy has encouraged the arrival of large numbers of Somalis, mostly children, young men and women," said Muthana. "The situation in Somalia still predicts the arrival of large numbers of Somalis to Yemen in the coming years."

"The number of Ethiopians may also be equivalent, because of the drought and economic difficulties in the country," he added.

Muthana, who is also the Chairman of the National Sub-Committee on Refugee Affairs, referred to two perspectives in the government current policy regarding immigrants and refugees from Somalia and the Horn of Africa. The first is granting the Somalis an automatic asylum due to the circumstances of war and insecurity in their country. The second is considering those coming from stable and secure countries like Ethiopia and Eritrea as illegal immigrants. "There are exceptional cases in

which we grant asylum to some people from those countries," he said.

"The UNHCR is looking forward to meeting with the Committee {of Refugee Affairs} to discuss the modalities of how to proceed with this issue while respecting refugees and asylum-seekers' rights as well as ensuring that Yemen meets its treaty obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention," said Andrew Knight, the UNHCR External Relations Officer in Sana'a.

Yemen is the only country in the region to be signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. Upon their arriving in Yemen, Somalis are automatically recognized as refugees by Yemeni authorities, while non-Somalis seeking asylum have to be undergo the UNHCR refugee status determination procedure. Non-Somalis fear arrest and detention by the Yemeni authorities who consider them illegal immigrants and hence leave the shore upon arriving, thus missing to be registered in the UNHCR reception centers.

Daily trips, crossing the treacherous Gulf of Aden, arrive to the Yemeni coast coming from Somalia, Ethiopia and other countries of the Horn of Africa. The vast majority is Somalis and Ethiopians, some flee war and persecution others look for economic opportunities in the Gulf States and Europe. UNHCR statistics show that 309 people lost their lives in 2009 and nearly 600 in

2008 as they made their journey, across the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, to Yemen.

"There are large numbers of illegal immigrants from the Horn of Africa in prisons," according to Abdu Salam Jawhar from the Refugees Administration at the Minister of Interior office. "We provide them with food and health services."

In its latest report, the Human Rights Watch, describing the UNHCR job in Yemen as "enormous and complicated", expressed concern about UNHCR's failure to press the Yemeni government more forcefully and consistently to allow asylum seekers to get refugee status in Yemen regardless of their nationality.

"UNHCR's strategy of quiet diplomacy with the Yemeni government simply isn't working," said Georgette Gagnon, Africa Director at Human Rights Watch. "The agency needs to start treating the plight of Ethiopian asylum seekers and refugees in Yemen as a priority and not secondary concern."

The UNHCR said, in their latest update for the press, that it "remains very concerned about the continued arrests and deportation of non-Somalis."

Knight said that the UNHCR had difficulty accessing those in detention in the past, but now there is great progress with the government and they are planning to establish a reception centre in

Bab Al Mandab.

"This project marks a major step forward in helping Yemen to meet its human rights obligations without compromising its security interests," Knight said. "[In the reception centre] the non-Somalis can be screened before conducting the refugee status determination, thus avoiding the detention of asylum seekers."

The UNHCR was granted access to group of Somalis and Ethiopians deported from Saudi Arabia. The Somalis were transferred to refugee camps in the south. The screening by the UNHCR, to determine the asylum seekers among non-Somalis revealed that only 10 percent were asylum seekers. They were transferred to Kharaz camp to undergo refugee status determination procedures. The rest wanted to return to their country and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) will facilitate their return, according to Knight.

"The Yemeni government is in a genuinely difficult position—the tens of thousands of Somali refugees it has already welcomed represent an enormous strain on the country's fragile economy," The Human Rights Watch said in the report. "Yemen is also under strong pressure from Saudi Arabia and other neighboring states to stop the flow of migrants who use Yemen as a transit point to reach their countries."

The Human Rights Watch calls upon



Newly arrived Somali refugees wait to be registered at a refugee camp in south Yemen.

the Yemeni government to commit to its obligations under the international law by ensuring that all asylum seekers are able to apply for refugee status regardless of their nationalities.

Muthana said that the government estimates the number of immigrants and refugees from the Horn of Africa in Yemen to be approximately 750 thousand. "Most of them consider Yemen only as a transit to Gulf States, Europe, America and Canada, however large numbers of them settled in Yemen," he said added.

In 2008, more than 50,000 new arrivals landed on the shores of Yemen

— a 70 percent increase on the previous year. So far this year, already more than 70,000 have arrived, with a marked increase of non-Somalis, increasing the strain on the government's already limited resources, according to the UNHCR latest update.

"UNHCR is concerned that no refugees have been resettled since August. The security situation in Yemen restricts resettlement countries' governments' ability to send missions to Yemen thereby limiting UNHCR's ability to facilitate durable solutions," the UNHCR update said.

Yemen needs practical efforts to combat corruption

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

SANA'A, Dec. 23 — Corruption thrives in Yemen, a report said on Wednesday. With international indicators ranking the country on the top of corrupt countries in the world, the government has to take practical step to show willingness to combat corruption.

The annual report of international Transparency Organization about Corruption perception indicators (CPI) for the year 2009 puts Yemen at the bottom of the list of the countries fighting corruption with 2.1 of CPI followed by Iran 1.8, Sudan 1.5, Afghanistan 1.3 and Somalia 1.1. New Zealand tops the list with 9.4 followed by Denmark 9.3, Singapore 9.2, Sweden 9.2 and Switzerland 9.0.

Based on these results, the Yemeni Team for Transparency and Integrity held last a workshop last Thursday to discuss the report's findings.

The team, which consisted of the Democratic School, Social and Democratic Forum, Women Journalists Without Chains, Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights and Human Rights Information and Training Center, brought together concerned bodies fighting corruption and representatives

of civil society organizations to investigate the report and comment on its results.

The report was not wholeheartedly embraced by all the participants. Some argued that Yemen did more to fight corruption than was given credit for. Dr. Fuad Alsalahi, the Professor on Political Sociology and the academic researcher and consultant on civil society and Human rights said the report was not fair for giving Yemen this figure. "The report did not include all points and it did not tackled the current crisis and corruption. Others believe that the political will necessary to take real steps on the ground is lacking. "Political leaders have no real intention to fight corruption. Corruption reports against government officials are only blackmailing tactics," said journalist Saleh Assuaraumi.

When ministers have been fired in the past, he is given other post such as being appointed as an ambassador or a member of Shoura Council, rather than being prosecuted, according to Assuaraumi.

Further, ministers are punished lightly for crimes such as stealing public money to build villas, while low level employees who steal relatively insignificant things such as computers are

penalized harshly.

Assuaraumi lashes out at organizations that are charged with combating corruption saying: "the parliament is completely paralyzed and the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption has not referred any corrupt ministers to justice because it is not backed by political willingness."

"The report of the organization is frustrating because it reflected remarkable deterioration in levels of combating corruption and controlling spots of corruption. Yemen has dropped 13 points in terms of realizing transparency principles. In 2009 Yemen ranked 154 in 2009 from 141 in 2008," said Samir al-Faqih, editor of Corruption Page which is a state-run newspaper in Al-Wahda.

Others doubted the criteria by which Yemen was judged: "There are no real indicators on the level 2.1 given to Yemen. We do not know from where these figures came from. The report is politically biased rather than objective," said Dr. Abdul-Hakim al-Sharjabi the Head of Integrity, Transparency and Good Governance Center.

Judge Rashid Al-Munaifi complained that it is necessary to know the regula-

tions, that the report depended, its statistical method its sources — which are media related. Citing areas where Yemen has confronted corruption, Al-Munaifi recalled that "the public fund prosecution restored YR one billion (from corrupt officials) to the public fund."

Ultimately, the report seems to lack credibility. Dr. Abdul-Bari Dughhaish, a Parliament Member, said, "Our problem in the Arab world is the scarcity of information, some times information are given by guessing. Thus, the figures you get are not accurate," he said.

Dishonesty in public affairs could be better addressed with refocusing the missions of government agencies. For example, he suggested that the name of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption be re-titled The Supreme National Authority for Transparency, thereby changing the goal of the department from a prosecution body to a transparency institution.

However, the agency has taken action to bring corruption cases to justice. By investigating 11 case of corruption,

Vice Chairwoman of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption (SNACC) Bilkis Abu Osba argues, "We are investigating any case we become aware of while protecting the identity of the informants. The authority has received 570 notifications on corruption cases but many of them do not fall under the authority's specializations."

Some dispute the assertion that the political will does not exist in Yemen to fight fraud. In a workshop held on Sunday on Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Chairman of SNACC Ahmad Al-Anesi affirmed that, "This

willingness was found when the law for combating corruption and other related laws were signed." But, he admitted that "Political will alone is not enough if there is no popular will. To achieve positive results, both citizens and officials must cooperate in the fight against corruption."

He indicated that the definition of corruption differs among countries. Additionally, other nations have made it a priority to fight corruption; a lesson that we must take to heart by raising awareness of the issue in public education.

Continued on page 2

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Saudi Arabia reveals relative tranquility, losses announced

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Dec. 23 – About 37 Saudi Arabians were killed, 26 are missing, and more than 470 were injured, since the confrontation with the Al-Houthis. The Deputy of the Saudi Arabian Minister of Defense, Prince Kaled Bin Sultan stated last Thursday.

He added that only 48 hours are given to the sneakers to leave Aljaberi, located on the border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, or else they will be killed. He said that the southern Saudi border is completely under control.

Saudi media sources announced that dozens of Al-Houthis were killed in military operations in Alqso'op and Koa Saui villages in the last two days.

The sources pointed out to clashes with light middle weapons and RBG bombs between Houthis and the Saudi forces on Monday evening nearby Al-rumaih Mountain. During the confrontation 7Houthis and one Saudi Arabian soldier were killed.

Regarding the battles between Houthis and the Yemeni army. The latter said that many Houthis were killed in an attack by the Yemeni army. The attack targeted a site belonging to Houthis in Alnuakair in Razeh district.

The Yemeni army 26th of September website announced detecting 37 cars full of weapons and ammunition. The cars were on their way to Houthis.

Tribal sources said that Houthis' attacks against the Yemeni army are going through a recession era and that the air raids and weapons by the Yemeni army are on progress. Some security sources said that a Houthi leader was killed on Sunday after an air raid which targeted

Haidan district. Other Houthis are also reported to be killed in Alsafr district and Bani Mae'en in Razeh district.

Sofian frontline witnessed military operations as well as air and land raids that targeted Houthis sites. The raids extended to areas like Matrah in Sa'ada (Houthis main site) as well as Alnaqa'ah (the second more important Houthis site).

A statement by Houthis released on their website states that they stopped a Saudi Arabian attempt to sneak into Al-malaheet district last Monday midnight. They added that the Saudi Arabian forces used more than 830 missiles and shells in an air raid.

Houthis stated that 54 citizens were killed in the air raid in Razeh. Women and children formed the majority of the 54 victims.

In another statement Houthis said that the Saudi army tried to attack Qoa village last Sunday using more than 50 military weapons. One Saudi tank was destroyed during the attack.

Humanitarian situation
Médecins Sans Frontières(MSF)(doctors without borders organization), said that citizens and hospitals are being under threat and that thousands have fled of their homes due to the battles between the Yemeni army and Houthis. The organization mentioned in its report, for this year, that the number of suffering people is increasing. It added that crippling the organization from helping those people is the biggest challenge it faces.

Steve Forney, the head of (MSF) said that the teams of the organization are facing many difficulties thus it is the organizations' right to talk about any challenge facing it.

Activists demand explanation while Al-Qaeda vows revenge

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SANA'A, Dec. 23 - Many human rights activists and parliament members have gathered in front of the Cabinet to protest against what they called the "unfair governmental behavior" condemning the government's attack on Abyan last week.

They demanded the state to establish a legal investigation committee consisting of members of the parliament and activists. At the same time they rejected the notion that Al-Qaeda existed in Abyan, hence the attack.

To the gathering crowd, Lawyer and president of the National Organization for Defending Human Rights and Freedom (HOOD) Mohammad Allaw said: "We suffer from living in a country that is ruled by a government which does not respect its citizens' lives. It exists to destroy its citizens with American airplanes, like what happened in Abyan. I hereby call all free people to condemn this policy and call for organizing functions and sit-ins to protest against killing innocent people under the name of fighting terrorism."

"Abducting free journalists and activists and closing down newspapers that criticize the government's actions will never stop us from saying the truth on behalf of the people. Those who allowed Al-Mahfad district in Abyan to be attacked are the ones against national unity," he continued.

Fu'ad Dahaba, member of the parliament of the opposition Islah conservative Party, said that a state which does not apply its constitution does not deserve to exist. "Massacring citizens is a crime history will never forget. Therefore, I call on all politicians, scholars and educated people as well as all segments of the society to stand against injustice and to get rid of the present government because it does not deserve to rule us."

Al-Qaeda does exist in Yemen Simultaneously, more than fifteen thousand protestors gathered yesterday in Al-Majannah village of Al-Mahfad district, which was attacked by Yemeni air force last Thursday.

The protestors included members of Al-Qaeda who announced in the public protest that their war is against the USA not the Yemeni army.

Al-Jazeera Channel showed part of the protests, Abdullah Ahmad Al-Raimi, Al-Qaeda leader who is currently on the Yemeni government wanted list, was recognized in the crowd. Al-Raimi had escaped from Yemeni security after serving three of the four year sentence he was given by a Yemeni court after he was handed over from Qatar.

Just a few days before the protest, the Yemeni government has published his photo in several media outlets as a criminal at large. In the video, he was standing with a body guard.

Among the protestors also were several of the Southern Movement's leaders who have aggressively been demanding an independent state in South Yemen since last year.

Government's spokesman Minister of Information Hassan Al-Lawzi denied that there were civilian victims of the air raid in Abyan in the weekly press conference on Tuesday. He emphasized that the raid was against Al-Qaeda elements only. "President Saleh instructed the establishment of a committee to investigate results of the raid in Abyan. The committee will be headed by the

Abyan's governor and other authority figures."

He added that Rashad Al-Alimi, the Minister of State for Defense and Security will present a report to the parliament the following day, detailing Al-Qaeda's plans that were failed because of the attack. Yemen Times is still working to get a copy of this report if it has been delivered.

Al-Lawzi also spoke of the 62 operations committed by Al-Qaeda elements since 1992. He noted that these operations deprived the country many innocent lives as well as severely damaged the national economy.

The Ministry of Interior confirmed it has information that Al-Qaeda in Lawder in Abyan governorate is planning to take revenge for the attack.

Consequently, it directed security organizations in Abyan, Shabwa and Al-Baida'a to intensify its operations against Al-Qaeda elements.

It has so far carried out a double attack operation against Al-Qaeda sites in Abyan, Arhab and the Capital Secretariat. About 17 elements of Al-Qaeda were arrested accordingly.

Violations against press freedom and journalists on rise

By: Ali Saeed

ABYAN, Dec. 23 – The violations against freedom of press, freedom of expression and journalists in Yemen are on rise, according to a report recently published by the Center of Training and Protection of Press Freedoms, a Yemeni independent organization for defending the rights of journalists.

The report recorded around 1402 violations against local and international newspapers, journalists, reporters and opinion writers since 2000 until July 2009.

The violations ranged from threatening and intimidation, arresting, assaulting, unfair trials, interrogation and arbitrary firing on journalists and opinion writers, to confiscating and seizing newspapers and blocking news websites and blogs.

The report was presented in a two day seminar, organized by the Center of Training and Protection of Press Freedoms. The Seminar, which dealt with 'trial procedures of newspapers and journalists' started from Tuesday Dec 22.

"The aim of the seminar was, to assess the general status of the freedom of press and the trial procedures that were followed in cases of journalists and newspapers and identify whether the problems are embedded within the laws or in the implementation of the laws by the relevant executive authorities," said Mohamed Al-Odaini, the director of the center.

"All the accusation statements against journalists and opinion writers by the prosecution alleged the published articles for provoking tribal chauvinisms, or inciting secession among individuals in the society," said Ms. Hariri. She also questioned whether the interrogations and trials were based on evidence of conflict or as merely preventive measures.

"If those articles were put on trial because they incited chauvinism, why other articles in other newspapers that are affiliated to ruling party are not subjected to trials or interrogations? Are they exempted from the law?" questioned a journalist, from Sana'a radio (the main public radio), agreeing with Hariri's

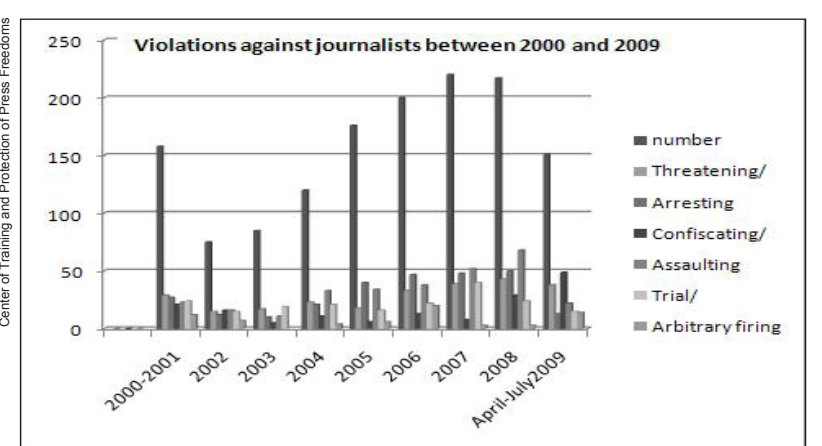
During the seminar, a team of lawyers presented an analysis of the trial procedures of newspapers and journalists related to printed materials and publishing, between 1990 and 2008.

The first working paper was on the 'interrogation procedures and their level of consistency with the international legislation on the Right of Expression and Freedom. It was prepared and presented by Afra'a Hariri, a lawyer and human rights activist. The paper reviewed of the Yemeni criminal procedure system, which combines the features of the accusation and the investigative system.

The paper showed that although, the Yemeni criminal procedures system regulated the process of interrogation, collecting evidence and trials under the rule of 'the accused is innocent until he is convicted', there were recorded violations of applying procedures that were not complying with either the Yemeni law nor the international legislation. The paper also cited examples of recorded violations and came up with the analysis that most of them follow a typical style in the accusation statements.

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working paper.

In a similar activity, organized by the 'Women Journalists Without Chains' organization, in Sana'a, on Tuesday, Dec. 22, the organization protested for the 27th time to release the Al-Ayam newspaper that was confiscated and banned from publishing in April and release the disappeared journalist Mohamed Al-

Maqaleh. Mohamed Al-Maqaleh disappeared in August.

It is worth mentioning that this year witnessed the biggest campaign against the press in Yemen that included the confiscation of around eight local newspapers and seizing international newspapers at the airport such as the Al-Quds newspaper.

A new opportunity for preschool kids



By: Mahmoud Al-Harazi
For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Dec. 23 – Now parents of children from three to five years old have a new opportunity for their children in the Turkish International School Kids Academy that was inaugurated yesterday. There are already 75 students from 15 different nationalities enrolled in this academy, which would be the fifth TIS educational institution established in Yemen.

Mehmet Donmez, the Turkish Ambassador in Yemen expressed his delight at the inauguration that such strong educational Turkish institutions are growing in Yemen.

"Now students can enrol in Turkish schools right from nursery and until high school," said Kamal Hussain Mohsen Al-Jabri, Minister of Communication whose son is enrolled in the TIS.

"Our aim is to provide a well-balanced curriculum, which will enable children to reach higher level of achievements," said Mubin Fidan Vice Principal/ counsellor

in kids Academy school.

The Kids Academy includes a playground equipped with various toys, a cinema where children would enjoy audio and video entertainment and educational programs. A variety of activity rooms such as an arts room, drama area, music room and a puppet theatre. It also has a library is designed so that young learners can enjoy their first steps into reading world.

It also has a dining hall that provides nutritious and healthy meals for the toddlers.

Turkish international schools have been contributing to the Yemeni education system for the last 12 years.

Several prominent government and diplomatic as well as private sector delegations were present in the inauguration.

Hisham Sharf Undersecretary of the Ministry of Planning, Mohammed Tawaf Undersecretary of the Ministry Education, Mohammed Madaes Director General of Public and Private Education in the Ministry of Education.

Women Journalists Without Chains



Around 1,402 violations against journalists were reported in the last nine years ranging from direct threat to abduction and illegal detention.

Continued from page 1

Yemen needs practical efforts to combat corruption

For his part, Minister of Information Hassan Allouzi affirmed his ministry's readiness of state media institutions to be direct supporter of the struggle against corruption, and to eradicate its roots. He noted there are run state newspapers like al-Wahda has devoted its reporters to this effort on many occasions.

Chairwoman of SNACC Bilkis Abu Osba presented a review on contents of the National Strategy for Combating Corruption. The strategy tackles corruption in Yemen, its essence, reasons, amplitude, consequences and trends of fighting it. The strategy also includes the connectional and methodical framework of the strategy

and the national system of transparency and fighting corruption. Measures to protect against corruption and stopping its practice, rescuing the law and judicial follow up, promoting awareness and social participation, are additional components that aim to coordinate efforts of the strategy.

The strategy has two main aims: To enhance principles of integrity and transparency and to improve administrative and intuitional mechanisms to boost accountability and protection against corruption. The strategy has also other short and long term aims like promoting awareness.

The strategy is based on Islamic religious, national legislatives, politi-

cal willingness, the national agenda for inclusive reforms as well as drawn from Yemen's international commitments with its development partners and the international legislations represented in the United Nations' treaties in the field of combating corruption.

Meanwhile, Dr. Harald Fuhr, Chairman of International Politics in Potsdam University in Germany who has international experience in field of fighting corruption presented a paper on Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption.

He reviewed experiences of European countries in combating corruption and good governance. He draws

a connection between poverty and corruption, citing a case in Afghanistan which is more corrupt due to this reason. He noted rich Arab countries like Oman which is a successful example in implementing good governance and fighting corruption. Rich countries are better able to make the financial sacrifices needed to fight fraud, and have stronger institutions to implement and enforce anti-corruption regulations.

He indicated that fighting corruption has started in the 1990s and before this period people were not able to talk about it. In respect to Yemen, he said low salaries are main reasons behind corruption.

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In Brief

SANA'A
Al-Saleh residential project under procedures discussion

The Higher Committee of Al-Saleh Residential Project for limited income people discussed on Monday procedures to finalize the implementation of the residential projects in the rest of the governorates.

The committee was chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Abdul-Karim al-Arhabi.

The discussion focused on the importance of providing suitable and free of troubles lands to ensure the full implementation of those projects in the upcoming phases.

The minister affirmed, during the meeting, the importance of making lands available for the residential projects in the Capital Secretariat in order to start implementation process the same as in other governorates.

Four people killed in traffic accidents
Four people were killed and 90 injured on Sunday in 66 traffic accidents across the country, information center of interior ministry reported on Monday.

According to the General Traffic Administration, reasons caused the accidents were over speed, carelessness of drivers.

Nearly 109 Somali refugees arrive at Yemeni shores

About 109 Somali refugees have reached Yemeni shores in two separated journeys coming from the Horn of Africa, Interior

Ministry has said.
About 37 of the refugees, including 17 women, have arrived in Broom Coast in Hadramout province where they were gathered and sent to Maifa'a district in Shabwa province in collaboration with the representative of High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Taiz coast has received about 36 of those refugees, including 11 women, and were sent to the refugees camp in Kharaz area.

In related news, Kharaz camp has received 54 Somali refugees including 14 women and 13 children who were sent to Shabwa province.

Training CBY staff at AABFS discussed
Governor of Central Bank (CBY) Ahmad al-Samawi met here on Monday with President of the Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Sciences (AABFS) in Jordan Isam Zabalawi.

Al-Samawi discussed with Zabalawi the programs carried out by the academy for training employees of the CBY and the other banks working in Yemen.

In the meeting, the two sides dealt with the bilateral relations between the bank and the academy and means of boosting them.

Yemen, Sudan approve executive program for customs cooperation

Yemen and Sudan approved on Monday an executive program of the technical committee for customs cooperation between the two countries.

The two sides signed the minute of their joint talks which were concluded in Sana'a as they agreed to exchange information related to means of combating customs smuggling.

Chairman of Yemeni Customs Authority Ali Al-Zabidi highlighted Sudanese experiences in combating acts of smuggling, affirming concern of Yemen to benefit from this experience.

For his part, the Director General of Sudanese Customs Authority Saifeddin Suliman praised steps taken by the Yemeni customs authority, saying that the two sides would continue contacts through the technical committee to serve common interests of both nations.

On the other hand, Suliman left Sana'a after his several day visit to Yemen in which he held talks with the Yemeni officials in the customs authority and finance ministry.

Yemen to take part in Arab conference for Industrial Information, Networks
-Yemen is to take part in the 4th Arab conference for Industrial Information and Networks to be held in Saudi Arabia during 20-22 December 2009.

It will be presented by delegations from the Yemen Standardization Metrology and Quality Control Organization (YSMO), the National Center for Information and Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Upon his departure, general director of (YSMO) Ahmed al-Basheh said to

26sep.net that the conference aims at improving standards of industrial quality and developing Arab-Arab trade as well as enter the Arab productions in the global competition and market openness.

The conference activities will include holding an exhibition over industry, networks and geographic information systems in order to develop this industry, he added.

The conference is organized by the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO) in collaboration with the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

ADEN
Yemen, China discuss trade, economic cooperation

Yemen and China discussed here on Monday aspects of trade and economic cooperation between the two friendly countries and ways of promoting them.

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He affirmed the keenness of the governorate leadership to provide all facilities in order to develop such relations.

Shaif also called on the Chinese companies to benefit from investment opportunities in Aden as well as to trigger trade and investment activities between the two countries' free zones, noting to the huge flow of Chinese goods in Yemeni markets which reflects the increase of trade exchange between Yemen and China.

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HODIDAH
Eritrea sizes 6 Yemeni fishing boats

Dec. 20 (Saba)- About 74 Yemeni fisherman arrived on Sunday to the Port of Hodeidah province after the Eritrean authorities released them, Interior Ministry has reported.

The Eritrean authorities sent the fishermen back onboard of one of the six fishing boats they had seized after a 3 days arrest.

Their News

Partnerships Intern with UN-AIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Secretariat (UNAIDS) coordinates and supports the efforts of Cosponsors (UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO, World Bank), to support the multi-

sectoral HIV response by the Royal Government of Cambodia, Civil Society Organisations and Development Partners.

Deadline: Dec 23, 09

UNAIDS Country Office in Cambodia is now seeking a suitable candidate to undertake a six-month

internship to assist with a range of tasks related to UN System Coordination, social mobilization, and partnerships. This assignment represents a good opportunity for the incumbent to share knowledge and experience, as well as to learn from others and from practical work in the field. The assignment could be undertaken as part of university studies or training courses at a graduate level.

Readmore:
<http://cambodiajobs.blogspot.com/2009/12/partnerships-intern-with-unaidstdeadline.html>

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To be eligible prospective students must have been offered a place on the PhD programme.

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The Department of Film Studies at St Andrews is one of the newest in the UK, in one of the oldest Universities (St Andrews celebrates its 600th anniversary in 2013). It is situated within the School of Philosophical, Social Anthropological and Film Studies. In the recent UK-wide RAE 2008, the Film Studies department was extremely highly rated for its research and research environment.

For further details see our dedicated website: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/>

For an additional enquiries please contact filmstudies@st-andrews.ac.uk or Tel: +44 (0)1334 467473

MTN launches tariff international roaming service and other offers

MTN- Yemen, the mobile company launched last Wednesday its international roaming service by standard tariff and a package of distinctive offers for subscription customers. These offers are:

Karam Tariff through which prepaid subscription clients can get a discount up to 40 percent on their calls and short messages up to 40 percent once their register for this tariff system.

Shabab Youth through which calls and short messages cost only five Yemeni Riyals per SMS or for every one minute of calls within Yemen.

Kalam Tariff which costs prepaid subscribers only one Yemeni Riyal per minute after the third minute and for half an hour.

To know how to benefit from these distinctive offers subscribers can send the name of the requested service in short message and send it to 111 and they will receive more details on the requested service.

The sixth lucky winner of the World



Cup 2010 Championship Mohammed Abdul Karim Saif received his prize to enable him to travel to South Africa and attend the sports event, his accommodation, travel expenses and even a tourism package will be covered by

MTN, who is the host for this Important sports championship that is happening for the first time in Africa.

Another seven winners got a 32 inch "Sony Bravia" TV flat screens each, while many others won in-kind prizes.

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R.C.B. Luxembourg: BIF 10970

EXTRACT

By Court order dated 11 November 2009, the Luxembourg District Court of and in Luxembourg second section sitting in commercial matters has modified and completed the winding-up order on the Limited Liability Company Bank of Credit and Commerce International S.A. with registered office at 2 rue Kalshatrouk, L-1453 Luxembourg with respect to the mode of liquidation as follows:

When at the end of the liquidation procedure the liquidators want to determine on a final basis the liabilities of the liquidation, they will publish in the national and international newspapers or distributed by the present court order a notice to all creditors of BCCI S.A. in liquidation existing at the opening of the liquidation who have not yet filed a Proof of Debt or all other creditors whose claims filed have been neither admitted nor rejected, to have their claims filed by registered letter so that their Proof of Debt will be in the hands of the liquidators latest 60 days calculated as from the date of the last publication relating to the publication of the bar date otherwise they will not participate in the proceeds of the liquidation and will be excluded from all rights in the liquidation.

The creditors of the mass as well as the creditors who will challenge the calculation of the ordered distribution are requested to make themselves known to the liquidators as soon as possible in order to state their rights before the close down of the liquidation.

In order to avoid an unwarranted delay between the bar date and the start of the close down procedure of the liquidation, the liquidators will report to the supervising judge on the status of the recovery operations of assets within short periods of time and at least once every three months.

It is to appear that the effect of the recovery of assets was to continue beyond the period of one year since the bar date the liquidators will proceed with the distribution of a new interim dividend that is in relation to the assets available for distribution at that time.

The present order is to be published by contract in the newspapers "Luxemburger Wort, Tagesblatt, Finanzial Times, International Herald Tribune, Le Monde, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, and Five Star News Zeitung" and in the official Journal of the European Union and in two national newspapers of each country where BCCI S.A. had a branch.

The provisional execution of this Court order is ordered, irrespective of any reserves and without any guarantee.

The present extract is a translation of the Court Order issued in the French language and in case of discrepancy between the English text and the French text, the French text prevails.

Joseph EMBELFELT,
Freddy EMBELFELT
On behalf of the Judicial Liquidation of BCCI S.A.

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UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

YEMAD/HCR/ADMIN/110
22nd December 2009

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
INTERNAL EXTERNAL VACANCY NOTICE

Title of Post: Assistant Community Service Officer
Position Number: 10008230
Category & Level: NO-A
Location: Aden

Duration: 31/12/2010
Closing Date: 10/01/2010
Date of Entry on Duty: 01/01/2010

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Under the direct supervision of the Community Service Officer, in the Sub-Office Aden, the incumbent must be a national of Yemen with excellent knowledge of local conditions, culture, institutions and expected to perform the following duties, guided by the humanitarian principles and values of the United Nations, and adhering to the UN Code of Conduct:

1. Assesses the general social conditions of refugees and their needs for social service, such as medical assistance, financial assistance, counselling and in particular assistance to vulnerable cases. Provides individual counselling to refugees needing such assistance;
2. Undertakes research and assessment of community resources for planning and implementation of assistance particularly in medical services, education and self-help activities sector;
3. Ensures that proper coordination is maintained with officials of relevant institutions involved in planning and implementation of assistance to individual refugees;
4. Assists the refugee community to identify its own needs, to establish priorities and to meet these needs through developing self-help groups;
5. Assists in the formulation of project proposals based on the results of evaluations carried out;
6. Prepares correspondence, reports and statistics as required;
7. May be required to supervise and coordinate the work of lower level staff;
8. Undertakes other duties as required.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Knowledge and Skills:
- University degree in Social Sciences, preferably in Social Work but alternatively in Sociology, Anthropology or related fields.
- Completion of UNHCR learning programmes or specific training relevant to functions of position.
- Experience:
- Minimum 2 years of previous job experience relevant to the function.
- Flexibility and ability of work as part of a multi-cultural team.
- Prior experience in counselling and/or individual case management.
- Languages:
- Fluency in English and excellent knowledge of the local language (Arabic).
- Knowledge of another UN language or the language(s) spoken by the caseload would be an asset.

FOR INTERNAL CANDIDATES:
GL staff regardless of grade or length of service with a relevant degree and meeting UNHCR standards for recruitment to the NPO category may apply to an NPO post for which they qualify in terms of prior proven experience, academic qualifications, language requirements etc.

GL staff at the G-6 level and above without a university degree but with 6 years of progressive and directly relevant UNHCR experience are eligible to apply for NPO post at NO-A level.

FOR EXTERNAL CANDIDATES:
While priority will be given to Internal Candidates as per UNHCR guidelines, suitable External Candidates will be considered.

SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES:
Required to pass an entry test. GL candidates are exempted from those aspects of the test that are no different from the functions/experience gained in the General Service category.

GENDER BALANCE POLICY:
Applications from equally qualified female candidates will be given priority consideration. If you wish to be considered for this vacancy, please submit the following documents in sealed envelop to the below mentioned address:

- Application and UN P11 form (External candidates)
- Yemeni ID (all)
- Copy of the University degree (all)
- Application and Fact sheet (Internal candidates)

- Ms. Diana A. Sallam, Snr. Admin./Finance Clerk
UNHCR SUB-OFFICE ADEN
P.O. Box: 6090,
Aden- Republic of Yemen

IMPORTANT:
• APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE ABOVE MENTIONED CLOSING DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT THE ADMINISTRATION SECTION OF UNHCR.
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22 مايو حدة	هاتف: 01/132099	هاتف: 01/132099/119	هاتف: 01/132099	هاتف: 01/132099
الأصبحي القاسية	هاتف: 01/602022	هاتف: 01/602044	هاتف: 01/602002	هاتف: 01/602002

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Desperation in the Yemeni desert: The refugee crisis from Africa

By: Heather Murdock

Refugees pay smugglers up to USD 150 to be packed onto the tiny fishing boats that carry them from the Horn of Africa to Yemen. Once at sea, passengers who make the slightest move are beaten by smugglers. The bodies of those who die from the beatings are tossed overboard. When they reach Yemen, some smugglers drop passengers off on empty beaches in the middle of the night. Others order refugees to jump into the water, far from the shore. The passengers swim to land, sometimes while Yemeni soldiers fire at the smugglers. The small boats often capsize, and those that don't survive the trip are buried in mass graves near the beach by the UN refugee agency. So far this year, 300 bodies have washed onto the shores of Yemen, and more than 150 people are missing and presumed dead. The UN says that there are about 160,000 African refugees in Yemen, but the government estimates more than a million. This year, the number of new arrivals has increased 40 percent, according to the UNHCR. People are fleeing not only the war in Somalia, but severe drought in East Africa and political turmoil in the run up to the Ethiopian elections.



The Kharaz camp, home to about 13,000 African refugees, has not changed much this year, despite increase in new arrivals, according to Abdulaziz Mohammad Ahmed, a Somali refugee and the chairman of the Refugee Youth Council in Kharaz. At the camp, there are no job opportunities, and not enough food or medicine to go around, he said. Those that can get out, leave as quickly as possible. Refugees without money will walk for days to Aden, the nearest city, in the hope of finding a job.



Qamer's son, Abdullah Ali Sharif was three months old when he was smuggled to Yemen. But before they reached land, their crowded fishing boat capsized. Four people died in the accident, and the rest swam to shore. Abdullah's parents say the trauma of the accident and growing up in the desolate desert camp has driven their son mad.



Six-year-old Samira, like most of the residents of the Kharaz camp fled the war in Somalia. Samira said that she, her two brothers and her mother took a fishing boat from Somalia after her father was killed by Al-Shabab. The Islamist militia now holds much of Somalia, including parts of the capital, Mogadishu.



Many people have spent years at the refugee camp. They are trapped by poverty and their tenuous legal status, and are often desperate to escape. Qamar Sharif Abdullah Hussein took out a picture of her friends and family during happier times in Somalia and burst into tears. Her best friend, Nora was resettled in London 10 years ago. But Qamar, like the vast majority of refugees, was left behind.



Basateen, which means "gardens" in Arabic, is a slum on the outskirts of Aden where about 16,000 African refugees live. Twenty-one year old Zahara Yuseff, a resident of Basateen said she came to Yemen on a fishing boat, and then was beaten with a stick until she jumped in the water off shore. Being young and single, the Kharaz camp would not take her so she moved to Basateen to find a job. "They said, if you are alone, you don't get anything with us," said Zahara.



Like many refugees, Mona Ala Abdullah said her family depends entirely on the UN refugee agency for survival. Supplies of food and medicine at the camp are never enough to go around, she said. "They don't take care of us," she added. "We are nearly becoming crazy."

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Iran's plans for Yemen are destructive - Part 2

By: Raghida Dergham

If the issue of the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict was to return to the Security Council, Lebanon's role would be of the utmost importance as its only Arab member. Similarly, in any non-Arab issues, Arab membership, represented by Lebanon, will have exceptional weight. In any case, there is the importance of proximity in forging resolutions concerned with world peace and security, which places countries elected to a seat at the Security Council at the same table of talks and negotiations that includes the five permanent members: the United States, China, Russia, Britain and France.

However, alongside rights and honor, tremendous responsibilities fall upon the shoulders of the Lebanese government as it takes its seat at the Security Council. Indeed, this seat is also one of testing the seriousness of the state and the standing it seeks after. Thus if the Lebanese delegation comes to reflect internal Lebanese disputes in the stances taken by Lebanon towards international issues, it will lose respect and also its ability to influence decision-making, as Lebanon is not a country that holds the right of veto and its vote is therefore not decisive. Hence, the importance of Lebanon at the Security Council lies in its influence much more than in its vote.

Security Council members, in their first meeting after the Lebanese government was formed this week, welcomed this achievement without any of them - including the United States - voicing reservations over the composition of the cabinet, which includes ministers who are members of Hezbollah. This is also a welcoming message to the membership of Lebanon in the council and a message of willingness to look the other way in order to help the country, however with an insistence on the resolve to implement all resolutions, including Resolution 1559, which the US representative made sure to mention. Indeed, the Security Council will not retract resolutions, and any attempt - or thought of one - towards the possibility of annulling or removing a certain resolution is only an unrealistic dream. Indeed, Resolution 1559, which demands the dismantling of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias is staying at the Security Council, as are the resolutions that established the Special Tribunal for Lebanon to try those implicated

in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri and his companions, in addition to the other assassinations which the investigation proves to be related to that of Hariri. Thus it would be wise to avoid any attempt to rally against Security Council resolutions, and it is necessary for Lebanon to cling to the firm stance it has taken, that of committing to implement all of the resolutions that concern it.

Iran could create a climate of confrontation at the Security Council, this to bring the nuclear issue out of it and to return it exclusively to Vienna, where the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is based. The message of the United States and Britain during the closed session this week to look into Resolution 1701, which is concerned with Lebanon and which has laid down the circumstances and the conditions of sustaining the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel, was a clear one. Indeed, the representatives put forth the issue of the Iranian ship that was seized by Israel, which claimed that it was carrying weapons and headed to Syria on its way to Hezbollah in Lebanon. Yet they did so by holding Iran responsible and did not make use of it to attack Hezbollah. Similarly, the Security Council decided to refer the matter to the sanctions commission concerned with Iran, which prohibits Iran by virtue of Resolution 1747 from smuggling weapons outside of its territory.

Yet such a message of goodwill will not last if Hezbollah insists on forcing its own agenda on the Lebanese government. Indeed, the issue of "resistance" which it seeks to introduce to the ministerial statement was resolved under the Siniora government and there is no need to provoke a crisis and an unnecessary problem on the eve of Lebanon entering the council.

As for Iran, it is well able to take care of itself in its relations with the great powers. And just as there is no need for the United States, Russia or France to corner Lebanon on the issue of Iran, there is no need for Iran to expect Lebanon to clamor on its behalf. Indeed, Lebanon's identity at the Security Council is an Arab one.

Hence developments on the regional scene should be monitored, as some of them may reach the UN Security Council. Indeed, the council has previously addressed the Yemeni and Saudi-Yemeni issue, and developments may bring this issue back to the council on a completely different basis.

Iran has admitted this week through its Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki its direct role in Yemen, thus supporting reports which state that Iran has been providing the Houthis with funds and weapons. In fact, Mottaki threatened, saying: "we strongly advise regional and neighboring states not to interfere in Yemen's internal affairs". He added, promising, that "those who pour oil on the fire must know that they will not be spared from the smoke that billows".

The United States, its government, congress, media and people, are in complete ignorance of what is happening in Yemen and why. There are even high-ranking directors in the US Administration in charge of the issue of Yemen and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) who are surprised to hear of basic evident facts, after having decided to dwarf the issue and to reject the reports of Iran's role in Yemen. Today, the US Administration, the American media and American intellectual and research institutions must devote themselves to understanding what is happening in Yemen before it is too late and it becomes the most dangerous failed state for the region and the world.

Likewise, Saudi diplomacy must participate in the information campaign by clarifying what its current policy and strategy is towards Yemen, and how it intends to handle the issue with Iran. Indeed, there is dire need to make US officials and the American media aware of the dangers of the "time bomb" called Yemen, in terms of the geology as well as of the rebellion, the tribal structure, the Houthis and the government.

The mistakes of the past are many and there is a need today to stop engaging in proxy wars and to build regional relations on the basis of turning countries into "effective states" for regional forces. Iran seems enthusiastic about persisting in this pattern, nearly making it its "signature brand", while Arab countries wish to put a stop to such a pattern - either out of necessity or purposely due to them being occupied with internal matters and with the challenges of creating jobs for millions of young people.

Lebanon has benefited from rapprochement, consensus and agreement, at least temporarily and as a first step. As for Yemen, it deserves international mobilization before it is too late.

Source: Ya Libnan

Arab winds of change

By: Brian Whitker
The Guardian

Who is driving real change in the Arab countries? Not politicians, but feminists, gay people and bloggers

"Women, bloggers and gays lead change in the Arab world." That is the headline of an article by Octavia Nasr for CNN's blog AC360°. "Several new lines are being drawn in the Middle East's desert sand simultaneously," she writes. "If they continue to be drawn at this rate longer and thicker, it's hard to foresee any governments, censors or jails being able to stop them."

Though Nasr sounds a bit overexcited about the existence of a feminist mag in Arabic in which "no one dares to advertise" and a few other developments which are interesting straws in the wind but scarcely signs of an imminent revolution, I think she has a point. If asked where change is likely to come from in the Arab countries, I would not put much faith in "reformist" politicians and opposition parties - they're mostly no-hopers - but I would definitely put feminists, gay men, lesbians and bloggers very high on my list.

It's important not to exaggerate what they are actually achieving at the moment, but let's consider their potential as challengers of the status quo and drivers of change. The "Arab problem" is mostly perceived in terms of the regimes: the lack of democracy, authoritarian rulers who trample over people's rights, and so on. That was the perception of the Bush administration in particular and it led to the simplistic idea that regime change was the solution.

It's now very clear (as I explain in my new book, What's Really Wrong With the Middle East) that this was a mistake. You can overthrow dictators, you can force countries to have elections and you can even insist on voting procedures that are reasonably fair, but that doesn't bring freedom unless it forms part of a much bigger social transformation.

What has emerged in Iraq, for ex-

ample, is not so much a model for the rest of the Middle East (as originally intended by Bush and the neocons) but a model of it. As the smoke drifts away, Iraq is emerging as a fairly typical Arab state with most of their usual negative characteristics - a government with authoritarian aspirations, institutionalised corruption and nepotism, pervasive social discrimination and a rentier economy that produces little besides oil - plus, for good measure, resurgent tribalism and sectarianism.

Arab regimes, by and large, are products of the societies they govern and it is often the society, as much as the government itself, that stands in the way of progress. In Kuwait, for instance, it was not the hereditary emir who resisted granting votes to women, but reactionary elements in the elected parliament - and there are plenty of similar examples.

Khaled Diab, an Egyptian who contributes regularly to Cif, summed it up pithily when he told me: "Egypt has a million Mubaraks." In other words, the Mubarak way of doing things is not confined to the country's president; it is found throughout Egyptian society, in business and in families too. The Arab family as traditionally conceived - patriarchal and authoritarian, suppressing individuality and imposing conformity, protecting its members so long as they comply with its wishes - is a microcosm of the Arab state.

Changing the power structures within families (and in many parts of the Arab world this is already happening) will also gradually change the way people view other power structures that replicate those of the traditional family, whether in schools and universities, the workplace, or in government. This is where women come in. In an Arab context, demanding the same rights as men is a first step towards change. Asserting their rights doesn't mean that all women have to be activists for feminism. Even something as simple as going out to work - if enough people do it - can start to make a difference.

Contrary to popular opinion, most human rights abuses in the Arab coun-

tries are perpetrated by society rather than regimes. Yes, ordinary people are oppressed by their rulers, but they are also participants themselves in a system of oppression that includes systematic denial of rights on a grand scale.

In these highly stratified societies, people are discriminated for and against largely according to accidents of birth: by gender, by family, by tribe, by sect. Women, as the largest disadvantaged group, can play a major role in overcoming this and helping smaller disadvantaged groups to do the same. Once the equality principle is accepted for women it becomes easier to apply it to others.

Discrimination against gay people has only begun to be challenged in the Arab countries during the last few years. In a patriarchal system, where masculinity is highly prized, any deviation from the sexual "norms" and expected gender roles is not only subversive but is regarded as extremely threatening. The vigilante killings in Iraq are the nastiest example - not just of men who are thought to be gay, but others who simply don't dress and behave "as men should".

The third group driving change are the bloggers. A recent survey found 35,000 people blogging in Arabic, plus countless others who use Facebook, Twitter, etc, to communicate over the internet. There has been much debate about the extent to which this is reshaping public discourse and undermining censorship, but that is not really the main significance of blogging and the internet in the Middle East. The traditional "ideal" of an Arab society is one that is strictly ordered, where everyone knows their place and nobody speaks out of turn. Basically, you do what is required of you and no more. You keep your head down, don't make waves and let those who supposedly know better get on with running things.

The point about bloggers is that they want none of that. They are engaged, they are alive, and they'll speak out of turn as much as they like. Put all these elements together and you can see how, sooner or later, the edifice could start to crumble.

Islamic movement in Yemen (Islah Party)

By: Abu Al-Hasanain Muhsin Mu'aidh

Much talk has been made about the Islamic Movement in Yemen (The Muslim Brethren) represented by the Islah Party and its attitude towards the current events such as the movement in the South or the Houthis in Sa'ada. Many accuse the Islamic Movement of being uncertain about its vision and being careless, hesitant and not taking initiatives in what concerns the nation.

It is clear that whoever is voicing this opinion has a very narrow perspective or either is motivated by a political agenda hoping that the movement would yield or surrender to such accusations.

Unfortunately, those are not but puppets in others' hands. They do not recognize that the movement stands firm against the influx of attacks as it realizes its responsibility not to create a public insurgency, and to put forward the people's best interest before creating a chaotic situation and that fending off problems is more important than bringing in benefits.

It is also not fair that the long history of the movement since the early forties is summarized in the last few years and evaluated accordingly.

The movement has learnt its lessons and realized that they should not be a

tool used by the ruler to attack his opponents, for soon enough he will turn to the movement with his vengeance. The movement learnt that if today they are sharing power with a ruler who keeps cutting deals, tomorrow it will be dumped in the corner with no importance given to it.

History shows that the Islamic Movement in Yemen has not stood silent in times of need and has worked endlessly to promote peace and security in the country. A time came in the past when the movement was indifferent to power despite the fact that it could have easily ruled.

People today ask about the Islamic Movement's view towards Houthis. We say that Houthis are a creation of the current regime who raised this rebellion on hatred and enmity to the Islamic Movement and to become a scarecrow against neighboring countries.

Now the Houthis turned against their master after they felt powerful. And the government is trying its best to get the movement to stand by its side against its own creation.

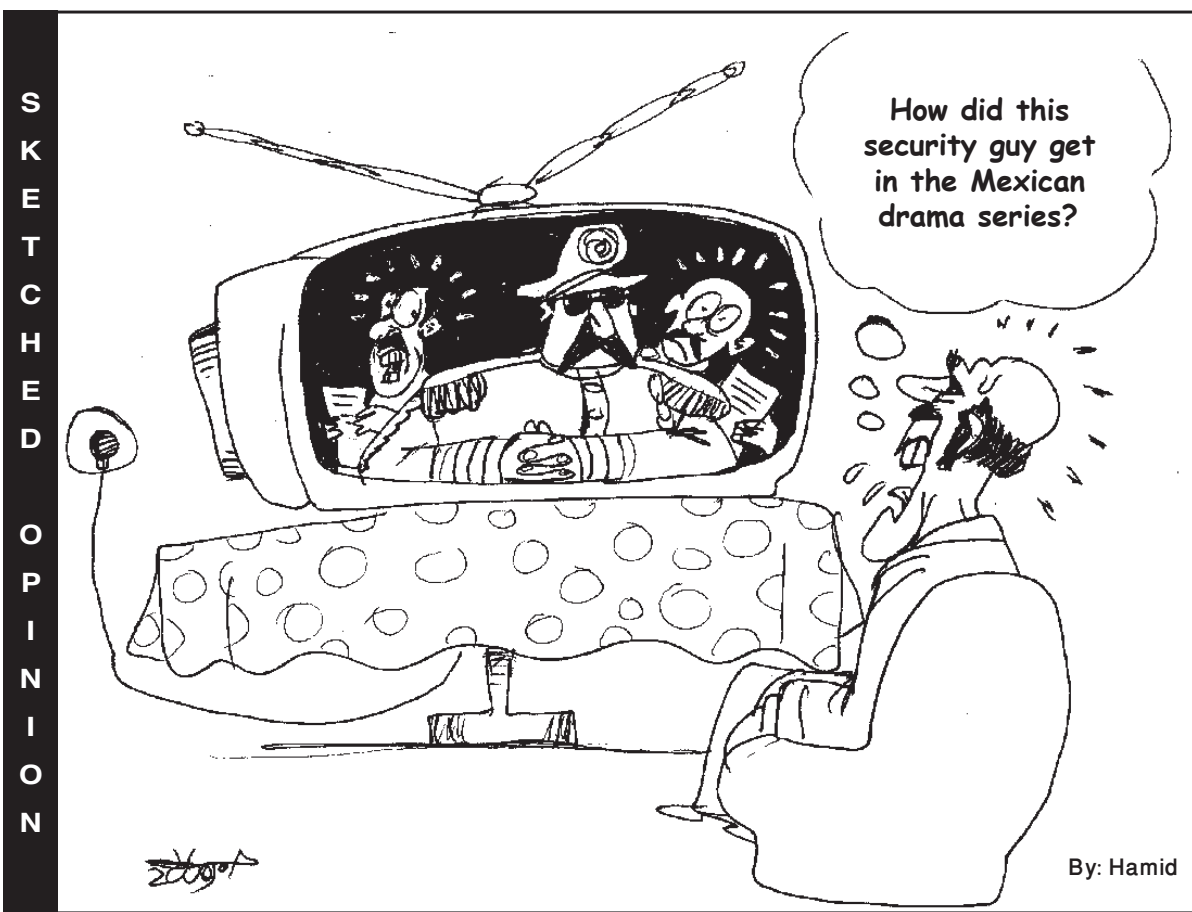
The Islamic Movement, however, saw that there is no use in talking with the present regime and decided to form another coalition so that it would be able to release its message. The movement joined other parties and estab-

lished what is known now as the Joined Meeting Parties.

Some accuse the movement of having no fixed goals or objectives as today it is joining hands with those who were its enemies before. How in 1994 they fought against the Yemeni Socialist Party and today they are together in a political coalition. The reasoning behind this is that when the movement aided the government in its fight in 1994, it was doing so to protect the Yemeni unity and defend the country's stability against chaos and insecurity. Today it is fighting for the same causes, only this time the players have changed.

Although the present regime promised to grant the Islamic Movement represented by the Islah Party many political positions, the party refused. This may be explained in terms of the party's principles, which prevent it from taking positions lest this compromises its stance. One other reason why it refused positions is that the present regime refused to carry out the "National rescue program" presented by the Joined Meeting Parties.

The movement knows its place well and will not take part in the war. It always away from causing bloodshed and we ask Allah to help us continue working for the sake of peace and guide our youth to righteousness.



By: Hamid

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Swiss xenophobia reflected in the vote to ban minarets

The Swiss ban on the construction of new minarets has angered Muslims and human rights groups.

By: Rachele Kliger

The Swiss decision to ban the building of new minarets in Switzerland is sending shockwaves throughout the Muslim world.

Muslims and human rights groups have expressed outrage at the decision, depicting it as an attack on Islam and a setback for religious freedom.

More than 57% of Swiss voters approved the proposal Sunday in a nationwide referendum backed by Switzerland's right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP), widely associated with anti-immigration campaigns.

"It's an indication that fascist and far-right groups are growing in number and in strength," Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra, Assistant Secretary-General for the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and an imam for the Muslim community in Leicester told The Media Line.

"This should be very worrying for all decent Europeans who wish to see the diversity of our continent continue in order to help our communities be cohesive and peaceful," he said. "The

MCB is extremely disappointed that a country in modern-day Europe has such a significant population with such a dislike for diversity, particularly for Islam and for Muslims."

There are concerns the referendum results will have a similar effect to the 2005 Danish political cartoons, in which depictions of the Prophet Muhammad sparked anti-Danish boycotts and violent demonstrations throughout the Muslim world.

"I would call upon all Muslims not to demonstrate or take to the streets," Mogra stressed. "This simply gives ammunition to those who wish to portray us as violent extremists. We need to be dignified and challenge this through the democratic process that we have available to us as Europeans."

Egyptian Mufti Ali Gomaa denounced the vote, calling it an "insult" to Muslims around the world and "provocative behavior," but urged Muslims to be restrained in their response.

The Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) urged U.S. President Barack Obama to use his upcoming address at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point to



speak out against the decision, calling it a move that is "a violation of religious freedom and a breach of international law."

The human rights advocacy group Amnesty International said it "deeply regrets" the decision, stating that it "violates both the freedom of religion of Muslims living in the country and the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religious belief, as set out in several international human rights instruments, that Switzerland is a party to."

"The general prohibition of the construction of minarets violates the right

of Muslims in Switzerland to manifest their religion," Amnesty said in a statement. "It can do lasting damage to their integration."

Claude Moniquet, Chief Executive of the European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center said the Swiss were likely to receive negative reaction from around the world.

"It's very clear that the Swiss authorities could have problems inside Switzerland with local groups calling for terrorist attacks," Moniquet told The Media Line. "They will also likely face problems outside Switzerland, with Swiss interests put at risk in North

Africa, in the Gulf, and in Muslim countries. It will be a huge challenge for them."

Moniquet was skeptical over concerns that the Swiss financial industry will suffer, with speculation that wealthy Arabs and Muslims might withdraw savings from Swiss bank accounts.

"When you're a billionaire and you want to put your money somewhere, Switzerland remains maybe the best place in the world," he said. "So it could marginally affect the economy of Switzerland but not in a fundamental way."

"Many people in Europe think we have a problem of integration with the Muslim minority and I think it's true," Moniquet added. "We have a problem, but banning the minarets cannot solve the problem. It will just raise the communities against each other. It will not help to resolve coexistence in the integration program."

Moniquet argued that the referendum stemmed from two factors.

"One is general, and you find it across Europe, and that's the fear of Islamists and the fear of Islam," he said. "The other is a pure Swiss problem: The Swiss always had a problem with

foreigners and they don't like them...I call it Swiss racism."

An op-ed in the Qatari daily A-Raya said the referendum was the worst gift Muslims received for Eid Al-Adha.

"This indicates an increase in racism in Europe in general, and especially in Switzerland," it read. "It's odd that this racist tendency comes at a time when the Arab and Muslim streets are showing more awareness for the need to respect religious freedom of minorities and individuals and focus on values of tolerance and acknowledgment of the other."

Following the referendum, the government said it would respect the decision of the people and will not permit the construction of new minarets. The decision will not affect the building of mosques or the four existing minarets in the country.

Switzerland has a population of 7.6 million people, of whom more than 4% are Muslim, mostly from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia.

The minaret, a tower adjacent to a mosque, is a visible symbol of Islam. The call to prayer is made from the minaret, but this call is banned in Switzerland. Right-wing Swiss parties have depicted the minarets as symbols of Islamic militancy.

First published on The Media Line

Saudi Gender War Leads to Dismissals Left and Right Prize University becomes a proxy for Saudi's cultural wars

Benjamin Joffe-Walt
The Media Line

When the Saudi king set out to build the Arab world's most advanced university on the northern shores of Jeddah, he may not have expected its founding to spark the largest theological war the kingdom has seen since women tried to drive through the streets of Riyadh.

But for better or worse, that's the war King Abdullah seems to have on his hands.

Opened in late September, the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) is Saudi Arabia's first co-educational institution, with male and female students from over 60 countries studying side by side, unveiled women driving around the 14 square mile grounds, and no religious police on campus.

Against the backdrop of a region that makes up only 1.1% of global scientific publishing, KAUST is one of the Arab world's most ambitious edu-

cational initiatives in over a decade and a source of pride for many Saudis.

But not all Saudis are feeling appreciative, and the advent of mass gender mixing in an institution founded by the king is said to have caused a crisis for Saudi Arabia's conservative religious authorities, with support of KAUST becoming a cultural proxy war for whether or not women and men should be allowed to mix publicly.

The debate began in October when Sheikh Saad bin Nasser al Shithri, a senior Saudi cleric, was fired by the king for publicly criticizing KAUST.

That was followed last week by a surprise announcement from Sheikh Ahmed al Ghamdi, head of the Saudi Religious police in Mecca, who came out in favor of KAUST and against the khilwa sex segregation laws.

"The word [khilwa] in its contemporary meaning has entered customary jurisprudential terminology from outside," Sheikh al Ghamdi said in an interview. "Mixing was part of normal life for the Ummah [Islamic nation] and its societies."

Those who prohibit the mixing of

the genders actually live it in their real lives, which is an objectionable contradiction," he said. "In many Muslim houses - even those of Muslims who say mixing is haram [forbidden]- you can find female servants working around unrelated males."

Sheikh Al Ghamdi's comments caused a flood of criticism from hard-line Saudi religious figures, some of whom have appeared on Saudi television accusing the sheikh of threatening the place of the religious police in the kingdom.

Then on Tuesday, unconfirmed rumors that Al Ghamdi has also been fired were all over the Saudi press.

"Everyone is shocked," Eman Al Nafjan, an influential Saudi blogger, told The Media Line. "Nobody knows what's going on."

"The way Sheikh Ghamdi phrased his comments it was interpreted as him speaking on behalf of the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice," she said. "That's probably what got the religious police to work behind the scenes to get him dismissed, but apparently it wasn't the

king who dismissed him so maybe he will intervene."

"Sheikh Shithri, on the other hand, said that King Abdullah doesn't know what's going on and that people are using the king to create the university," Al Nafjan said, referring to the original criticism of KAUST. "So it was not just a case of him having a problem with the mingling of the sexes, it was that he was disrespectful."

"He specified KAUST," she added. "You can't just criticize the kingdom's largest project of the last four years. He should have spoken in more general terms."

Wajiha Al-Huwaidar, a Saudi women's rights advocate, argued that the theological debate KAUST has engendered is a sign of diversity among the kingdom's religious authorities.

"The religious authorities are very powerful and they don't hesitate to hurt anyone," she told The Media Line. "Extremists are in charge of the religious institutions in this country so when someone from inside says something like this he will be attacked."

"At the same time, we have this idea



that all religious people in Saudi feel the same about these laws but it's actually not true," she said. "I think Sheikh Ghamdi personally believes that men and women working and studying together is the right way to live. Mixing

men and women is not against religion, and he is very brave for saying this."

To date the Council of Senior Scholars, the highest religious authority in the kingdom, has yet to comment on KAUST.

DIFF 2009 unveiled a glittering lineup of movies

The Dubai International Film Festival plans to stage its sixth edition this year despite the emirate being in financial meltdown and stock markets across the globe plummeting amid exposure to its debt crisis.

The president of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Khalifa, issued a statement through the state news agency backing Dubai's leadership. But organizers of the film festival were reticent in coming up with a statement with organizers, declining comment at time of going to press. It is unclear whether this year's event would be affected by the current turmoil.

Putting on a positive front early Tuesday, festival organizers unveiled a glittering lineup of movies, including James Cameron's "Avatar," enough to make other festivals blue with envy. The lineup also revealed that Gerard Butler will receive Variety's International Star of the Year award at the 2009 event.

Tony Award winner Rob Marshall's film version of the musical Nine will open the Dubai Film Festival on December 9, according to a report in Variety. The Festival continues through December 16 and will close with the regional premiere of James Cameron's Avatar.

Fest opener "Nine" depicts a director's midlife crisis and a series of complicated romantic entanglements and

stars Daniel Day-Lewis, Nicole Kidman, Penelope Cruz, Marion Cotillard, Judi Dench, Kate Hudson and Sophia Loren. Other programmed movies include the world premiere of "City of Life," a multilingual Emirati film from Ali F. Mostafa, and Indian superstar Ranbir Kapoor's "Rocket Singh: Salesman of the Year." Cameron's "Avatar" will provide a big event to close the festival.

Also listed in the lineup is "Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel" and Rodrigo Garcia's "Mother and Child" starring Naomi Watts, Samuel L. Jackson, Annette Bening, Kerry Washington and Shareeka Epps.

Fest's Muhr prize for Arab cinema -- originally launched in 2006 with the ambition to become the premier showcase in the world for Arab filmmakers -- has managed to bring together a stellar lineup.

Among the competitish contenders are Egyptian helmer Kamla Zekry's "One-Zero," Arab-American filmmaker Cherien Dabis' "Amreeka" and French-Arab director Nassim Amaouche's "Adieu Gary."

Palestinian helmer Michel Khleifi's



"Zindeeq" receives its world preem at the fest as does Emirati filmmaker Ali Mostafa's "City of Life."

Organizers are rolling out the red carpet for Mostafa, who has previously won the Emirati Filmmaker prize at the fest and has long been seen as the Emirati helmer most likely to break out internationally. Mostafa's film, which finished principal photography in mid-March, takes its name from the English translation of Dubai's oldest nickname.

The multi-lingual, multi-stranded character-driven drama follows the intersecting lives of a privileged young Emirati, an Indian taxi driver and Roman flight attendant all living in the bustling emirate.

Elsewhere, Indian acting icon Amitabh Bachchan will receive a lifetime achievement award for his contri-

bution to cinema as part of the fest's honoree program. Previous recipients have included Morgan Freeman, Egyptian superstar Adel Imam as well as Indian uber-producer Yash Chopra.

Fest is also hosting a sidebar of French pics in its In Focus section. Among the pics selected are helmer Laurent Vinas-Raymond's "I Forgot to Tell You," starring Omar Sharif, and Francois Ozon's "Le Refuge"

The Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF) 2009 has tuned into the shifting media trends by bonding with traditional as well as digital media with more than ten leading publishers, television channels and digital companies on board as Media Partners this year.

In a path-breaking move, DIFF 2009 has redefined its media outlook with a

strong digital media component while continuing its partnership with print and audio-visual outlets.

This year, DIFF has on board AMG; DMI; France 24; Good News Cinema; Gulf News; Ahlan!; MBC; Google Youtube; Zee TV; E-Vision; Variety the international premier source of entertainment news; Emirates Neon Group and Orbit Showtime as media partners.

DIFF's Director of Marketing and Sponsorship Mahsa Motamedi said the media plays a crucial role in effectively conveying the message of DIFF, "Bridging Cultures, Meeting Minds."

"As is the norm at DIFF, we are moving in tune with the trends. This year too we have formed strong media partnerships, including new channels that reach out to a wider audience. DIFF is partnering with a good cross

section of organisations, across all levels of media, to help us deliver our core messages regionally and internationally," she added.

DIFF's media partnerships also highlight the growing interest of the global media in the festival, which is now regarded as the most definitive film festival in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Compared with 450 media registrations in the opening year, DIFF last year had 1,165 accredited media, from around the world, covering the event -- an increase of over 150 percent. This has in turn translated to phenomenal growth in audience participation too -- with the number of admissions growing by over 110 percent in the past five years.

Source: MENASSAT

The only businesswoman in Ja'ar

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

Yasmeen Al-Matari has broken a long held stereotype in her community. As an owner of a computer applications institute, Yasmeen is a proud member of a male dominated business.

Al-Matari, 28, lives in Ja'ar in Abyan governorate in the southern part of the country. After majoring in Information Technology from Aden University she teaches at the faculty of Education in Abyan in addition to running her business.

Al-Matari has dreamed of owning an institute in Ja'ar, Abyan she was a university student. "During my study at the university I had to study English, and write research papers on the internet or buy CDs, but at that time there were no such services in Ja'ar or in Abyan. So I wanted to make all this available," said Al-Matari.

Yasmeen Al-Matari had the heart and abilities of a leader but lacked the skills. When she studied computer maintenance at the new Horizon Institute in Aden she heard that there were free training courses in Marketing and personal skills. She joined it, and learned how to seize opportunities, lead a team, prepare a budget, set goals and achieve them. She immediately started to practically apply what she learned.

The Dutch Embassy in Sana'a funded the training and the Small Micro Enterprises Promotion Service (SMEPS) managed it. The curriculum was provided by International Finance Cooperation (IFC)'s Business Edge Program. Training took place at the New Horizon Institute and at other institutes.

The program is designed to improve the performance and competitiveness of developing countries by improving business-management skills and supporting private sector development.

When her employer had financial problems at the institute, Al-Matari saw an opportunity. She offered to buy it and she split half of the cost with her brother. In addition to the financial support from her family, they left the administrative staff for her. She bought the institute in August 2008.

By changing the decoration, updating the computers, reducing education fees and designing new brochures to promote the institute, she renovated the institute. She also recruited more teachers for computer and English courses. Her institute provides training in computers, Internet applications, English and general education subjects. She also suggested teaching the IFC curriculum that she had studied.

"I insist on using educational tools like CDs in lessons and I give more attention to listening skills for English language learners," she added. Educational aid materials and computer appliances are also sold in the institute.

"I took into account students' living standards," said Al-Matari. "A student can start the course and pay later. A number of students have already completed their diploma and still come to pay remaining fees through instalments."

To keep teachers loyal to the institute and encourage them to give more to their students, Al-Matari treats them as friends not as employees. She gives them 25 percent of the revenues and the opportunity to choose the courses and times they prefer.

It has been a year since she owned the institute and she is proud of her success. She embodies an enthusiasm and demand for learning that is unmatched. "In the summer school holiday, corridors between classrooms filled with students waiting for their time to start lessons."

Al-Matari is the only woman specialist in information technology in her neighbourhood and almost the only

business woman in all of Ja'ar district. Many of the men in her family are in the carpentry business. The women are mostly housewives and a few work as teachers. She is the only businesswoman in the family and now the proud owner of Al-Matari Academic Institute.

"I am proud that because of me, a woman, my family name hangs high on a prestigious academic institution and not just on the front door of a carpentry shop which was what my large family had been doing for a long time," she said.

Yasmeen Al-Matari's main goal now is to make her institute's certificate internationally accredited. "This will increase the number of students in the institute," she said. "And this will help me achieve my dream of owning a private school or at least a Kindergarten."

In Abyan, it is difficult for women to receive training because it is not traditional for men and women to be in mixed-gender environments. The courses Al Matari took in marketing and personal skills gave her the idea of offering women-only classes so that families would feel more comfortable about their female relatives attending business courses, according to IFC.

Al-Matari said many of her students discuss with her about her experience. "They ask for information about my experience and when they have the resources they will open their own businesses," she said.

Business Edge is helping to reduce the skills gap among groups that are underserved or not served at all. Some 26 percent of all trainees are women. Last year, in Yemen alone, Business Edge training partners met demands from startups, entrepreneurs, and other groups by selling 3,004 training slots. Surveys showed that 79 percent of trainees improved their performance at work after they took the course, according to IFC.

The economical dimension of the emigration phenomena

By: Yaseen Altamimi *

The Minister of Emigration Affairs, General Ahmed Musa'ed Husain estimates the number of the emigrants Yemenis in Gulf Countries at about 1,400,000. Among them are 370 businessmen and more than 240 scientists. There are 19 Yemeni communities that take care of the emigrants affairs.

The number of the emigrants is increasing, yet an exact figure is unknown - causing the government to be unable to effectively support those Yemenis. Some foreign minister deputies estimate the number of Yemeni emigrants worldwide to be greater than 4,500,000. The National Information Center said that Yemeni emigrants live and work in about 40 countries.

The money that Yemenis earn abroad and send home is economically significant, despite the fact that many workers were sent home after the first Gulf War. In August, to a governmental report presented to Al-Shorah Council - the body who advises the government - confirmed that remittances are a crucial part of the national budget. Remittances increased from 1,287,000,000 USD in the nineties to 1,379,000,000 USD in 2002.

And that money is put to work funding construction projects and infrastructural development. The National Information Center site says "when looking to the role the emigrants play to help their country, one can obviously recognize the importance they play."

Little support for a third conference for Yemeni expatriates entitled "Strengthening National Links" materialized, and did not take place as scheduled in 2007.

The poor relationships between the emigrants and their homeland came out of some challenges. Unfortunately, the apparent lack of care shown by the country toward its emigrants resulted in that emigrants no longer believe in such conferences.

The weakness of the Ministry of Emigrants, which is legally obliged to take care of the emigrants interests



Yemen American Benevolent Association celebrates its 40th anniversary. The association was established in 1969 by Yemenis in Benevolent, America as a non-profit organization to primarily support the children of the Yemeni community there.

and keep good relationships with them, contributed to the failure of the conference. The merging of the Ministry of Emigrants with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has lessened its power to be able to take decisive action.

This merging paralyzed the Ministry of Emigrants reducing it to a small part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, delaying the conference for more than two years. However, thanks to the Ministers' council the third emigrants' conference was given an organizational panel which gave them clearer instructions on how to go about their work.

A lack of funding for emigrants' educational foundations by the government created further obstacles for the conference. In an interview with the Yemen Voice, Minister Saleh Somae' estimated that more than 54 million USD has disappeared. This led the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption to launch a fraud investigation. The money was meant to fund emigrants' children's education.

But corruption is not the sole problem besetting the conference. The absence of a clear strategy by the government has hindered its ability to benefit

from the bountiful economic resources available from emigrants.

The importance of such a strategy is valued especially in the time when the emigrant Yemeni communities hear nothing but negative news from home. Given the great role emigrants are playing in terms of the national economy and the potential importance to the development of the country, such negativity - like the quarrels between the political parties -- should be addressed immediately.

Other issues also need urgent attention. The government's inability to establish easy procedures for emigrants who want to spend a vacation in their homeland casts the government as untrustworthy in the eyes of Yemeni emigrants. Additionally, the lack of communication between emigrants and the diplomats abroad who are charged with taking care of them further discourages Yemenis who work tirelessly abroad to support their homeland.

* This story is an extract from a report published in Yemen Voice, on Yemeni immigrants published in Great Britain.



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Physician:

1. General Practitioner, degree in paediatrics or internal medicine is an asset.
2. Ability and experience in manage, supervise and lead medical team (mobile clinic team).
3. Experience in first aid and health education is mandatory.
4. Previous work experience in a humanitarian context is mandatory.
5. Experience in emergency programs is an asset.
6. Practical experience in public health is an asset.
7. Arabic, English is compulsory, French is an asset.
8. Ability to write medical activity reports.
9. Diplomatic, able to communicate with a variety of people.
10. Flexible attitude, to adjust to a different culture, medical context, political context.
11. Good sense of organization is essential.
12. Ability to work with team spirit.
13. Ability to work under stressful conditions.

Medical Assistant:

1. Certified medical assistant.
2. Previous work experience at least 7 years in hospitals, medical centres or clinic.
3. Have experience with drug managements and pharmacy recording.
4. Previous experience of mobile teams activity in the field is an asset.
5. Basic laboratory experience is an asset.
6. Previous experience in first Aid and health educations is an asset.
7. Experience in registration of medical records and data.
8. Previous work experience in a humanitarian context is mandatory.
9. Arabic, English is compulsory, French is an asset.
10. Diplomatic, able to communicate with a variety of people.
11. Flexible attitude, to adjust to a different culture, medical context, political context
12. Good sense of organization is essential.
13. Ability to work with team spirit.
14. Ability to work under stressful conditions.

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4. Previous training or experience in first Aid and health educations.
5. Previous experience in registration and medical records.
6. Previous work experience in a humanitarian context is mandatory.
7. Arabic, English is compulsory, French is an asset.
8. Diplomatic, able to communicate with a variety of people.
9. Flexible attitude, to adjust to a different culture, medical context, political context.
10. Good sense of organization is essential.
11. Ability to work with team spirit.
12. Ability to work under stressful conditions.

CV and letter of interest should be sent by e-mail at: recruitment_mdm_yemen@yahoo.fr, under the applied reference or to POBOX: 16372. Females are highly encouraged to apply for this job. No applications received after 31st of Dec 2009 will be considered.

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Skills and Abilities: Strong interpersonal skills, flexibility, teamwork skills and ability to pay attention to close detail are essential. ability to work under pressure (serving many clients at one time) and to meet deadlines is also required.
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- Assign and correct homework, score quizzes and exams, evaluate student progress and assign end of term grades to each student fairly and objectively.
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To Apply Submit cover letter and CV by hand to the ILC- UST Reception Desk, to the attention of the director of the center or by email to: elc@ust.edu.ye Email submissions are preferred. Qualified candidates will be contacted to submit detailed applications and interviews

ON THE OCCAISON OF 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL BANK OF YEMEN WITH SIMULTENOUSNESS OF CROSSING 42 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE DAY

Under the patronage of His Excellency the President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the President of the Republic of Yemen, the banking conference of the National Bank of Yemen was inaugurated by Wahid Ali Rashid, deputy Governor of Aden Governorate along with Mr. Ahmed Dhalai, Deputy Governor for Investments. The banking conference was convened within the period between

12 – 14th of December 2009 in the hall of Mercure Hotel, Khormaksar, and in the presence of Mr. Abdulrehman Mohammed Alkuhali, the Chairman of administrative council and General Manager, and his first deputy and member of the administrative council Mr. Sami Mackawee and members of bank's administrative council and managers of the departments and branches and other invited guests and Officials of Government sectors and local branch managers.

Mr. Abdulrahman Alkuhali the Chairman of administrative council and General Manager of National Bank of Yemen gave a speech, in which he assured the administration's reliance of modern future views enabled its to stand forcefully in the banking market represented by its strategy towards completing the program of reconstruction of the framework and modernizing information technology, and concentrating on modernization and development of the product and services and to raise the capability of financial management and expansion geographically and increasing the number of branches and to ensure the security of the depositors by confidence money. He also pointed at the activities of the bank which were initiated by confident steps since 1998 and realizing positive results which lead to multiple profits. He concluded his speech for the occasion of the 40 years passing of the establishment of the National Bank of Yemen by Dedicating his greetings and congratulations to the president of Republic of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh.



Mr. Abdulrahman Alkuhali
Chairman and General Manager

In several other speeches the wordings Emphasized on the activities of the bank in pre-unity phases and the capability of the bank in competing with other commercial banks and explained the bank's investment position and the effects of the financial recession and the bank's capability in facing these challenges.

Speeches about the training and rehabilitation courses for banking transactions and training of the banking cadre for the period between 1999 – 2008, were also mentioned. Conference concluded on the activities of the banking credit and banks income realization and the achievement of the National Bank of Yemen in increasing its revenues through the recent past years and showed documentary clips which described the National Bank's activities from the day of its establishment through 40 years and the bank's participation in the social, cultural and humanitarian activities. The conference came to the end on the 14th of December 2009 after issuing a number of decisions and recommendations as follows:

Betterment of performance and exertion of efforts in presenting suitable services to its clients in all branches and increasing more rehabilitation of banking cadre locally and abroad and giving opportunities for youngsters in employments and supervision of various sections of the bank and swift developments in providing services according to Islamic rituals and in accordance with the future plans of the bank.



We still argue about khat

By: Abdourahman Robleh
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As I was trying to find some books in the English section of Bayta Al Saqafa library, I struck up a conversation with one of the visitors. We discussed a number of topics. The topics covered the problems of the world as well as the ones of the region. We were of the same opinion on certain issues even though we couldn't agree on details. The visitor, Khalid, as I picked up his name later, asked me whether I chew Khat or not without preamble. Without thinking about it I said, "No." The response caused him to raise his eyebrows and he started presenting a number of reasons why Khat is beneficial, as he said many people ignore them. Khalid was arguing about how nice the Khat is until I began to suspect he was a Khat dealer advertising it. His arguments in favor of Khat were as follows:

"Khat gives energy to laborers and students. Khat improves students' attention and reduces farmers and laborers physical fatigue. Students and laborers are able to concentrate on what they are doing both physically and mentally for up to eight hours and it

provides energy which can not be found in any stimulants such as coffee.

In addition, Khat strengthens relationships between people. People chew Khat together during Khat sessions, which enables them to keep in touch from time to time and in this way they build enduring relationships.

Khat is a national product, and it creates job opportunities for uneducated people as they are able to sell it and obtain a source of income to sustain them and meet their daily needs. It does not require skills or educated people to handle it.

Consumption of Khat reduces the consumption of other, far worse drugs such as heroine or hashish in the country. Khat users tend not to take other drugs. It is rare in Yemen to see hashish or heroine users compared to other countries where Khat is illegal."

As I listened to his rhetoric for some time, I conjured up a poster of the 'Yemen without Khat Association'. The poster reads "Passing an exam with Khat is an Illusion" It is correct. I have witnessed that kind of illusion when some of my friends studied while chewing Khat and as they slept, forgot everything they had read. They were in a tight spot as they got the exam paper and knew nothing about it.

Yes, Khat can strengthen the relationship between people but Khat chewers only socialize with other chewers, not with all people. People need common activities. Hobbies can strengthen people's relationships because all people have hobbies and you could take your hobby to a particular association. For instance, if you like literature or a particular language, you could join a literature association or club. His arguments are baseless on this point. Hasn't everyone witnessed those Khat chewers who spend their time away from home and don't care about their families? So, Khat actually breaks down family ties as opposed to strengthening them. If Khat chewers break down their familial ties, what is the use of having a good relationship with others?

When I came to last point, I turned my face away posing a few questions to myself. "Since Khat per se is considered a kind of drug how could it reduce drug taking?" "If the answer is positive, then how?" As I was trying to answer these questions I compared between the stimulant effect of Khat and one of the other drugs. There is a big difference. Khat can be easily given up while quitting other drugs requires treatment and most likely a stay at a rehabilitation center. Not having Khat would be very

unlikely to cause someone to commit a crime to acquire it while other drugs certainly drive people to commit the worst kinds of crimes. I quite agreed with him saying that most people, if not all, need stimulants of some sort and Khat could be the least destructive among them. When I went home, I thought about how to justify that. I tried to find the rate of drug users in Arab countries where Khat is illegal and to compare their usage with ours. My search was carried out on the internet and I came to realize that Arab countries hide information.

After long hours of searching, I at last, discovered a survey conducted by the Home Office commissioned by NARCO in Britain. The research took place over a period of 13 months. The survey is a review about Khat chewers in Britain in general and Somali Khat chewers living in four English cities in particular. I skimmed through the survey. The survey revealed that there was no drug aside from Khat associated with Khat chewers. But, some people rarely used other drugs when they are without Khat.

Therefore, I can say, despite it's many drawbacks Khat does indeed have a tangible positive side even though I don't chew it.

The stolen joy

By: Naji Gazali
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Living in the West, celebrating a religious Holiday is not just an event that you celebrate once a year; it is an identity buildup measure that we want to preserve, maintained and advocate for. Yet the joy that we are waiting for to share and spread and installed in our kids in Eid Aladah Almbark can't be felt this time, even if we fake it. The wound is so grave and painful and it hits homes. It is true that all Muslim should relate to other Muslims' pain and hunger equally as he/she may react to his own people. And it is true that

Muslim and Arabs in Palestine, Iraq, Somalia has endured and still enduring such harsh environment of poverty, hunger, destruction, killing and war, and seeing these pictures of refugee where kids' beauty and smiles have been stolen and instead their naked and skeleton bodies depicts a painful reality that we would give everything we have to stop it from ever happening. In this Holiday, I wonder how will wear my new clothes and take my kids into Eid prayer and how to smile and shake hands of friends and relative when my heart is empty of such happiness and joy. The faces of those peoples that I share with them my ethnicity is afraid of being bombarded, or feeling hungry or cold or having no feeling at all. My

joy turns into tears and hate and curse no one could ever underestimate. I keep asking myself as if I am getting no where with an answer for what is this war? Whatever the justification of the war in Sadda is, it becomes irrelevant, because human rights tops any government claims or and justifications. Killing for the sake of protecting the state from collapsing and to enforce its laws on its citizens by killing them is a shame and will never protect the state but it will destabilized it further to chaos and terror. No government's rights should overcome human rights' especially to live in peace and to have equitable resources. In Yemen our right is diminished and belittled. The people should be protected not wasted and

the means of the government such as a ruler, prime minister, and the whole government structure should be the one get wasted for the sake of the people and not the other way around. And judging by international standards and reports, Yemen is considered to be the most impoverished Arabic country in the world behind Somalia. Its debt to the international Bank tops 6 Billion Dollar, with no apparent improvements in any sectors of its citizen's lives', such as health, education, environmental, and basic infrastructures services like water and electricity. Now Sadda's war has harvested thousands of lives and probably million of Dollars for nothing. Yes for Nothing. Yet, corrupted mindset sees force as the only language to solve this problem. knowing not that it is very easy to start a war but it is very hard to end it, because the players will multiply and in Sadda's war; it has proven so, where the Saudis now and Iranian are flexing their interest and muscles on our sea, land, and air. And if you have not noticed, Yemen's sovereignty has been undermined and gravely threatened to a greater extent by such intrusion by the Saudis and the Iranian. We have been ridiculed by the Saudis' sea embargo and the 10 km ultimatum the Saudis enforced on alhuthie inside Yemenis land, and the continuous air raid against alhuthiy rebels and Yemenis villagers who are caught up in this despicable war. If none of the above intrusions on Yemen's sovereignty and territories seems to be insulting then what are we fighting Alhuthie for?!

The Mind's Eye

By: Maged Thabet Alkholidy
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Driving-car women, a new fashion! (Part 2)

Have you ever expected to take a bus or hire a taxi driven by a woman in Yemen? In part 1 of this article, last week, I have shed light on the prominent negative aspects of the phenomena of women driving cars - a phenomenon recently spread in Yemen, especially in the main cities of Sana'a, Aden and Taiz. In this part, I will do my best to highlight the positive aspects of this phenomenon so that, others, especially women, do not criticize me as biased as a man.

When somebody says: "women drive cars", we feel that women have become more independent than before. Women driving cars no longer need men to drive them. They follow the idiom "self help", showing that they can lead their life without men. This, therefore, reflects their independent characters through which they can enhance their abilities to do and behave similarly like men.

The movements of women in all the Yemeni cities are limited to particular hours of the day. The sun-set always announces the end of the women's movement in the day. That is why it is rare to see women in the buses or even walking in the streets at night. I think, the reason for this is a matter of security only, because it is not safe to hire buses or taxis at night. If women drive their own cars, on the other hand, this may go differently because they will feel more safe and secured especially if they are going to or coming from a particular secure place like home or a relatives' home. Thus, women's movements outside homes will no longer be limited to the particular hours of the day.

Women driving cars no longer require a male companion to accompany them wherever they go to protect them, especially in the public transportation. Some families do not allow their daughters to go alone if they need to hire taxis or buses. At the same time, women sometimes need someone to accompany them, when they go out in a taxi because they are afraid to hire a taxi or a bus without somebody to accompany them. That is why we can consider the phenomenon of women driving cars, as a positive feature of modern society.

Taking taxis or buses sometimes expose women to molestation by

people in streets or in the buses. I remember one situation, which happened about three weeks ago. It was the sun set time. I hired a bus from Jamal street to Al-Gumhuri Hospital area. There was a woman sitting behind me. A man got into the bus, and took a seat behind her. As the bus was moving, we suddenly heard the woman shout at the man behind her. The other passengers and me asked what happened? She told us that the man was trying to touch her. The risk of women getting exposed to such cases is definitely much lower when women are themselves driving.

Bus or taxi transportation usually requires more time and money especially in large cities like Sana'a. In such cities, taking buses burns the time because of they stop here and there driving slowly through the crowded streets. Taking a taxi can be a solution for this. But this costs more money, especially if the person has many places to visit. In comparison, women driving by themselves, is a better alternative. Driving their own cars, women can save both money and time. They will no longer have to pay the taxi driver higher for places which are nearby and can also take the shortest and fastest route to places, instead of the crowded and long streets.

Another important advantage of this phenomenon, is reduction in the number of car accidents. I think, it goes without saying, that women drive wisely and carefully than men. They never, or I can say, rarely drive 'rough' as some men do. They also follow the traffic rules and rarely violate them, though the reason for this might be avoiding problems with traffic police rather than for compliance with the rules.

To conclude, women driving cars do enjoy certain privileges in their daily life, such as - a sense of independence, since it becomes easier to move about without a male companion, not only during the day but even at night. Finally, it can be said that this also reduces the number of accidents because women drive wisely and slowly.

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.

English curriculum in Yemeni schools

By: Suleiman Raise Bauzer
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Crescent English Course is the Yemeni course book for our Yemeni schools, which is compiled by the most three famous, intelligent authors in England most noted for teaching the English language.

These books have been used in our schools since 1993, and without a shadow of a doubt, the authors Terry O'Neill, Peter Snow and Helen O'Neill are still the best for authorizing the course, but I must speculate as to why this Crescent English Course hasn't been changed, modified or developed despite the fact that things change regularly, by which I mean the English language itself.

In spite of the fact that the material is old, the tapes and teacher's book are helpful to students and teachers.

Upon consideration, I believe that the obvious reason why the material has not been changed or updated is because the Ministry of Education

planned for the courses to be taught from the seventh class and this is a complex time for students to focus and understand at the same time. Subjects in the seventh level are far more complicated than previous ones, and surprising the students by introducing a new English book starting with the alphabet and greetings, compounded by the teacher's different styles could contribute to many students dropping out of school.

It is time to change the Yemeni curriculum to be taught from the early school years with the new teaching styles, class activities and decorated books in order to be assimilated and become tolerable to the pupils.

According to English Language Teaching for the Arab World, Oxford University Press by Peter Snow and Terry, Helen O'Neill, this is one of most structured courses to have been planned since 1993 and revised in 1996, but the fact remains that in fourteen years, there has been no change and our schools still rely on the same old material.

Furthermore, although perhaps not so frequently in terms of grammar or spelling, according to linguists the

language certainly changes and evolves in other respects, such as vocabulary and methods of communication, from time to time. One should even consider that there is British English and American English, which has now become widely popular and accessible, but the main point here is not whether to use British or American English, but to introduce a new system from the early school years, which applies the latest courses and techniques.

We know that the age of students in the seventh stage is about fifteen to sixteen and this is not bad for learning a new language but it is through long and extensive study that they learn so many subjects. Unfortunately, this will result in poor marks for the pupils when they are required to have good skills in English for college.

Finally, if the students have gained nothing from the English courses during their six years of studying English as a second language and a new subject, shall these pupils' fathers enroll their children in private institutions or pay for tutors, and in that case what about those who can't afford to pay for such luxuries?

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Yemeni wedding bells...er...lights are in the air!

By: Gaar Adams
Traveler in Yemen Blog

The mountains around Sana'a provide year-round regularity in terms of excellent weather--cool mornings, balmy afternoons, and warm evenings. The weather is never too hot or too cold, and temperature fluctuation is almost nonexistent. However, in the past three weeks or so, I have definitely noticed an increase in the average temperature during each part of the day. Certainly nothing drastic--perhaps about five degrees--but it definitely has signaled the arrival of summer. And this summer weather seems to have heralded a surge of Yemeni weddings.

It's easy to tell when there is a Yemeni wedding currently taking place or about to happen: lights get strung from building to building across the street to signal the two to three day celebration. It's a beautiful image, particularly at night.

These lights were to make people



aware of a wedding celebration directly next to where I'm living. The lively party and music could be heard for blocks around throughout the evening and night.

In some cases, invitations are used. However, in terms of invitations, weddings are much less formal than the West in that respect, with people from the neighborhood coming, etc. Westerners walking past are almost universally invited inside. It's just about impossible to spend any time in Yemen and not by lured into a wedding party.

Although more well-off people may be able to afford to hold their wedding party in a large hall, most people have their weddings in big tents like the one pictured below. With a wedding party outside like this, it invariably spills into the street and becomes a



participatory event for people walking by, with some people being invited inside and everyone peaking through tent's windows at the festivities inside.

Besides for the obvious visual signs, one is alerted to a Yemeni wedding in the evening by a caravan of cars--often decorated--zipping through the streets and honking (even more than a normal Yemeni, which is saying a lot).

But perhaps the coolest part of Yemeni wedding parties is the music and accompanying dancing. I found a link on YouTube to a traditional Yemeni song, you can search for (Yemen Music and dance bar* Mizmar for Yusuf Albadagee) and you will find it. You'll also get to see some traditional jambiya dancing. This was the same dance that we did with the guys in Manakha. Pay attention to the instruments as well, as they're pretty awesome. The plucky guitar-type one is called an oud, and the really screechy double-reed instrument you see the guy playing is called a mizmar (it's my new obsession...I think it's absolutely fantastic).

One last thing of importance--so far

I've been saying "wedding party," when I should be saying "segregated wedding party." Men's wedding parties will include qat chews, music, and dancing the same as the women's parties. However, the men's are done in a public space. The women's are comprised of some of the same activities, but notable for a much more interesting reason.

Alright, so--important note--I obviously have not been to a female wedding party. Men are clearly not let inside. So what follows is information from research and stories told to me by friends who have attended a female wedding party.

What I do know, and what might be the most interesting thing of all, is that women get so dressed up that it puts Western weddings to absolute shame. I have had the privilege of walking by a Yemeni dress shop, and to adequately describe these dresses would require well beyond every known adjective for the word "ornate." Simply put, though, they're positively stunning. And (from a Westerner's perspective) it's obviously quite jarring to enter these wedding parties with women clapping and shouting and dressed to the nines when in basically every other part of public life they're completed covered in black abayas and silent as the still air.

Apparently it's also quite something to witness the bride. She makes a late entrance and then walks down a catwalk for upwards of twenty minutes while being shown off to her guests. The theme of showing off is one that runs deeply through Yemeni marriage parties--part of the reason women take such measures to dress up so much is that, traditionally, the vast majority of match-making is down at weddings. But don't think of Western match-making at a wedding--this kind means the mother of a man scopes out prospective brides for her son. So it's pretty necessary to look as best as possible.

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