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Electricity blackouts decrease as Marib-I enters service

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

SANA'A, FEB. 21 — The peoples' continual inconvenience from repeated daily electricity blackouts are being eased as 137 megawatts from the gas powered Marib Power Station, called Marib-I, have entered the service early this February.

Engineers at the National Electricity Control (NEC) in Sana'a confirmed that the trial run of 137 megawatts of the 341mw Station, built in Marib governorate, has been successful.

Earlier, the Minister of Electricity and Energy, Awadh Al Suqatri, had previously announced the trial run for Marib-I would start on January 15th. But this was delayed because people shot down the electric cables over tribal demands for their area.

This new trial run comes after five months' delay in the recently constructed station, built by the German Siemens Company. This was due to impurities in the gas supplied by the Safer Company for Oil and

Gas which was responsible for providing the station with gas as a fuel. Now, with the change to Yemen Liquefied Natural Gas (Yemen LNG), this kind of fuel is now suitable for operating the station.

"This trial run to operate one unit (137 mw) of the station has proved to be successful," said a source in NEC who didn't want to mention his name, as he is not authorized to give statements to the media.

"Now the unit is in service, you can see the difference on a daily basis; the blackouts have been reduced."

Another engineer who works for NEC said by operating this and the other two units composing Marib-I, the Ministry will dispense with having to rent power from the private sector, resulting in a large financial saving.

"This year, you will not see blackouts as Marib-I has entered service," announced this same engineer who spoke anonymously. He added that by achieving other electricity projects, under construction, there will even be surplus of power.

According to the earlier statements from

Minister Al-Suqatri, the trial run of the other two station units will follow the first one, with a two month period for each.

Last Tuesday, the cabinet ratified a Memo of Understanding between the Ministry of Electricity and Energy and the Yemeni Company for Industrial Investments Ltd. to construct gas powered power stations in Marib. This was quoted on the Saba website. The cabinet funded 49 percent of the construction costs as the government contribution, while the company will fund the remainder.

The Yemen Times has tried several times to contact officials at the Ministry for more details and confirmation of the above facts but so far they have only given a promise to speak sometime in the future.

On a more relevant note, the Saba news website reported that the cost of buying electricity from the private sector had increased in 2009 by 7.5 percent, to reach



YR 21.9 billion during the period of January to November as compared to YR 20.3 billion for the same period in 2008.

The value of this bought energy was YR 14.3 billion and YR 7.6 billion is the cost of diesel, used as a fuel for the station, in the same 2009 period.

The General Manager of Bought Energy in the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Aref Taha, told Saba that the General

Electricity Corporation revenue from this energy had reached YR 18.3 billion in 2009 with the shortage estimated at YR 3.6 billion.

He made it clear that the bought energy had increased by 17.8 percent during the above mentioned period in 2009 to reach 1625 gigawatts as compared to 1379 gigawatts for the same period in 2008.

It may be worth noting that the Ministry

of Electricity and Energy were forced to buy from the private sector in 2006, due to increasing demand and a sharp short-fall. As this sort of energy consumed the entire budget of the ministry, this was the only solution.

The demand for energy is increasing annually and is estimated at 10 percent of Yemen's existing supply, calculated to be approximately 11,000 megawatts.

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Relative calm in Sa'ada, Amran and Al-Jawf

By: Mohammad Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, FEB. 21 —The governors of Sa'ada, Amran and Al-Jawf have reportedly been relatively calm this last week.

Ali Bin Ali Al-Qaisi, head of the Al-Malaheedh committee to observe the ceasefire, said that Houthis have not disabled the Yemeni army.

Ali Al-Salami, a member of the same committee, confirmed what Al-Qaisi said, adding that the Yemeni army is looking for important sites to set up camp in.

However a member of one of the committees, who asked to remain anonymous, told the AFP that Houthis are stopping the Yemeni army from spreading along the Saudi border. He added that the Houthis had taken Al-Malaheedh from the army.

Sources in the committees said on Friday that the Yemeni army would spread along the Yemeni-Saudi border if landmines planted by the Houthis were removed.

Official sources said that the committees are authorized to conduct field visits to observe the removal of land mines and barriers from the main roads in the governorate, as well as control Houthi

presence in mountainous areas.

The Houthis started last week to open up the Amran Road and hand over weapons and ammunitions.

In a related context, the Penal Court started interrogating 45 Houthis who were arrested during the sixth war.

According to a judicial source, the General Prosecution is to start trials against Houthis who were accused of forming armed gangs to fight against the state, causing the death of many citizens.

The Houthis however threatened that if they were tried, they would likely break the agreement they signed with the state.

Governor of Sa'ada Taha Hajer said that the Houthis do not show the willingness to carry out the six conditions presented by the state earlier to stop the war.

Hajer stated that some families had returned back to their homes two days ago in Aal Oqab in the Sa'ada governorate.

He said that the works to implement water and electricity projects will start in the next days. The committees would count the displaced people and offer them the basic things they need, he said, adding that removing mines will require some time.

The Ministry of Defense's website re-

ported that the Houthis were supposed to bring their representatives to meet with the committees to carry out the conditions.

Al-Sahwa.net reported that confrontations between the Houthis and the Aal Al-Dhameen tribe in Al-Zaher district had killed one member of the tribe and injured another.

Reactions from outside Yemen The European Union called on the international community to help Yemen face terrorism and work to establish security.

Catherine Ashton, European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs, said that the union is calling for a permanent ceasefire permanently that the war should never be fought again.

She added that the European Union suggests to hold a real comprehensive dialogue in which all parties are involved.

Helen Clark, the head of the United Nations Development Program, said that the program will do its best to push development in areas affected by the war.

Clark expressed her concerns about the humanitarian situation in the areas affected by the war in Sa'ada and mentioned her deep concerns about the 250,000 displaced people who have fled their homes because of the war.

Small arms sales heading underground

SANAA, FEB. 20 - (IRIN) - The government has started imposing tough new restrictions on arms dealers in local markets, but this is merely pushing the trade underground, say local NGO activists and military officials.

"In the past, various types of small and medium-sized weapons were sold openly in arms markets inside or outside main cities," Tawfiq Haddash, a Defence Ministry official, told IRIN.

"Nowadays, arms dealers in the main cities open their shops with no weapons on display, but take buyers to their homes to sell arms and ammunition in secret deals."

He said undercover arms deals were taking place in markets outside cities such as in Jihana District in Sanaa Governorate, and Sowadia District in Beidha Governorate, some 250km south of Sanaa.

According to Abdurrahman al-Marwani, chairman of local NGO Dar al-Salam, which campaigns against armed violence and the bearing of arms in Yemen, there are more than 300 arms shops throughout the country.

A survey carried out in 2009 by Abdussalam al-Hakimi, assistant professor of sociology at Taiz University, concluded there were 9.9 million small arms in Yemen, including 1.5 million in the hands of government security and military forces, and 30,000 available in arms shops. The rest were owned by individuals, with 60 percent of families surveyed saying they had weapons in the home.

The survey said the possession and misuse of firearms was one of the causes of psychological problems among children; they aggravated land disputes, facilitated highway robberies, and hindered development projects in both rural and urban areas.

According to Dar al-Salam, up to 1,200 people die annually in Yemen as a result of armed violence or the misuse of small arms.

Al-Marwani said irrespective of any restrictions placed on the small arms trade, the number of victims of armed violence was unlikely to be reduced "because the absolute majority of Yemeni



Shops outside main cities in Yemen still sell arms openly

people have been possessing arms for decades now".

Livelihoods at risk?

Arms dealers who depend on the trade for their livelihoods in the impoverished country are worried.

"If I stop this trade, how can I and my family survive? This shop is the source of income for my eight-member family," Ahmad Ali Mutahar, an arms shopkeeper in Jihana market, told IRIN. He said his business had already been hard hit by a deteriorating economy, political unrest and arms crackdowns.

"Ten years ago, I used to sell four or five guns and up to 90 bullets a day, compared to only three or four guns and 100 bullets a week now."

Alawi Abu Saif, an arms dealer in Sowadia market, said he would not quit the trade unless the government provided an alternative job to support his family. "I inherited this trade from my father, as did the majority of sellers in this market," he said.

"Without getting alternative livelihood sources, these dealers and brokers will not stop practising the trade," Khalid al-Anisi, executive director of the National

Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, known as HOOD, said.

"Part of our culture"

Al-Marwani said possessing arms was part of Yemeni culture, particularly in the northern and eastern parts of the country, and could not be outlawed easily.

Even people who had lost their own children to weapons' misuse continued to support their right to bear arms.

"Last year, my two children - Mohammed, 8, and Aref, 6 - were killed after a hand grenade they were playing with inside our sitting room exploded..."

Their four-year-old sister Afaf was seriously injured in the incident," said Ateeq al-Jashoush, 40, from Ans District in Dhamar Governorate, some 100km south of Sanaa.

But he said the incident had not stopped him bringing grenades into his home, and that about half the 90 families in his village still kept guns and grenades in their houses "to defend themselves and their property because they don't trust the authorities".

"Arms' bearing is part of our culture, which is why the trade continues, even through secret deals," he told IRIN.

Donors demanded to be directly involved in development projects implementation

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, FEB. 22 —The Yemeni Center for Studies and Economical Information recently held a discussion on the "the conditions of accepting and employing international funding of development projects in Yemen", in Sana'a. 40 economic experts and representatives of local and international organizations participated in the discussion.

During the discussion, the participants criticized the state for being able to secure only 20 per cent of the total donations available to finance projects in Yemen. The projects were supposed to be financed almost wholly, in case they were already established, according to the third five-year plan, 2006-2010.

The discussion recommended establishment of certain units to manage the projects and ensuring efficiency, transparency and honesty in recruitment of managers for the units.

Mohammad Al-Afandi, the head of the Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies, suggested establishing offices where donors can directly supervise funding the projects and manage them in line with the development priorities of the country.

Mohahar Al-Mekhlafi, a finance and stock expert, presented a paper on how external funding is crippled and suggested ways to tackle this problem.

One of his suggestions was to allocate YR 100 million for each governorate for training and qualifying specialists who would in turn outline the objectives of projects and ways of evaluating them.

In addition, he stressed on the importance of identifying management limitations and suggested working collectively to overcome them.

Al-Mekhlafi also recommended that local funding should be specified for projects in agriculture, health, education and security affairs so as to protect the interest of the state.

Al-Mekhlafi demanded to activate the role of auditing committees in the parliament regarding the recommendations that were unanimously agreed upon by the parliament and the Shoura Council.

Hani Al-Ezzi, a lecturer in economics, presented a paper on evaluating the efficiency of international funding in Yemen and said that international sponsors have specific priorities which govern the selection of projects for financing in developing countries.

Adel Al-Solwi, a journalist and a researcher, outlined the problems encountered by the state in accessing external funding such as the administrative and technical abilities demanded by the sponsors as prerequisites for eligibility.

Giving examples of successful projects financed by international sources such as the projects of Social Fund for Development and the General Works project as well as some of unsuccessful attempts to secure funding such as the project of establishing an electricity power station, Al-Solwi presented some solutions to the problems.

Mohammad Jubran, a lecturer in accountancy, stressed on the importance of a comprehensive reform of all adminis-

trations in the state offices to combat corruption and manipulation of the resources of the country for personal gains.

The participants identified the absence of auditing for the projects by the parliament and hiring unqualified companies as the major factors restricting the projects from securing international funding.

The discussion pointed out that conducting a systematic feasibility study before financing the projects and including a time frame for developing the capacity of human and technical resources of the country would probably improve the eligibility of Yemen for financial support from international sources.

Luft Al-Sarhi, an expert in the Islamic Banks, said that Yemen does not need to ask for finance from foreign countries. He said that Yemeni businessmen are investing outside the country and if the state manages convincing these businessmen to invest inside the country, its problem could be solved.

It was also suggested that the opposition as well as civil society organizations should be called to supervise these internationally financed projects. Fu'ad Dhaba, a member of the parliament, said that the Yemeni parliament needs the advice of economic experts and said that the opposition parties should be allowed to supervise the projects.

The discussion also recommended participation of civil society organizations in carrying out audits for the projects and to conduct studies on opportunities for the Yemeni community to benefit from these projects.

Mine detection dogs defend Yemen from mines

By: Bohdana Rambouskova
UNDP Yemen Quarterly Newsletter

SANA'A, FEB. 21 - The staff and the animals of the Mine Detection Dog Unit of the Yemen Executive Mine Action Center were appointed to a hard mission at the end of 2009: to clear from land mines and explosive remnants of war in vast areas of the Hadramawt region. The winter season is the only time of the year when work in the extremely hot conditions of the east Yemeni desert is possible.

Due to its conflict history, Yemen has been facing severe problems with unexploded ordnances as they are present throughout the whole country with the only exception of the Al-Mahwit region. Some of the explosives are as much as 50 years old and hidden deep in rocky or sandy terrains. More than five thousands land mine casualties have been registered so far with many survivors never obtaining proper medical care and staying deprived of decent sources of livelihood.

Most of the casualties are women fetching water and woods, and gardening. Inhabitants of insecure areas are also getting mine risk education to diminish number of injuries.

UNDP Yemen has been engaged in the mine action since 1999 and many international donors have been financially and technically supporting the Government of Yemen in its efforts through the UNDP Mine Action projects. These include: European Commission (EC), Germany, UK Department for International Development (DFID), Belgium, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Canada, Netherlands and Japan. The Government of Yemen has also contributed significant funds. With a total budget of 6 million USD - out of which 1 million USD from UNDP - the third phase of the Strength-

ening National Capacity for Mine Action started in 2007. The project provides financial and technical support to the Yemen Executive Mine Action Center (YEMAC) as the implementing agency for all mine action activities in the country. The Mine Detection Dog Unit is directly managed by the YEMAC, and it is financed by Germany.

Dogs with special training are more suitable for clearing vast mine fields than detection machines or heavy machinery. First of all, dogs are much faster as they are able to easily identify suspected areas where mines are located; they can work in hardly accessible terrains such as rocks; they are reliable in discovering plastic mines and in fields with high occurrence of minerals where detection machines cannot be applied. The only limitation for dogs is that they cannot be used in areas contaminated by both anti-personnel and anti-tank mines. This is due to the fact that dogs locate mines by smelling TNT and the stronger smell of anti-tank mines renders difficult the identification of smaller anti-personnel mines.

The idea of employing dogs in mine detection in Yemen originated in 2001 when the government of Germany brought in a first group of specialists from Afghanistan for a trial mission. Their service in Khataba province was so successful that soon after the creation of a Yemeni unit with local personnel started. New Yemeni instructors, dog handlers, veterinarians and para-veterinarians, field supervisors, set leaders and group leaders were trained to operate in the field with mine detection dogs, 19 of which born and fully trained in Yemen. The training center was originally located in Aden but dogs suffered from hot climate and the center had to be relocated

to Sana'a where lower temperatures due to high altitude are more suitable for the animals.

Breeding of dogs in Yemen started in April 2004 and in December 2005 the first animals were ready for deployment in the field. Dogs complete the training at the age of 22 - 24 months after going through socialization trainings followed by explosives and then mine trainings. The majority of dogs are German shepherds together with three Malinois Belgian shepherds. Dog handlers are recruited from experienced deminers in the army. "We have much more applicants interested in working with dogs than vacancies available," says Ahmed Al-Khader El-Berhamee, Manager of the Mine Detection Dog Unit. Dogs are far from being popular pets in Yemen but the mine detection dogs are held in high consideration not only from the army personnel but also from the inhabitants of cleared areas. "Many people are interested in keeping old dogs that have finished their service," added Mr. El-Berhamee. Retired animals keep getting food and medical care from the YEMAC.

Mine Action field operations do not focus only on clearance of unexploded ordnances. After clearing a field, a quality assurance group checks if the territory can be handed over to the local community. Then a medical survey is conducted to record land mine injuries and provide the victims with medical care, artificial limbs and other means with the aim of restoring normal life conditions. From January to September 2009, a total area of 1,400,224 square meters was cleared by mine detection dogs. The third phase of the UNDP Mine Action project has considerably contributed to reaching Yemen's goal of clearing its entire territory from mines by 2014.

World Bank's Gender support evaluation 2002-08

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, FEB. 21 — In 2001 the World Bank adopted a gender equality policy as a means to help reduce poverty. This policy was outlined in Integrating Gender into the World Bank's Work: A Strategy for Action (referred as the 2001 Gender Strategy). Through this evaluation IEG finds that the World Bank made progress in gender integration between 2002 and 2008 integrating gender concerns in more than half of the relevant projects. These signs of progress are qualified by findings that implementation of this policy weakened in the latter half of the review period and that there was no built-in results framework in the strategy.

With regard to outcomes, detailed reviews were undertaken in 12 focus countries. The evaluation finds that Bank support likely contributed to improving gender equality-related outcomes in three domains—investment in human capital, access to economic assets and opportunities, and voice in development—substantially in 4 of the 12 countries, modestly in another 6, and weakly

in 2. At the project level, 42 percent of relevant projects in the 12 focus countries generated substantial outcomes that contributed to progress in one or more of these domains.

Through conditional cash transfers and student bursaries, Bank support contributed to increased enrollment of girls in schools.

Supporting microfinance institutions to provide credit to women in a culturally appropriate manner improved their decision making powers within households. Focused attention on ensuring that women benefited from temporary work generated by Bank-supported construction created new opportunities for women and reportedly ensured equal wages for equal work.

Support for enhancing women's voices at the community level helped give women legitimacy in participating in public activities in several countries. Supporting the engagement of women as decision makers in designing activities for a rural road project resulted in the construction of footpaths, which women prefer because they are the easiest and safest way to take their animals

to pasture and to collect firewood and water.

In contrast to this progress with women, Bank support has not been equally effective in fostering retention of boys in schools in countries where this is an emerging issue. Similarly, providing training of trainers for extension services predominantly to men—in a context where women overwhelmingly ran family farms and were limited by local norms from attending meetings—diminished project efficacy and reduced development effectiveness. Weak support for gender-aware reform of the agricultural sector could have exacerbated inequities for women, who constitute a significant group of the informal labor in many countries. Failure to integrate gender into Bank support for local governments reduced development effectiveness and resulted in missed opportunities to ensure gender-aware development at the local level, where the risks of elite male capture are typically high. Finally, individual women's needs differ, depending on their responsibilities and roles. Consulting only wives of community leaders resulted in the provision of insufficient

water at inconvenient times to women from poorer households.

Recommendations:

Establish a clear results and accountability framework that supports gender policy. A clear results and accountability framework helps build analytical foundations for policy measures that support a country's gender and development agenda. Such a framework is important for articulating objectives and desired results, assigning clear responsibility lines, and setting a monitoring and evaluation system to better understand results. The absence of an explicit results framework and the lack of clarity on appropriate outcomes weaken the implementation of any gender policy. For instance, the World Bank was able to effectively mainstream gender into Country Assistance Strategies and country programs in Bangladesh and Ghana through the results framework, with a clear set of monitoring indicators assessing results in client countries.

Mainstream gender needs at the country level and ensure client-country ownership. To achieve effective results in supporting gender mainstreaming in a

country, it is critical to ensure client demand and to align project and policy objectives with that demand, while keeping such objectives realistic. In cases where the country-level strategic approach cannot be implemented, it is important to ensure that the project is designed to benefit both men and women, encourages equal participation of both genders, and mitigates any negative effects that project activities may have on either men or women.

Fund incentives for effective gender-related action in client countries. Strengthening the collection, analysis, and dissemination of sex-disaggregated and gender-relevant data is important for designing gender-aware and -equitable policies and projects. The availability of such data leads to the integration of gender-related or sex-disaggregated indicators, which increases increasing opportunities for monitoring gender issues and trends. For instance, the Egypt Country Gender Assessment, produced jointly with the National Council for Women, was anchored in relevant sex-disaggregated data, and its recommendations were mindful of the country-level

context. The report became an effective tool in raising gender awareness in Egypt and reportedly influenced country-level policies in several areas.

Establish clear management accountability for gender mainstreaming. Management needs to be accountable for the development and implementation of a system that monitors the extent to which gender-related concerns are adequately addressed in projects and policies, including effective reporting mechanisms. In such an accountability framework, country directors and representatives need to be a focal point. For instance, when the World Bank's President in 2008 required country directors to report on the status of gender work directly to him, that indicated the need to act more forcefully and systematically to implement the accountability framework called for in the 2001 Gender Strategy.

This is the third report from the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) on the World Bank's support for gender and development, this evaluation considers progress over the period fiscal 2002-08, following the Bank's 2001 Gender Strategy.

In Brief

SANA'A
Malaysian participation in 2010 Tarim: Islamic Cultural Capital discussed

Minister of Culture Mohammed al-Mufahi held talks on Wednesday with the Malaysian ambassador to Sana'a Abdul Samad Othman over arrangements for holding Malaysian cultural activities during program of 2010 Tarim Islamic Cultural Capital.

They discussed participation of the Malaysian side in the program which includes Malaysian Cultural Fair and art show at Sana'a Culture Center in coming March.

They also discussed means of enhancing cultural cooperation between the two nations.

CMES to organize seminar on foreign funds for development in Yemen

Center of Media and Economic Studies (CMES) is organizing a seminar on mechanism of receiving foreign funds for the development plan in Yemen next Saturday in Sana'a.

A coordinator of the seminar Mutahar al-Makhlafi said that the seminar would discuss reasons behind obstacles to use these funds in the development projects, saying that the seminar aims at coming out a clear idea and recommendations to enhance capacities of receiving these funds.

Academicians, economists and representatives of the relevant bodies and local and international organizations would take part in the seminar, al-Makhlafi said.

Oil company affirms no hike in oil derivatives price

An official source at the Yemen Oil Company said on Wednesday that the reason behind the current oil and diesel crisis in some gas stations is due to some transportation hinders, affirming there is no increase in price of oil derivatives.

In a statement to Saba, the source made clear that oil derivatives are available in all enterprises of the com-

pany and are sufficient to cover the local market needs, noting that these derivatives will be available in all gas stations soon.

It indicated that teams are being dispatched to the field to supervise selling process in gas stations and seize those violators.

The source called on citizens to report the company, or any of its branches, on any price increase of oil derivatives or refusal to sell these materials if proved availability thereof.

Trade minister affirms importance of preparing strategy for industrial development

Minister of Industry and Trade Yahya al-Mutawakel affirmed on Thursday importance of preparing strategy for industrial development within measures to improve the industrial sector in the country.

In the opening session of a workshop for modernizing the industrial development, al-Mutawakel also pointed out to the two draft laws which organize industrial activities and protect national products.

The draft laws are now in the table of the parliament, he said.

He also talked about ongoing arrangement for launching the campaign "Made in Yemen" soon which aims at enhancing confidence of the customers with the national products.

The workshop was organized by the ministry in cooperation with Malaysian Siryam Company.

ADEN

Yemen, Germany discuss education cooperation

Aden governor Adnan al-Jaffri held Wednesday talks with the German ambassador to Yemen Michael Klor-Berchold on the aspects of cooperation in the field of technical education and teaching German language in Aden.

During the meeting, the governor pointed out to the depth of the relations between both countries in the various

fields, pointing out to the Yemeni-German educational programs which are developing through the continuation of teaching German language in some schools.

Al-Jaffri noted the importance of developing partnership in supporting the introduction of technological means and networking with schools to upgrade students performance.

For his part, the German diplomat said this visit comes within the launch of the German language program in the radio.

Klor-Berchold affirmed German's support for the various areas of development, particularly in the field of technical education which is a basic foundation in the rehabilitation of young people and enabling them to obtain jobs.

Canadian medical team carries out free nine surgeries in Aden

A Canadian medical team has carried out nine surgical operations at al-Wahdah Hospital in Aden city within the 4th Canadian free medical camp.

Director of the hospital Mohamed BaAzab told Saba that the Canadian team offered medical check up for more than one hundred cases.

BaAzab valued efforts of the team and their Yemeni counterparts to do such surgeries and humanitarian activities.

SOCOTRA

Vice President in visit to Socotra

Vice President Abdo Rabu Mansour Hadi paid on Friday a visit to Socotra Archipelago in order to discuss and get acquainted with issues in the archipelago and put foundation stone for the project of Socotra seaport.

Along with Minister of Transport Khalid al-Wazeer, Hadi put the foundation stone of the seaport of Socotra and was briefed on the project map projecting the nature of work and implementation process.

The project is estimated at \$50 mil-

lion and to be set up in accordance with the international technical standards and qualities.

Hadi also toured in the archipelago and visited the natural landscapes in Socotra.

AMRAN
Five-year-old killed in Yemen grenade accident

A five-year child was killed on Friday in Yemen's northern Amran province when a hand grenade that he found in his dad's room and then played with it exploded, the Interior Ministry reported.

The accident was blamed on the child's negligent family, the ministry said, urging parents to keep weapons out of children reach.

8 children killed themselves in weapon accidents in Yemen this year, according to the ministry.

HAJJAH

Police arrest child smuggler on Yemen border

Police in the border Haradh district, Hajjah, held on Friday a child trafficker while trying to smuggle a 12-year-old child to Saudi Arabia, the Information Ministry's Media Center reported.

This month security forces thwarted attempts to traffic 10 children, aged 10-15, security sources told the center. Three traffickers were arrested and the children were sent to a child care center in the province, the sources added.

MUKALA

Transport Minister: Brom seaport will expand trade activities

Minister of Transport Khalid al-Wazir affirmed on Thursday that the seaport to be established in Brom area, Hadramout province, would contribute to expanding the trade and economic activities in the region.

During his visit to the location of the seaport project, al-Wazir pointed that

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the government, the local authority and the ports corporation are working to accelerate implementation of this important strategic project.

He called upon the local societies to cooperate with the government's efforts so as to speed up the completion of the first phase of this project.

Reviewing the studies and engineering designs of the project has been entrusted to a French company which

upgraded the previous study of the seaport, al-Wazir noted.

Furthermore, al-Wazir met during his visit with the officials at the Yemen Arabian Sea Ports Corporation and reviewed with them the efforts exerted to follow up the competent authorities to speed up establishment of this future trade port, which will serve the trade and economic movement in the eastern areas.

Their News

Conspiracy Theories in the Middle East and US: 13-15 January 2011, Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, Germany

Call for: papers
Deadline: 15/03/2010

We invite contributions that focus on any aspect of conspiracy theories related to either the Middle East or the United States. We are interested in papers that explore the comparative and transregional dimension of this topic. Conspiracy theories flourish in highly diverse environments and answer to vastly different human needs, desires, and imaginations. Focusing on two regions, the United States and the Middle East, the conference adopts a comparative approach to the study of conspiracy theories.

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If you have any queries contact Dr. Michael Butter: conspiracy.theories@friass.uni-freiburg.de or visit:

http://www.friass.uni-freiburg.de/lang_and_lit/veranstaltungen/konf-Cons_lili?set_language=en

Arab Science and Technology Foundation Network

The Arab Science and Technology Foundation (ASTF) is pleased to announce it newly established virtual network; Arab Materials science and nanotechnology Network (AMSN). It serves one main purpose of ASTF; to connect people of close specialty and interests to serve for socio-economic development. With this network, we aim to:

1. Connect people and entities from across the regions that share the same discipline
2. Create opportunities for collaborative research
3. Promote "Nano-Tech" education as a means of increasing science literacy and public awareness of nanotechnology worldwide
4. Serve as a clearinghouse providing resources for the "Nano-Tech" community.

We invite you and your colleagues in the field to join this network. You

may start by visiting its website http://amsn-network.astf.net.

Queen Rania joins forces with GSMA to launch IGOAL: Education for All Mobile Campaign

Operators serving more than 1 billion mobile users will reach out to subscribers to back the IGOAL education initiative in a massive communication campaign Tuesday, February 16th 2010

(Office of Her Majesty, Press Department- Barcelona) At the Mobile World Congress held in Barcelona today, Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan joined forces with the GSMA, the mobile industry's leading institution, to announce the IGOAL: Education for All Mobile Campaign in support of 72 million children still denied access to basic primary education.

As the world's largest ever cause-related campaign of its kind, the initiative brings together mobile network operators from around the world, football stars and FIFA, along with educational champions, celebrities, charities and campaigners to support IGOAL - the legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa.

"We are grateful for the GSMA's leadership and partnership in creating this campaign," said Her Majesty Queen Rania, co-founder and global co-chair of the IGOAL initiative.

"I want to thank each and every one of you here today who has joined the IGOAL team and who'll reach out to subscribers with a message, an app, or a widget," added Queen Rania at the event attended by over 1,600 mobile professionals, industry executives and media representatives.

Along with IGOAL, the mobile campaign coordinated by GSMA will leverage the popularity of the World Cup to petition global leaders to meet the UN's 2015 target date for achieving universal education.

As part of an effort to demonstrate that universal education is a universal demand, operators serving more than 1 billion mobile users will provide a platform for people and football fans globally, to sign up to IGOAL via a host of mobile response mechanisms.

Speaking at the event, Rob Conway, CEO of the GSMA, said: "Our board has recognized the role, responsibility and reach of mobile in harnessing global support for universal education, a critical part of the UN's mission to eliminate world poverty."

"As a result, today we announce a collaborative campaign that is unprecedented in our industry, utilizing the scale of the world's largest communications medium to make a practical difference to the future for millions of children in the world," Conway added.

Also today, Aaron Mokoena who flew in from South Africa for the announcement said: "As the South African team captain and on behalf of all of my team, and the children of Africa, thank you to the global mobile companies that have signed up so far to support IGOAL. This will be the year that the mobile fraternity and football joined hands for the greatest of events, and the greatest of causes; Education for All."

Attending the event today, President of FC Barcelona, Joan Laporta also committed his team's support to the event and to the IGOAL campaign.

During the keynote address at the Congress, Queen Rania recognized the power and increase in mobile communication technology, citing Africa's 1000% increase in mobile subscribers in just ten years and the GSMA's growth rate of over 1000 subscribers per minute, suggesting that the way mobile phones and text messages are being used today, is revolutionizing societies and boosting economies as well as transforming the way we tackle humanitarian crises and aid efforts.

"Today, the mobile telephone is not just a means for talking, texting and keeping in touch," said Queen Rania. In the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake, mobile phone technology was not only effective in rallying masses and raising money, but also in saving lives and reconnecting loved ones, she added.

However, Her Majesty noted that, mobile phones are also transforming health, banking and agricultural sectors in many developing countries, but, as yet, their potential in the education sector was still to be realized.

As a global education advocate, Queen Rania urged operators all over the world to leverage their research and innovation tools to scale up mobile technologies and learning:

"I want you to be the institution that makes m-learning massive, and turns it into a force for dynamic educational impact," stated Queen Rania.

Mobile-learning, often referred to as "anytime, anywhere" learning, widens educational opportunities for children, Her Majesty explained, by providing schooling services in areas where traditional education aid cannot reach, like

rural villages and conflict zones.

Citing examples of pioneering m-learning services offered in countries like Kenya, for example, where mobile operators have launched an application where kids can take quizzes in maths and science, Queen Rania further underscored the advantages of introducing this kind of technology to support the learning process in the classroom.

Further calling on industry leaders to connect all children to a network of knowledge which ensures "digital justice," Her Majesty encouraged attendees to re-imagine the potential of m-learning, especially in emerging markets.

"Imagine UN peacekeeping tanks whose ammunition is mobiles loaded

with lessons," Her Majesty envisioned. "We don't need the smartest, most expensive technology to create change. We need a lot of cheap phones. We need infrastructure in hard to reach places. And we need you to work together," added the Queen.

"Think phone-aid. Think phone-anthropology," Her Majesty told the attendees as she pointed to the advantages of having lessons delivered to mobile phones enabling kids everywhere to study schoolwork virtually.

The IGOAL mobile campaign will comprise a host of mobile communications tools, including mobile advertising, applications and messaging as well as innovative football related content. Launching on April 20th, it will run un-

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5	External Radiator with water pipes Cummins	مبرد خارجي مع الأنابيب	sets 2
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Offers should be sent in envelopes addressed to the Department of Purchasing and Contracts of TeleYemen no later than 2/3/2010. A public auction session will be held at the management building in Jiraf at ten o'clock in the morning on 3/3/2010.

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JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE CAPITAL (18)

Childless: IVF, wonder doctors or a second wife



By: Judith Spiegel

“Especially in the villages, a second wife is often considered cheaper than IVF treatment. Also IVF is sometimes considered shameful”, says Dr. Anisa Jahaff. She works at the IVF & Assisted Reproductive Center in Safia. The center neighbours the ‘Mother’s Hospital’ where sounds of crying baby’s can be heard. The patients of Dr Anisa do not have babies. In a country where the average family has seven children and where daughters and daughters-in-law are expected to achieve the same, it cannot be easy to remain involuntarily childless.

“Women are expected to be pregnant within a year after the wedding. When this does not happen, the woman is often blamed and the family of the husband push him to marry a second wife”, Dr. Anisa says. “Or they believe they are haunted by bad spirits and seek treatment by exorcists who say they will drive out the bad spirit. They often spend a lot of time and money on this, all wasted,” Dr. Anisa adds. The IVF & Assisted Reproductive Center was established in 1999 and was the first IVF clinic in Yemen. Now, there is another clinic in Sana’a and one in Ta’iz. And although IVF is accepted more and more, especially in the cities, in the villages it remains surrounded by an air of shame and secretiveness. Some people think it is

haram, or prefer to go to ‘wonder doctors.’ Dr. Anisa: “It has to do with a lack of education.” In Islam, IVF treatments are acceptable. That is, on the condition that both sperm and egg involved in the process originate from a man and a woman who are married to each other. To use an egg or sperm from a third person is considered the same as sharing the marriage bed with someone else. In other words, this is considered adultery in Islam. Sperm donors or women carrying a child for someone else are therefore impossible. Not far from Dr. Anisa’s clinic lives a 36-year old woman. She is still childless and wishes to stay anonymous. Surrounded by her warm family in law, in a big house in Safia, she tells her story. Children walk in and

out the diwan and climb on her lap. These are the children of her sisters in law. “Every woman wants to be a mother, but if Allah decides that I will not have children, then it is no problem. However, if it is something physical that can be cured, then I will of course try that.” Which is why for sixteen years now, she has been trying everything there is to try in Yemen. She saw at least twenty conventional and unconventional doctors, she studied the Quran and she tried IVF once. Now she has turned her hopes to Al-Iman University where they are testing new homeopathic methods. She will only stop if the doctors tell her it is hopeless, which they have not done so far.

Dr. Anisa explains that often, women only try IVF once, although the success rate is only 30-35 percent per treatment. “They can only afford one treatment because it is expensive. Not compared to countries like the US, but for Yemenis it is, a treatment costs 1,500 USD.” Families often save for years to be able to afford an IVF treatment. Meanwhile, it is not uncommon for the man to marry a second wife.

Which is exactly what the husband of the woman in Safia did. About four years ago, he married his second wife. He has joined us in the conversation and explains that he is the oldest son of the family and wants children very much. “Because who will take care of me when I am old?” His first wife says that she does not have any problems with his second marriage. For her, it is clear: “Allah has decided that there has to be a second wife, so there is.” She would even support a third and a fourth wife, as long as they give her husband a child. The reason why she is saying this, is that the second wife – so far - cannot have children either. And no, the problem does not lie with him. He has been tested many times and they are sure. “He is just unlucky,” the family laughs.

Dr. Anisa is more sceptical. “It is possible of course, but men who come

here and are tested infertile almost always ask us not to tell the family. Men consider infertility shameful because it is not masculine.” She tells a story about a 60-year old man who came to her clinic and asked her to examine his wife, who was at least 50 years old. “So I did. And to my great surprise she was still fertile. So a treatment was possible. But then the man appeared to be infertile. And he had always known. Nevertheless, he asked me not to discuss this with his wife.”

At the IVF & Assisted Reproductive Center they estimate that around 20 percent of Yemeni men have fertility problems, and around the same percentage of Yemeni women do. “This is not different from surrounding countries. But there is one thing to bear in mind, we know that many people do not go to doctors when they cannot have children,” Dr. Anisa says. Most likely, therefore, the number is

higher. As to reasons for infertility or reduced fertility Dr. Anisa is clear: “Men are often infertile or less fertile because of qat and shamma (the tobacco powder put under the tongue). Infertility of women is often caused by tuberculosis, or by a wrong treatment of cysts in the ovaries.”

For those who seek IVF treatment, this is often a shameful thing. If a woman gets pregnant through IVF, it is not uncommon to keep this a secret. Or, if it is not a secret, women can face problems with their family in law. Dr. Anisa: “There was a woman here, she got pregnant after the treatment, thank God. Her husband was extremely happy with it. But he died in a car accident and his family immediately rejected the daughter in law and threw her out. They believed their dead son had always been infertile. They did not believe in IVF and accused her of having a baby of another man.”

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Street cleaners denied their rights

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For the Yemen Times

They work almost all day for less than the minimum wage and often cannot pay the rent on a room for the month. They do not have health insurance or holidays, and insults and condescending looks are part of their daily lives because they are dark-skinned. They are the street cleaners of Sana’a. Most of them are known as the akhdam, a marginalized group in Yemeni society. According to lawyers, they are deprived of the rights that Yemeni law gives to other workers under the pretext that they are temporary workers, but some of the street cleaners say that they are discriminated against because of their dark skin. The street cleaners of Sana’a are employed by the municipality, but they are paid daily wages that do not add up to the minimum monthly salary of

YR 20,000 by law. One street cleaner said that he works eight hours a day but that what he earns in a month does not exceed YR 16,000. He also complained that he was not given a sweater to wear to work in winter despite repeatedly asking for one. He demanded to be paid monthly, and to have the opportunity to live in a house with electricity and running water. Jamila Suleiman, a 40-year-old street cleaner, said that others look down upon them as if they were lowly creatures with no right to raise their voices in objection to the conditions in which they live. Suleiman agreed that it has been a long time since they had demanded to be given sweaters to work in during the winter months. Leila Ahmad Hassan, a street cleaner who supports nine children, said that the street cleaners live in houses made of clay and straw bricks. She and other female street cleaners are denied the maternity leave given to other government employees, she said. A mother who has just delivered a baby can be fired if she spends any time at home after delivering her baby. The cleaners also complain that their employers make no allowances for being late if they have problems at home. “Sometimes I cannot come early in the morning due to a critical problem in my family like a family member being ill,” one street cleaner complained. “I manage to get someone else to cover for me, so that the person in charge does not cut my daily wage.” No compensation for work injuries. The capital’s street cleaners are calling on the state to give them the same treatment as other governmental workers, including the right to compensation for work injuries. A young man who was working as a street cleaner reportedly died recently

because he fell from the rubbish truck while on duty. Mas’oud Kulaib, a street cleaner for 20 years has set up the Amr and Oqba Association, an association to defend the rights of street cleaners. The association is named after his two sons, Amr and Oqba. He said that street cleaners can develop lung diseases from the dust as they sweep the street. They are also prone to developing illnesses due to their prolonged contact with rubbish almost all day long. A study by Kulaib’s association has recorded at least 108 street cleaners who had accidents while at work, of which 11 were fatal. Nine of them lost the ability to walk due to bone fractures. Some became blind and some were disfigured. He added that preparations are underway at the municipality to grant a monthly salary, health and social insurances to street cleaners. He also suggested running courses to teach street cleaners about their rights in association with HOOD, the Yemeni Organization for Defending Rights and Freedom, because most do not know their rights as state employees. Yemeni law not applied. Abdul Rahman Barman, a lawyer, said that the street cleaners are not supposed to receive their wages on a daily basis. He said that it is illegal to pay someone daily wages for longer than four months. After that, he should be promoted to have a monthly salary. He added that by law Yemenis should receive 30 days paid holiday per year, and 10 days holiday if they are sick. By law, women are entitled to two months maternity leave. From the sixth month of pregnancy until delivery, a woman should not work more than five hours a day. He pointed out that the minimum salary by law in Yemen is YR 20,000. He added that street cleaners should be given all their rights as workers under the Yemeni Labor Law and as Yemeni citizens, and not to be looked down upon as inferior human beings because of their dark skin.



Female street cleaners are denied all holidays, including maternity leave.

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1. Job Title: Corrosion Inspectors/Specialists

Description:

The primary duties include corrosion survey, cathodic protection survey and nondestructive examination & inspection activities to meet plant integrity and reliability requirements for safe and continued operation.

Requirements

- The ideal candidate should have degree in engineering (Chemical/Metallurgy is preferable). Diploma in Engineering with NACE certification and field CP/Corrosion experience can also apply.
- At least 5 years of related experience as Corrosion Technician in the Oil and Gas sector is highly preferable.
- Hands on Experience in corrosion inspection with oil and Gas Static Equipment.
- NACE Certification in the field of Corrosion and Cathodic Protection is highly preferable.
- Should be fully conversant with MS Office.
- Good interpersonal and communication skills are essential, as well as the ability to work well in a team environment.
- Proficiency in English, both spoken and written is must.

2. Job Title: Non Destructive Testing (NDT) Inspectors/Specialists

Description:

The primary duties include field testing of all types of non-destructive testing, such as UT (ultrasonic Testing).

PT (Penetrant Testing), MT (Magnetic Particle Testing), RT (Radiographic Testing) etc.

Requirements

- The ideal candidate should have degree in engineering (Mechanical/Metallurgy is preferable). Diploma in Engineering with NDT certification and field experience can also apply.
- At least 5 years of related experience as NDT Technician in the Oil and Gas sector is highly preferable.
- Hands on Experience with oil and Gas Static Equipment.
- ASNT NDT Level - II in UT/RT/MT/LPT/VT Eddy Current Test etc is highly preferable.
- Should be fully conversant with MS Office.
- Good interpersonal and communication skills are essential, as well as the ability to work well in a team environment.
- Proficiency in English, both spoken and written is must.

3. Job Title:- Mechanic/Diesel Mechanic Technicians

Description:

Responsible for the execution of day-to-day preventive and corrective maintenance, troubleshooting, repairs and overhaul activities related to the mechanical parts of all rotating equipment including diesel engines, gear boxes, power generators, pumps, compressors, and valves in accordance to manufacturer procedures. Responsible for follow up with spare parts requirements. Compliance with safety instructions and procedures.

Requirements

- University degree in Mechanical Engineering; High School plus 2- years diploma in mechanic discipline; or City and Guilds training.
- Minimum 5-10 years of related mechanical work experience in the oil and gas industry including maintaining and overhauling diesel engines, generators, compressors and control valves.
- Willing to work independently and at remote stations.
- Good knowledge in setup plans and schedules on equipment predictive and preventive maintenance.
- Good background in hydraulics and equipment fault findings.
- Must possess a strong work ethic with a "can do" attitude.
- Must have good knowledge of safe work practices including hot/cold work permits
- Must be able to read and understand spare parts, service manuals and technical literature
- Proficient in using computers including Microsoft office applications.
- Good reading and writing of English.

4. Job Title:- Electrical/Instrument Technicians

Description:

Responsible for the execution of day-to-day preventive and corrective maintenance activities related to all electrical, instrumentation, and pneumatic systems. Carries out troubleshooting, faultfinding, repair and configuration of control systems and low-medium voltage equipment of the Oil and Gas Industry.

Requirements

- University degree in electrical/electronic engineering, High School plus 2-years diploma in electrical/electronic, or City and Guilds qualifications.
- 5-10 years work experience in related position in the oil & gas industry.
- Ability to read and interpret engineering and manufacturers drawings, P&IDs and blue prints is essential.
- Must have PLC, RTU and SCADA experience.
- Must have good knowledge of safe work practices including hot/cold work permits.
- Must be able to read and understand spare parts, service manuals and technical literature.
- Proficient in using computers including Microsoft office applications.
- Good reading and writing of English.

Other job details of the above and other positions are posted on "Careers" at SAFER'S Website: www.sepocye.com. To apply and process your application and CVs for the above positions, please visit SAFER'S Website.

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CARE International in Yemen

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

CARE International is looking for Motivated and Qualified male and female Professionals to provide programmatic support to the Education Project in Hajja. Care Yemen -Improving Access to Quality Basic Education Project in Hajja Governorate aims to help government of Yemen to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for education gender equity in primary school enrolment and completion working with the communities in coordination with MoE, Districts, Local Councils, Fathers and Mothers Councils to reduce dropouts and enhance enrolment and retention in school. The project is funded by Dubai Cares.

a) Senior Engineer (Position 01 based in Hajja 65% field)

Core Responsibilities

- The Senior Engineer, under the supervision of the Construction Manager, is responsible for monitoring progress of construction as well as quality.
- He/she supports the Construction Manager in the tendering process, bid evaluation and award approval process, and the contracts administration of the civil works.
- Liaise with Construction Manager, MoE and site engineers/project engineers and make recommendations on mitigation measures to prevent/minimize delays in contract implementation.
- Provide Weekly and Monthly Progress Reports to Shelter & Construction Supervisor.

Required Qualifications

- BSc/ Master's Degree (preferred) in civil engineering/building engineering
- Minimum of 5 years experience in civil engineering works, including at least 2 years of experience in tendering and contract administration of the civil engineering works.
- The candidate must be thoroughly proficient in written and spoken English and Arabic language

b) Site Engineer (Position 01 based in Hajja 85% field)

Core responsibilities

- Liaise with the Construction Manager and the Senior Engineer in implementation of construction you will assist in developing documents, review of tender documents, procurement of works, tendering, evaluation, contracting, procedures
- Monitoring quality and specification requirements in construction, verify site instruction, change orders in consultation with the Construction Manager and the Senior Engineer
- Verify progress payments requests by the contractor forwarded by the contractor
- 85% field based and confirm update on progress at site

Required Qualifications

- Civil engineering degree required
- A minimum of 5 years experience in construction of schools in remote areas
- Good written & verbal communications in English and computer literacy skills required
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple priorities, deadlines, tasks efficiently
- Logistical planning and problem-solving skills

c) WASH Specialist/Engineer (Position 01 based in Hajja 85% field)

Core responsibilities

- Develop a WASH strategy and workplan for the project
- Develop awareness plans and material, including water/sanitation infrastructure and/ hygiene education to be used in trainings and community mobilization
- Explore alternatives to key water issues of the context and dealing with multiple options. Plan in coordination with manager Capacity building, Community Mobilization and community immobilizers.

Knowledge and Skills

- Master's degree in public health, engineering, community development or other relevant discipline or Bachelor's degree with strong relevant experience in WASH
- At least 5-8 years of progressive work experience in relevant field, experience working in schools or in rural settings with appreciation for technology and water infrastructure with soft-side hygiene promotion is essential
- Fluent spoken and written English, with excellent written and verbal communication skills; desirable

d) Early Childhood Care and Development (ECD) Specialist

(Position 01 based in Hajja)

Core responsibilities

- Responsible for all ECD activities, development and implementation of an ECD strategy
- Support the Project Manager in managing project activities related to ECD
- Develop ECD strategy, awareness plans and material, including hygiene education
- Work closely with other sectors for integrated community mobilization and awareness
- Build the capacity of other field staff in ECD and liaise with other NGOS
- Develop field reports on progress and achievements

Knowledge and Skills

- Master Degree in Education, Child Psychology or related fields.
- Hands on experience as Teacher and Teacher Trainer preferably in Kindergarten
- Experience in developing learning material and training material
- Minimum 3 years experience of teaching Kindergarten, Nursery or Montessori
- 3 years experience of working in ECD programme with NGOs/INGOs
- Minimum 3-5 years experience as teacher trainer, curriculum development
- Handling data, Ms words and excel

e) Manager Capacity Building (Position 01 based in Hajja)

Core responsibilities

- Responsible to lead capacity building team and training activities for teachers, head teachers, and other stakeholders in collaboration with MoE and under the supervision of the Project Manager
- As Manager Capacity building, you will provide effective support, through mentoring, delivering workshops and developing resources, for teachers and youth volunteers
- Develop tools, for training assessment, pre-post training evaluation and develop reports
- Capture learning from the field and success stories of children and schools.
- Develop strong organizational relationships with schools, local government authorities.

Required Qualifications

- Degree in education or related fields. Hands on experience as Teacher and Teacher Trainer.
- Experience in developing training material coordinating a database
- Experience in girl's education and/ hands-on experience in design M&E
- Excellent writing skills in English. Fluency in spoken and written English and Arabic
- Minimum 5-08 years experience of teaching and teacher training

Qualified applicants should forward CV (in English) and cover letter (motivating your application) by email to vacancy@careyemen.org or by hand with name of position on the subject heading from which address detailed Job description may be requested. Application deadline is **6th March 2010**. Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

Words of Wisdom



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

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



OUR OPINION

Blood money in the Yemeni legislation

Blood money is a term known in Islamic jurisprudence as the amount to be paid by the murderer to the family of the deceased in compensation of the crime committed and also to ensure that the murderer does not get killed in return.

According to Sharia and the Yemeni law, the punishment for premeditated murder is death sentence unless the family of the deceased pardons the murderer and agrees to accept the blood money.

The Sharia, or Islamic jurisprudence does not however, through the Quran or the Sunnah which is the prophet's preaching, define how much the blood money should be.

Muslim Ulama throughout the years, thorough research and analysis has come up with rules regarding the issue.

Usually such rules should change with time to accommodate the changes in life. However, Yemen, like some other Muslim countries, has remained rigid and outdated.

I am not a Muslim scholar and so I cannot take the help of Islamic verses and hadeeth to win my argument. But when I look at some of the laws in my country I can't help but think that many of them defy common sense and need to be revised.

For example, there is an article that says that blood money for a woman is half that of a man. Probably this was measured according to the norms of some ancient times when the men were the sole bread winners of the family, and so when they got killed, the family lost its livelihood and its future. But this is not true today, as women too have become bread earners and today many households are led by women. Also, if the above justification is correct, does it mean that when a man is unemployed or with permanently impaired or illiterate and hence unable to earn a living his blood money becomes less?

And would killing a rich man cost more than killing a poor man since the latter's economic worth is much less?

Another eye brow raising article is regarding the religion. If a Muslim is killed, his blood money is double that if it were a non Muslim. In Saudi Arabia, they even go further and say that the blood money for the Christian is more than that for the Jew, Hindu or any other religion.

Does this mean that Yemeni Jews and Yemeni Hindus are of a lesser worth than Yemeni Muslims? What is the criteria for defining this worth?

There is yet another absurd article in the Yemeni penal code, which says, that if a dead body is found in a place where there are only women and children, i.e. no men around, then the blood money is to be paid by the state. This translates that women and children are either not capable of killing, or that they should be pardoned because they are? I am not sure why they should be pardoned but this is something we need to ask the ones who made the laws, isn't it?

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

On shore smile!

By: Abduljabbar Sa'ad

I still remember what I studied in the mid-seventies of this past century, when I was a student at Kuwait University. It was a course in Oil Accounting, which gave the students a strange feeling with its special terminologies such as oil cost, drilling wells, capital expenses, operating cost, royalty etc.

Last week, the Chairman of the Customs' Authority, Mr. Mohammed Zemam, invited me to attend a week-long trip to Hadramout. I should add that I was unaware of the main purpose for this journey. I knew that I was the Deputy Chairman of the Western Region; however, this trip was to the East instead.

Anyway, I got ready for the trip. The Dash-7 airplane picked us up from Sana'a, not to Al-Rayan where I was asked, but to Al-Masila oil field instead, where the wells of oil are located. We got there after about two hours of flying. When we were flying over that field, our guide person started explaining to us what was down on the whole oil land. We did not believe what we were viewing. That area was an equivalent to either two or three of the small Gulf States. There were almost 400 small oil wells!

When we arrived at that small airport, we had to get a

bus to take us to the Canadian Nexen Inc Campus. We passed by a small village with 5-stars villas. All that you can imagine was there. You have all the nice accommodations to be so joyful in the heart of that desert.

There were several hundreds of working staff; more than 90% of them were from the Yemeni nationalities. They were qualified, clever and religious people. They start their workday at 4:00 am and finish at 5:00pm. Starting and ending their days with prayers. The clean and tidy Mosques are all over the sites that we visited and they were full with people during all the prayer times. There were Yemeni people from all the provinces in Yemen. I.e. they were from the east, the west, the south, and the north whom they had the best qualities with the same best conducts of the genuine Yemenis.

However, the security was so restrict that they did not let any body to get through except with full and precise inspection, we had to go around the sites for two days to see the sophisticated methods by which the oil is treated in the oil field. It is almost un-man controlled from the beginning to the end. In the third day, another Dash-6 airplane picked us up to the terminal. We could see the main pipeline extends 140kms long from Al-Masila to the terminal in Dhabba. It was lying like the huge snake over the valleys and hills.

Bush to Obama: A toxic legacy

By: Paul Rogers
Open Democracy

A cascade of bad news for the United States from a series of frontlines – Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and even the American homeland itself – is provoking a series of emphatic statements of concern and resolve from President Barack Obama. It is becoming clear that the abortive attempt to explode a device on a plane close to landing at Detroit on December 25, 2009 and the bombing of a key CIA station in eastern Afghanistan on December 30 (to name but the most embarrassing incidents) are striking examples of intelligence failure that illustrate the depth of the US's strategic predicament. The inherited 'war on terror' refuses to die.

The military 'surge' in Afghanistan is getting under way, with even greater involvement from the US army and marine corps over the next months. There is a recognition in Washington and on the ground that their task is massive and that there is no certainty of success. In such circumstances, the authoritative report from the CNAS puts down a marker; its significance will grow if the new strategy in Afghanistan proves unable to improve the situation there.

The Yemeni shards

The CIA disaster in Afghanistan comes at a time when Yemen has suddenly entered the frame following the near-disaster over Detroit on December 25, 2009. Many commentators in western Europe have yet to appreciate the impact of the Detroit incident within the United States; a reading of the president's remarks in his statement of January 7 leaves no doubt about the deep concern at the highest level. For the past eight years domes-

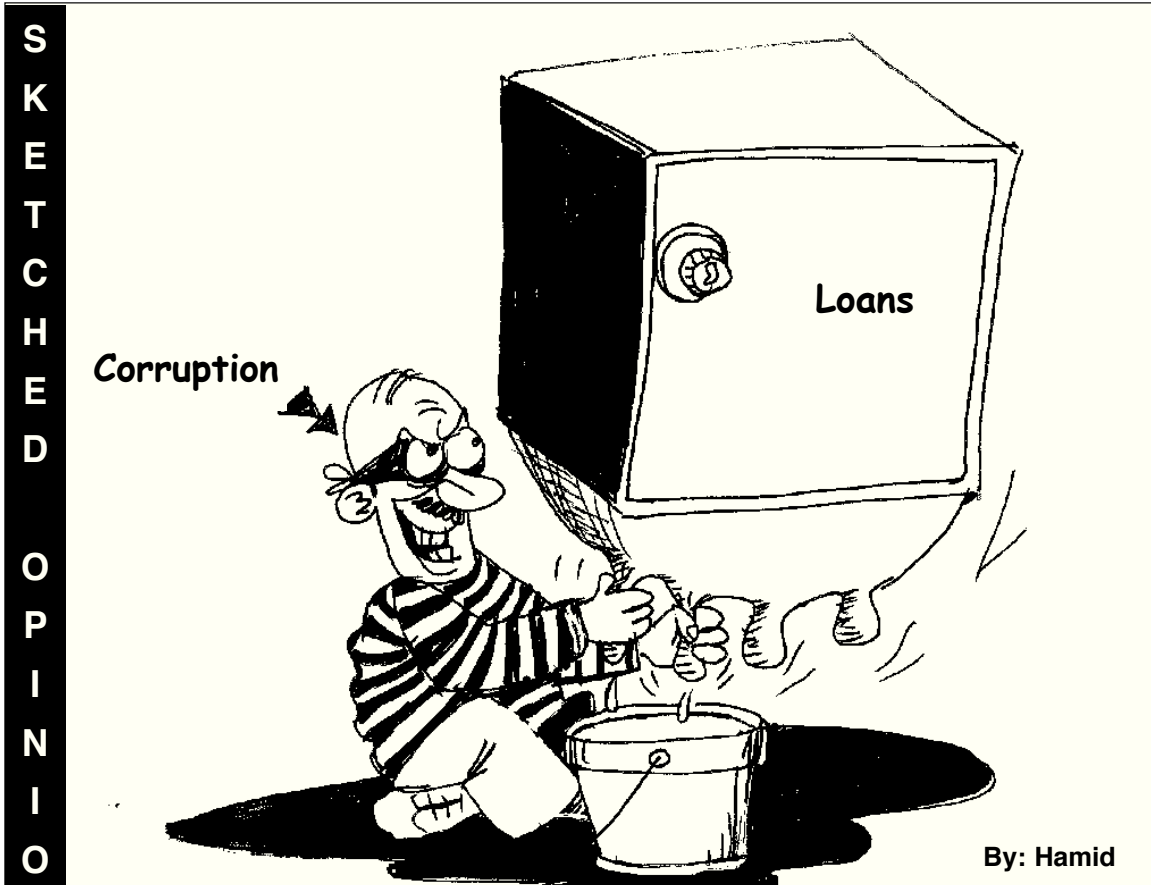
tic opposition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has grown slowly but steadily. Always, though, has been the thought that at least the United States itself has not suffered another major assault on the model of 9/11. London, Madrid, Istanbul, Jakarta, Amman, Casablanca, Mumbai, Islamabad and many others may have been hit, but the US had been spared.

The Detroit attack came very close to changing that. Moreover, it once again involved a crowded passenger aircraft approaching a major city. In these circumstances it is no surprise at all that Yemen has become such a focus of US attention. There is every possibility that the Barack Obama administration will substantially enhance US intelligence and special-forces operations there, as well as increasing the use of armed drones and possibly even sanctioning attacks by carrier-based strike-aircraft of the US navy.

All this means an expansion of the conflict with al-Qaeda and its diffuse associates. This, in turn, coincides with the surge in Afghanistan where the increased US military role is leading to grave concerns in Islamabad that more of the conflict will spill across the border into western Pakistan.

Barack Obama's administration has many problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and is now likely to become much more deeply involved in Yemen. There was at least the hope that the situation in Iraq was improving, but even that is looking markedly over-optimistic. The danger of another assault on the United States itself has been dramatically highlighted by the Detroit near-miss. Once again George W Bush's toxic legacy re-emerges to place its clammy hand on his successor.

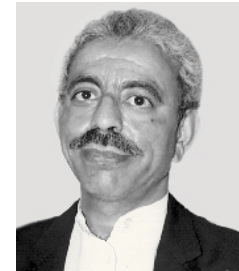
Paul Rogers is professor in the department of peace studies at Bradford University, northern England



By: Hamid

COMMON SENSE

The Licensed Terror of Israel



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

In the space of nearly one hundred years, the Zionist Machine has been an almost unceasing master of terrorism, in both its covert, disguised and open official and unofficial versions. In fact the very nature of the emergence of the State of Israel is almost unimaginable, unthinkable and almost impossible had not this unique form of Mob rule not been the accorded the liberty to unleash its various instruments of death, destruction and gross manifestation of "military occupation", the resources for which it has easy access to and almost provided gratis by the changing reigning powers that dominate world events. From the very outset of establishing a foothold in the Holy Land in the Early 1920s, then under the British "mandate" authority, the Zionist terror machine began to inflict death, misery and pain among the indigenous population of Palestine, with the eyes of the British officials and security apparatus completely oblivious to the clear early signs that the new settlers to the Holy Land were here for more than just a realization of a "Divine promise" to the Jews.

For the Interantional Zionist Establishment the promise meant that the Zionist settlers had the uncontested right to wrest the Holy Land by any means from anyone or anything that stands in the way of turning the Holy Land as Jewish as Matza biscuit. The turn your eyes away attitude of the British "mandate" authority was no more than the implementation of the Balfour Promise, by which Britain had taken God's place for now and could pay back the debt to the IZE for getting the United States to side with the British against the Axis Powers of World War I. While the intimidations and provocations against the Palestinians were ongoing well through the 1930s and World War II, the Zionist death machine became more addicted to terror as more Palestinian land was needed to make way for the large influx of Jewish immigrants to Israel during the war years and thereafter. Yet with the obviously unjust partition that the UN was able to come up with, the Zionist well trained and equipped militias, were accorded their first official tacit approval for a license to kill anyone who stood in the way of the establishment of the Jewish "National Home" turned to State in May 1948. The massacres had of course began well before "independence" and did not show any hesitancy even against the British patron of the Zionist aspirations (King David Massacre – 1946), which eventually got the British to label the Zionist Stern and Irgun mobs as "terrorists". For a list of the long list of unholy massacres undertaken by various manifestations of Israeli terror squads, see this link (<http://www.soundofegypt.com/Palestinian/adult/massacres.htm>), which is not in itself a complete one, but nevertheless quite composite with links that provide details of each.

Yet, Israel continues to enjoy the misleading rationale that it has the right to "defend itself", no matter how many innocent lives are wasted away in this noble cause of upholding the biggest robbery of the Twentieth Century. When Harry Truman took over the Presidency of the United States, shortly after the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, he decided that the US should now be the patron of this new oddity in the world community of nations instead of the British to ensure his Election to the Presidency in 1948. Former US Secretary of State George Marshall once opposed Truman's unjustified position in recognizing Israel. Marshall strongly opposed recognizing the State of Israel, telling President Truman in May 1948, "If you (recognize the state of Israel) and if I were to vote in the election, I would vote against you". Marshall eventually recognized the disfavor so much US support for Israel was to have on America's foreign policy and resigned in 1949.

It is really then not surprising that among the instruments of terror that the Zionist state must depend on for its "self defense" and what it sees as its continued existence is the renowned Israeli Mossad. To say that the Mossad is more than a covert intelligence gathering wing of the Israeli security web of covert and visible operations would be an understatement. This unabashedly unorthodox security/intelligence mob has the unlimited freedom and resources to do anything and everything necessary to carry out its mostly notoriously criminal operations for the sake of advancing the illegitimate right of Israel to kill, maim and destroy "in self defense" and in the open. It is not sure how many secret intelligence agencies have such wide ranging powers and unlimited bounds, but none would so openly be so proud of it:

"Dr. Ronald Bergman, Mossad expert and author of "The secret war with Iran" told CNN: "Throughout the years Mossad earned itself a reputation of an efficient and ruthless intelligence agency with - quote - license to kill!."

It would not be an exaggeration to state that the Israeli Mossad has killed more people than even the CIA or KGB put together during the Cold War years, in covert intelligence work. As for fake passports, one only has to go back to history, where on more than one occasion; the Mossad was relied on fake passports to get its dirty work done: (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2004/jul/16/israel>).

What one wonders is that could four governments (Britain, Germany, France and Ireland), some of which are well known for the strength of their security precautions, be so readily lax in allowing their passports to be easily faked? Or is it that as long as Israel is behind it, it is alright? Then it is clear that Israeli terror is indeed legitimized, even if it entails obstructing international law and order as well as diplomatic protocol.

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

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Israel vies to bring Mideast Jewish refugees into negotiations

Israel's parliament discusses bill that will tie compensation for Jewish refugees in Arab countries to any future peace negotiations

Rachelle Klinger / The Media Line

Israeli lawmakers are seeking a law that will make compensation for Jewish refugees expelled from Arab countries after 1948 an integral part of any future peace negotiations.

Lawmakers put together a bill demanding compensation for current Jewish Israeli citizens, who were expelled from Arab countries after Israel was established in 1948, leaving behind significant valuable property.

Originally submitted almost a year ago in the Knesset, Israel's parliament, the bill passed its first hearing two weeks ago. Now various interest groups are pushing the bill with the Knesset's 120 members before it is subjected to a second and third hearing next week.

The bill was sponsored by Member of Knesset (MK) Nissim Ze'ev from the Shas party and follows a resolution passed in the United States House of Representatives in 2008, calling for refugee recognition to be extended to Jews and Christians similar to that extended to Palestinians in the course of Middle East peace talks.

"I think the term compensation is too limited a term," former Canadian Justice Minister Irwin Cotler told The Media Line.

Cotler, a vocal advocate of the campaign, was one of several international representatives at the

Knesset conference discussing the bill, organized by MK Nissim Ze'ev on Monday.

"We're not just speaking about financial compensation or indemnification," Cotler said. "We're talking about justice for Jews from Arab countries. This speaks to the question of, among other things, rectifying the justice and peace narrative of the last 62 years where the question of Jews from Arab countries has not been part of the narrative."

"There have been more than 160 U.N. resolutions on the matter of refugees," he continued. "All 160 dealt with Palestinian refugees only. I'm not saying they shouldn't address Palestinian refugees, but I'm saying there's no justice and no truth if it does not also address the plight of Jews seeking justice from Arab countries."

According to the international advocacy group, Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC), some 850,000 Jews were displaced from Arab countries after the State of Israel was established. These include Jews from Syria, Trans-Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco.

Speaker of the Knesset Rubi Rivlin (Likud Party) said the issue was an important counterweight to Palestinian claims for a right of return to homes from which they were expelled or had to leave in 1948, and which are now part of Israel.

"The Arab peace initiative, based

on the Saudi initiative, has a clause that calls for a just solution to the Palestinian refugee issue," Rivlin said at the conference. "Israel is opposed to the right of return... we have to make an appeal today, to say that there is no room for bringing up the Palestinian right of return without the Jewish refugee issue being resolved. This has to be heard in the political discourse in Israel and in the international community."

Rep. Eliot Engel (D - NY), who supported the congressional resolution and attended Monday's conference, said there was hypocrisy in the way the international community dealt with the Palestinian refugee community.

"The Arabs today, as they have done for 50 years, use the Palestinian refugee population as political pawns," Engel said. "They want them to live in misery. They want them to suffer and then to blame the Jews. The fact of the matter is that the blame lies right at the foot of the Arab states, be it Saudi Arabia or Jordan or Egypt or any of those countries that have lots of petro-dollars and they don't even spend a shekel to help their refugees."

Monday's conference was marked by heated arguments from members of the audience, which included Jews who were expelled from Arab countries in the years following the establishment of the state.

Gila Naftali, an Egyptian born Jew who was expelled with her family in 1956 when she was eight years old, said there has been a systematic marginalization of eastern Jews. She was almost banished from the auditorium by security when

she lashed out at MK Danny Ayalon that "You don't know what it's like to be kicked out of your country within 24 hours."

Ayalon, a proponent of the bill whose father left his belongings behind in Algeria to come to the fledgling country in 1948, shook Naftali's hand on his way out, in a gesture of reconciliation.

The government came under criticism from Jews expelled from Arab states, who feel these initiatives are too little and too late. Others have questioned how the compensation, if acquired, will be allocated.

"I don't just want compensation," Naftali later told The Media Line. "Everybody will get the compensation. I want money for this building that was in our family for four generations," she said, brandishing a sepia photograph of her former Cairo home.

Stanley Urman, executive director of JJAC said he was aware of these sentiments.

"I feel for their plight and their pain," he told The Media Line. "We, the Jewish people and the State of Israel, must take responsibility for not being successful enough in bringing this to the world's attention."

The fact that the U.S. has already passed a resolution to this effect could serve to impact any future negotiations.

"They have sway," Urman said, in reference to the U.S. brokers. "Whether they bring this up in a forceful manner is yet to be seen. The U.S. is a member of the Quartet and all seminal Middle East issues are going through the Quartet, so the U.S. certainly would be our voice at

that table."

The Israeli bill stipulates that "The state of Israel will not sign, directly or by proxy, any agreement or treaty with a country or authority dealing with a political settlement in the Middle East without ensuring the rights of Jewish refugees from Arab countries according to the U.N.'s refugee treaty."

"In any discussion where the Palestinian refugee issue is brought up in the framework of peace negotiations in the Middle East," it continues, "the Israeli government will bring up the issue of compensation for loss of property and giving equal status to Arab refugees who left their property after the state was established and to Jewish refugees from Arab countries."

Ze'ev stressed that Iran was also included in the bill, even though it was not defined as an Arab country.

Levana Zamir, chairman of the international organization of Egyptian Jews said she welcomed the initiative.

"Finally, after 62 years, the Knesset is accepting a law that recognizes our rights," she told The Media Line. "I'm just sad that my father didn't have the privilege of seeing this. He fought for this and after he passed away I took the matter into my hands. As Jews from Egypt we should be very happy because there's a peace agreement with Egypt, so once there's a law, we should start demanding money."

Zvi Gabai, who represents Jews from Iraq, said it was a shame this was not done sooner.

"In the meantime," he said, "the Palestinians and spin doctors have

exploited the Palestinian refugee matter and presented it as though the Palestinian refugees were the only issue and that there were no Jewish refugees, without presenting two sides of the coin - that there were not only the Palestinians who suffered but also Jews from Arab countries who suffered and lost property, without bringing this matter to a decision, there will be no justice."

The Palestinian Return Centre, a London-based organization defending the rights of Palestinian refugees with the aim of resettling them in their original homes, said it was not farfetched to believe that Jews would get compensation, but stressed that it was wrong to draw parallels between the two refugee populations.

"The Jews who were kicked out of Arab countries have found a place to live," a spokesperson for the organization told The Media. "They have found luxury, work, good housing and a government. But the Palestinians have found nothing. They are not allowed to work in 70 professions in Lebanon. They're not allowed to travel. They don't have passports or basic freedoms and they're being bombed in Gaza's camps."

"There is no parallel in the suffering," the spokesperson continued. "The Palestinian suffered double what the Jews in the Arab countries suffered.... The [Arabs] have enough money and enough political will to solve the problem with Israel, but the problem is with Israel. If Israel is willing to conduct peace on the basis of giving rights to the Palestinians, I guess the Arabs would compensate the Jews, if that happened."

Egypt claims to uncover secret 'Muslim Sisterhood'

Egypt claims it has discovered a clandestine female contingent within the banned Muslim Brotherhood

Rachelle Klinger / The Media Line

Egypt's State Security Prosecution has uncovered what it claims to be a special women's unit within the banned Muslim Brotherhood movement.

The prosecution says this group is led by the brotherhood's deputy chairman Mahmoud Ezzat, who was arrested with 15 other Muslim Brotherhood members on February 8.

According to the charge sheet, the brotherhood is wooing women into the organization to act as go-betweens and convey messages among members of the illegal organization, without being detected by the Egyptian security forces.

The so-called secret sisterhood is being compared to a group led in the 1960s by Zeinab Al-Ghazali, who helped

imprisoned brotherhood members communicate with their peers outside of jail.

The accusations come at a sensitive time for the Egyptian regime as politicians gear up for the November 2010 legislative elections, and presidential elections in 2011.

Some experts have suggested the charges are linked to government efforts to weaken the movement and discourage their running in the upcoming elections, and that allegations regarding the secret women's organization have been raised purely for political purposes.

"There's a Muslim sisters organization and that's nothing new," Shadi Hamid, deputy director of the Brookings Doha Center told The Media Line. "It's important to note that even though the Muslim sisters can't technically be members of the formal brotherhood organization, they still participate in its

activities in a sense that the brotherhood runs women candidates at different levels."

"We're seeing levels of repression [against the Muslim Brotherhood] that are unprecedented in the post-Nasser period," Hamid explained. "Things have been getting considerably worse in the last two or three years as the government has been intensifying its crackdown on the brotherhood. It's a product of the brotherhood's growing strength since 2005, when it won 88 seats [in the legislative elections] and demonstrated it was the only real alternative to the regime and the status quo."

Jihan Al-Halfawi, a female Islamist who contended for a seat in the National Assembly in 2002, told Al-Arabiyya that the accusations of a subversive female contingent in the Muslim Brotherhood were unfounded.

"The women's division has developed in the same way that the Muslim Brotherhood has developed over the years and it's not secretive," she said. "The brotherhood is engaged in politics

publicly, even though it has no official recognition from the state but they have a lot of presence on the Egyptian street."

"At this point, the female contingent of the Muslim Brotherhood has an educational agenda," she added. "They aren't given any special assignments from the larger organization and their only mission in the organization is educational."

The Muslim Brotherhood has been banned in Egypt since 1954 but the movement enjoys significant popularity and is tolerated to varying degrees by the government.

Though the organization was banned from running in the 2005 legislative elections, it ran candidates as independents and won a fifth of the seats.

Hamid said the current crackdown and accusations against the brotherhood is a product of its growing popularity.

"The regime is a bit unsettled and worried because of the upcoming succession, and they're not willing to take any chances on that," he said.

"They realize that the brotherhood is the one force in the Egyptian polity that might be able to challenge that course of events."

Analysts have pointed out that Islamist parties often benefit from quotas set for women's seats, and that the current 66 seat quota for women in the upcoming elections will work in favor of such parties like the Muslim Brotherhood and further erode the performance of the ruling National Democratic Party.

The Muslim Brotherhood moved towards a more conservative and hard-line leadership following the December internal elections for its 16-member executive branch.

Dr. Gamal Soltan, director of the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Egypt said one possible impetus for the recent crackdown could be the changes in the brotherhood's leadership.

"It seems that the policy is not to allow the brotherhood to rest under their current leadership and to keep them under pressure," Soltan said.

"The current developments within the brotherhood are not assuring for the rest of the community," he said. "The majority of the people who have been elected for leadership positions in the organization belong to the less liberal and non-reformist factions within the brotherhood, and in a sense they are no longer enjoying the same sympathy of the broader political community that they used to receive."

Soltan implied that the accusations of a covert women's organization appeared to be a weak argument, since it is not new.

"The Muslim Brotherhood is a secret organization and is not transparent, so talking about a secret women's organization per se is not a surprise," Soltan said.

"In the past they had a women's organization and that has continued," he said. "There are different accusations you can raise against the brotherhood, and the police and the government chose this accusation this time. They have always had women's organizations."

Development's new donors

By: Alexi Kudrin and Robert B. Zoellick

MOSCOW - In 2006, when Russia's government hosted a G-8 meeting on cooperation with emerging development donors, it planted a seed that had great growth potential. Today, new development partners are increasingly prominent in the global architecture, providing steadily rising aid contributions of different types.

That is why this week's Moscow meeting of these new development partners points toward the future. In Moscow, development organizations and recipient countries, both long-standing and newer partners - including Russia, China, Korea, Turkey, and Poland - will meet to share best practices, consider innovations in development, and find ways of using aid more effectively to respond to shared global challenges.

The rise of new development partners - emerging markets that are channeling billions of dollars to developing countries

- opens possibilities for fresh ideas and resources to help overcome poverty, sustain inclusive economic growth (including through a dynamic private sector), and address global issues such as food security and climate change.

But there is a risk that developing countries, already burdened by dealing with numerous donors, will face an even greater fragmentation of aid efforts. New donors can lessen the load on the world's poorest and increase effectiveness by working together through multilateral channels. In Moscow this week, both newer and traditional aid donors, as well as multilateral organizations - such as the World Bank Group and the OECD - will discuss improving transparency of aid, coordination of assistance, and enhancing effectiveness by targeting results.

The conference will advance the "Moscow Process," an expression of Russia's desire to play an active role in forging new partnerships to shape the evolving global aid architecture. Russia

recognizes that newer donors have experiences, ideas, and resources that can help all countries climb up the ladder of opportunity. The World Bank wants to learn from these donors, catalyze deeper cooperation, and build a stronger and deeper multilateral system.

The Russia Education Aid for Development (READ) program offers a good example of this fresh approach. Its goal - to improve the measurement of education quality and learning outcomes - is pertinent to developed and developing countries alike. Improved learning leads to better jobs, greater productivity, and higher incomes in every society.

In partnership with the World Bank, the OECD, and several recipient countries, the Russian-inspired effort will support the development of educational institutions and the ability to measure progress in learning. Stories of cooperation such as READ illustrate how old notions of assistance need to be re-examined and challenged.

Effective development assistance is not a one-way street from donor to recipient or from North to South. It requires local ownership. We need to apply global experience, yet with customization for local circumstances.

For the World Bank, the Moscow conference marks a welcome step in building a more globalized aid architecture that recognizes a variety of contributions from aid donors and organizations, including through private-sector development. Since the full fury of the economic crisis hit in mid-2008, the World Bank has delivered a record \$88 billion of assistance for infrastructure, targeted safety nets, and private-sector investment to cushion the most vulnerable and to spur job creation. The Bank created special facilities to assist with food security, rapid crisis response, trade finance, micro-finance, public-private infrastructure, bank capitalization, and restructuring business loans.

This year, the Bank will set another

record for investment in developing countries. To sustain its vital role, it is working with its shareholders to strengthen its capital base. A well-capitalized World Bank leverages all its shareholders' investments by pooling them and then raising five times the capital by borrowing in financial markets. It then uses these funds in cooperation with aid partners, old and new, public and private.

We feel an especially strong sense of urgency as we approach the deadline of 2015 for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, which aim to reduce extreme poverty, hunger, and child mortality. The next few years will be critical. The G-20's call for ambitious replenishment of the International Development Association, the World Bank's fund for the poorest countries, is vital if we are to make headway.

At the dawn of today's multilateral system in 1944, 44 countries gathered in the United States at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to design the World

Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and a system for international trade. At that time, power was concentrated in a small number of states. The great waves of decolonization were just stirring; the few developing countries were seen as marginal players in the global system - not as central actors or agents of history. Before long, allies in the war against fascism split apart in a Cold War.

That world is long gone. The new realities of the global political economy demand a different system. Developing countries and newer market economies are part of the solution - so they must also be part of the conversation and decision-making process. We hope that this week's discussion in Moscow prompts a broader international dialogue with new development partners. We urge other donors and international organizations to join us in contributing to the "Moscow Process" as we modernize multilateralism.

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Libya to allow more foreign banks to set up shop

Libya plans to issue more licenses for foreign banks to enter joint ventures with local banks to boost the economy.

Adam Gonn / The Media Line

The Libyan Central Bank will allow more foreign banks to operate in Libya amid efforts to revitalize the economy and bring foreign capital into the country.

A statement by the Libyan Central Bank called on foreign banks "to submit an expression of their interest to set up a subsidiary in the Socialist People's

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya."

Foreign banks are to be allowed to own 49 percent of joint bank ventures with full management control, while domestic partners will own the remaining 51 percent.

"The move is part of ongoing efforts to reform the financial sector and has been expected for some time," Rory Fyfe, a Libya expert with The Economist Intelligence Unit, told The Media Line. "It is an extremely positive step for the

development of the Libyan economy and should help boost bank lending, which has already been expanding rapidly in recent years."

"This will provide vital assistance for growth in the nascent private sector," he added.

For the last couple of years Libya has been reducing the formerly dominant role of state owned actors in its economy. In 2009 two state-owned banks were partly sold, with another sale expected in 2010, and two of Libya's major telecommunications companies, Al Madar and Libyana were partially

privatized.

Philippe Dauba-Pantanacce, Senior Economist, Middle East and North Africa with Standard Chartered Bank said increasing privatization of the telecom sector has also included contracts on infrastructure.

"A French company won a major deal in November to put in place telecom infrastructure," he told The Media Line. "This was recently complemented by a contract awarded to a major Swedish telecom company."

There have been reports that parts of the Libyan Iron and Steel Company and

National Commercial Bank might also be up for partial sale.

According to a report by the Economist Intelligence Unit Bank, lending to the private sector increased by 54 percent between the end of 2007 and October 2009, and has been predicted to continue expanding at a similar rate.

Analysts have suggested the policies are related to the gradual thawing of Libya's international relations over the last 7 years, contrary to the isolation that typified the first 30 years following Colonel Gaddafi's seizure of power.

Until 2007 Libya was on the United States' list of state sponsors of terrorism both for allowing European terrorist organizations to set up training camps in the country and for its involvement in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing in which 270 people were killed as Pam Am flight 103 from New York to London was blown up over the Scottish village of Lockerbie.

However, in 2003 Gaddafi announced that Libya was giving up its program to develop weapons of mass destruction and pay compensation to families of victims of the Lockerbie bombing.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) wishes to recruit a Financial Management and Procurement Specialist (FMPS) to join its country presence team in Yemen. She/ He will be responsible for building the capacity of the projects' financial management teams and assisting them in developing the appropriate financial management systems to ensure monitoring of project efficiency and effectiveness as well as ensure integrity in the use of project funds. The FMPS will work under direct guidance and supervision of the Country Programme Officer. She/He will participate in the follow-up, design and supervision missions undertaken by the Country Programme Manager and the Country Presence Officer. The responsibilities of the FMPS will include:

Description of Responsibilities:

Project Design:

Carry out the financial management and procurement assessment to determine whether the project implementing entities have acceptable financial management arrangements, which will ensure:

- Funds are used only for the intended purposes in an efficient and economical way,
- Preparation of accurate, reliable and timely periodic financial reports,
- Safeguard the entities' assets.
- Design the financial management and procurement system in consultation with the project implementing entities and in line with Government and IFAD procedures and IFAD procurement guidelines.

Project Supervision - Capacity building and review of financial Management in projects

- Provide timely guidance to the project financial management teams in
- Setting up the financial management system,
- Selecting and customizing the appropriate software package,
- Establishing internal checks and controls,
- Clarifying the reporting lines and accountability framework,
- Calculation of annual budgets;
- Preparation of 18 month procurement plans, (7) preparation of financial reports, in line with the provisions of the financing agreement, the project design document, the national financial systems, and IFAD General Conditions for project financing.
- Conduct training and provide backstopping on financial management to the projects' financial management teams, and the financial staff of the service providers as required to develop their technical capacity to plan the disbursement of project funds in accordance with desired results; to manage the project funds in an efficient, effective and transparent manner; and to improve the quality and accuracy of the withdrawal applications and their regular submission.
- Review the projects' Annual Work Plans and Budgets and provide recommendation to the Country Programme Manager and Country Presence Officer on its efficiency, effectiveness and consistency with the disbursement history of the project.
- Review the project progress and financial reports with special focus on analyzing project expenditures against outputs and results achieved, cost over-runs or savings, and provide recommendations accordingly to the Country Programme Manager and Country Presence Officer.
- Review of the overall financial management of the projects with particular reference to the withdrawals from the loan/grant account, management of the special account, management of the project and imprest accounts, Government contribution, regular verification of the statements of expenditures, and audit findings and recommendations. The FMPS shall report on whether the implementation of the projects is in accordance with the provisions of the financing agreements, approved Annual work Plans and Budgets, Letters to the Borrowers, as well as procurement guidelines,
- Report to the CPM, CPO and the Portfolio Advisor any substantial violation or non-compliance with the financing agreements and make recommendations on required corrective actions.

Project Supervision – Capacity building and review of Procurement in projects Provide timely guidance to the projects' management teams in procurement modalities and preparation of 18 months procurement plans as part of the project Annual Work Plan and Budget, and in contract management.

- Review tender documents and reports on the evaluation of bids submitted to IFAD for no objection and advise the Country Programme Manager and Country Presence Officer accordingly.
- Review the terms of the contracts awarded and the commitments and disbursements made as well as results achieved of approved contracts that are subject to IFAD prior review.
- Check statements of expenditure to verify their accuracy against IFAD records such as guidelines and regulations.

Qualifications:

- The FMPS should have an advanced degree in financial management.
- Should have professional accountancy qualifications.
- Ten years or more of experience. This should include experience working with externally financed projects and with the financial management procedures of Government, donor agencies and NGOs.
- The FMPS must be fluent in both Arabic and English.
- Computer skills are required.

Only Online Applications will be accepted.

- For further details of the job description and online application, please visit our website at <http://jobs.undp.org/>
- Response will only be made to short listed candidates.
- The deadline for receiving applications is Tuesday March 2, 2010.
- Note: The monthly Salary for this post is approximately \$ 1700.



Expression of Interest

UNDP hereby solicits Expressions of interest for Ventilation System

UNDP invites qualified potential suppliers to express their interest in supplying the above service. The expression of interest should specify the name and address of company, contact person, relevant supply experience, financial statement, list of professional staff, list of reference letters/ contracts and must be received by UNDPY no later than **28 February 2010**.

It should be noted that UNDP is not obliged to invite to participate in the subsequent bidding process any potential supplier who had expressed interest in this project.

Only vendors prevailing from past experiences delivering the above will be considered. Interested potential suppliers should forward their expressions of interest, labeled "EOI Ventilation System" including the documentation listed above.

Request For Proposal (RFP) and any subsequent purchase order will be issued in accordance with the rules and procedures of UNDP.

Interested potential suppliers should forward their envelopes to the following address:

United Nations Development Programme
"EOI Ventilation System"
P.O. Box : 551
Off sixty road, near alawqaf complex
Sana'a – Yemen
Attn.: Ms. Amal Ali Ghaleb
Email: procurement.ye@undp.org
Tel.: +967 1 448605



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Candidates meeting the above requirements are advised to send their CV to the following address

yemen.careers@ye.nestle.com

Applications will be treated in strict Confidence; only short listed candidates will be contacted.



Vacancy Advertisement

The World Bank Office in Sana'a is seeking a local **Short-Term Consultant** to work on Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, global initiative aimed at improving transparency and accountability in resource-rich industries (oil, gas and mining). Position is initially for six months eligible for renewal based on business needs and performance. More information on global EITI can be found at www.eitransparency.org. Following its decision to implement the EITI and its admission as a "candidate country" by the EITI Board on September 27, 2007, the Republic of Yemen has been working on EITI implementation. The original deadline for the process to be validated was set for March 9, 2010, but the country has asked for an extension in light of delays faced over the course of the last 2.5 years. The Yemeni government put in place the Yemen EITI (YEITI) Secretariat, under the auspices of the Ministry of Oil and Minerals. More information is available at www.yemenEITL.org.ye A wider YEITI Council, composed of members of civil society, private sector, and Government, is in place to agree on YEITI progress, objectives and implementation.

Duties and accountabilities

- Support to Yemen architecture for EITI: Supporting the YEITI functions in the Ministry of Oil and Minerals and their mandate and work program including serving as liaison of the Ministry to the World Bank.
- Supervision of World Bank technical assistance: helping to supervise the recipient executed EITI trust fund in accordance with World Bank fiduciary rules and regulations.
- Outreach with extractive industry companies, civil society and donors.
- Support to the data reconciliation and publication process.
- Liaison with EITI and country teams in Washington including participation in World Bank missions that usually take place every 3-4 months.
- Regular written reporting to COCPO Department in Washington and assistance to the YEITI Council and Secretariat and close coordination with Oslo-based EITI Secretariat.

Desired qualifications and experience

- University degree in economics, petroleum management or other relevant discipline.
- Fluent Arabic and English language both verbal and written.
- At least 5-7 years of relevant professional experience and of implementation support including monitoring progress and impacts achieved.
- Prior experience in working with civil society, media or other actors would be a strong plus.
- Some knowledge of EITI and/or World Bank and Republic of Yemen financial, procurement and related procedures is a plus.
- Strong communication skills, excellent writing skills and teamwork including with donors and clients, and the judgment to advise others.
- Ability to work under pressure and to meet tight deadlines.

For full consideration, please send your CV with supporting documents before February 28, 2010 to wbyemen@worldbank.org, clearly marking the position.

What Americans think about Muslims Engagement over isolation

Sharing the results of a recent poll examining Americans' surprising attitudes toward Muslims, Dalia Mogahed, author and Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, demonstrates the importance of perceptions, and what can be done to change them

By: Dalia Mogahed
Common Ground News Service

The American people and their openness to Muslim communities will in many ways determine the success of US President Barack Obama's global engagement initiative, which he launched on his inauguration day a year ago by calling for a «new way forward» with Muslims. Change will depend in large part on how Americans think, and it is therefore crucial to understand American perceptions of Muslims and Islam.

How much do Americans know about Islam and Muslims? What characteristics define Muslims in most Americans' minds? And, perhaps most importantly, what factors make prejudice or tolerance more likely?

A new study released recently by the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies sheds light on these questions and many more. The following is what we discovered when we interviewed a thousand representative Americans on their perceptions of several faith communities, with in-depth analysis of their perceptions of Muslims and Islam.

Prejudice against Muslims, and Jews

Americans are more likely to admit harbouring prejudice toward Muslims



Dalia Mogahed, American Muslim scholar of Egyptian origin. She was selected as an advisor by US President Barack Obama at the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

than any other faith community that Gallup studied. Forty-three percent of Americans admit to having at least some prejudice toward Muslims. This is more than twice the number that expresses some prejudice toward Jews, Buddhists or Christians.

We also discovered that being prejudiced toward Jews makes a person more likely to express prejudice toward Muslims than any other factor studied. Of all the variables we looked at, from age to education to perceptions, the factor that was most strongly associated with anti-Muslim prejudice is not level of education, whether or not one knows a Muslim, or even one's opinion of Islam—it is anti-Jewish prejudice.

These results suggest that anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim sentiment are related phenomena, and that organisations fighting these social ills must work more closely together since they appear to be fighting for a common goal.

Muslims and gender equality

Frequent religious service attendance makes Americans half as likely to express extreme prejudice toward Muslims. For example, frequent church attendance makes someone less, not more likely to express prejudice toward Muslims.

The survey also revealed that prejudice, or the lack thereof, is more strongly associated with one's opinion of Islam than with whether or not someone personally knows a Muslim. If someone does not know a Muslim personally, it does make him or her more likely to express extreme prejudice toward the group. But, perhaps surprisingly, knowing a Muslim does not increase the likelihood of a person expressing no prejudice.

What these results suggest is that knowing a Muslim may help soften extreme prejudice, but it is not enough to eliminate it.

Our survey results also tell us that American perceptions of what Muslims think are sometimes significantly different from what Muslims really do think. Roughly eight in ten Americans (81 per cent) believe that most Muslims do not value gender equality. However, according to Gallup research in Muslim-majority societies around the world, the majority of Muslims, including 85 per cent of Saudi Arabians and 89 per cent of Iranians, do believe that men and women should have equal legal rights.

Greater interaction more of a benefit than a threat

Despite what may seem like negative results, the polls indicate that Americans' views of Muslims and Islam have generally improved over the past two years. Moreover, roughly seven out of ten Americans also say that greater interaction between the West and Muslim communities is more of a benefit than a threat. The majority of Egyptians, Saudis and Indonesians share this view. In fact, overall, Muslim approval of the United States and its leadership is on the rise.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that perceptions are not permanent, which is promising. But the public needs to be educated about Muslim beliefs. For example, Americans who believe that most Muslims support equal rights between men and women are twice as likely to express no prejudice toward them, indicating that we require a greater awareness of the fact that most Muslims worldwide support gender equality.

We also know from the results of the study that prejudice is not isolated to one group, creating an opportunity for greater interfaith partnership to help address this issue.

The majority of both Americans and the world's Muslims want engagement over isolation, a process that starts at home – through greater understanding of our own perceptions.

© Common Ground News Service 2010

Dalia Mogahed is Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies and co-author with John Esposito of *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (Gallup 2008). She also serves on the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.



“The American people and their openness to Muslim communities will in many ways determine the success of US President Barack Obama's global engagement initiative,” writes Dalia Mogahed.

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A «new way forward» with Muslims: Barack Obama during a fast breaking ceremony at the end of ramadan in the White House.

dia
social justice | development

DIA is an INGO working in Yemen, Morocco, Cape Verde and Palestine. DIA is committed to defend social justice and improve the living conditions for the most marginalized people. DIA has been active in Yemen since 1999 mainly in Ta'ez Governorate in two geographical areas (rural areas along the Red Sea coast by implementing Watsan projects and Ta'ez city for the social and economic integration of the marginalized people).

DIA is looking for:

A capacity building officer

Intervention area: Ta'ez city and surroundings

The Capacity Building Officer will be under the responsibility of the Program Manager. He / she will be in charge of building the institutional and operational capacities of local junior associations working with the marginalized communities in Ta'ez.

Main Tasks

- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the local associations and identify their needs;
- To set up specific trainings according to the needs (institutional strengthening, proposal writing, fund raising, project management and planning...);
- To accompany the local junior associations during all the project cycle (identification, conception, planning, implementation and evaluation);
- To monitor the activities implemented by the local junior associations on the field;
- To monitor the administrative and financial follow-up of micro-projects implemented by local associations working with DIA's support;
- To strengthen the collaboration between the local junior associations, the local authorities and other local or international partners (donors, charitable institutions...);
- To support local partners at the operational, institutional, organizational, and financial levels.

Profile

Professional experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 1 year experience in project management or in work with local communities. • Experience on the fields of Education and for Health and/or economy/development. • Experiences of a humanitarian organisation would be appreciated.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent ability to write and speak English and Arabic. • Computer literacy (Excel and in Word Software). • Very good knowledge in project management. • Significant knowledge in communities empowerment methodology and/or social work. • Good skills in reporting. • Implementation / coordination / monitoring of networks and alliances. • Ability to communicate easily with people. • Must be autonomous, dynamic, motivated, flexible.

Deadline to apply: March 10th, 2010. (CV + application letter in English) have to be delivered at the address below: DIA office - Al Kemp area - Ta'ez (Phone: 04 28 24 28, Fax: 04 28 24 29) or by email to: rebecca.bouchel@diaid.org

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Manakha residents pay up to YR 10,000 for one truck of water

By: Mahmoud Al-Harazi
For the Yemen Times

Residents in the city of Manakha are complaining of the high price of a tank-load of water from a water truck to compensate from a lack of water from the governmental network.

A tank-load of water from a private truck costs up to YR 10,000 in Manakha compared to about YR 2,000 in Sana'a. Truck owners say that the price reflects the transportation costs.

Manakha city is about 65 km away from the closest water point in Khamis Bani Saad and it takes about 4 hours to go there and back, said Ahmed Daaqeen, the owner of a water truck.

"My water truck's capacity is about 40 barrels [about 4,600 litres]. The water costs me about YR 2,000, and I sell the water for about YR 10,000. The long distance and time I spend to bring water to Manakha city is why the price water in Manakha is so high," he said.

In Manakha city, resident Abdelqader Abdullah added up how much he spends on water over the course of six months.

"The public water project provides our street with water once every 6 months," he said. "During these six months, I spend about YR 25,000 for each truck-load of water besides the YR 7,500 I have to pay to the public water project for water twice a year only."

"We depend mainly on the public water from the government project, and depend on the neighbours who sometimes give us water," said Mohammed Ahmed, another resident in Manakha city. "We also use water from the rainwater cisterns and the dams for the cleaning and washing."

"We can't buy water from the water truck because it's too expensive," he said.

Many residents in Manakha city wash their hands in a plastic basin to save water because there is no water in their taps from the public water project during most of the year.

There were about four wells for Manakha residents but, because of the lack in rain in the last few years, these have dried up, according to Ali Sunbul, director of the public water project in Manakha city.

Two new wells have been drilled in Mausana valley that produce about 70 cubic meters per day, but that is not enough for the over 20,000 people living in Manakha, he said.

A solution would be to dig another well in Khamis Bani Saad, the place where water trucks now go and fetch water for the city, but the Ministry of Water and Environment has stopped this project, he said.

"We dug a well 600 meters deep in Mausana, but it failed because there



On the outskirts of Manakha city, residents gather water from the Al-Qarawayn spring which they say will soon dry up.

was no water in this well," said Hassan Al-Sheikh, general manager for environment and water at the Ministry of Water and Environment.

The basic sources of water in Manakha city should come from the Surdud valley in Khamis Bani Saad in front of Bab Bishr. But because the local authority did not follow up the issue properly at the ministry, the project has been delayed, he said.

The technical study to dig a well in Khamis Bani Saad and set up the network is ready, he said.

Manakha water project officers must present a study with their problems to the Ministry of Water and Environment, said Najeeb Al-Maqtari, executive director at the ministry.

If the finances for the Manakha project are not approved this year, they may be next year, he said.

The ministry's budget for water related projects is between USD 400,000 and 4 million. The only issue for the Manakha water project is the long distance between a well in Khamis Bani Saad and the city. The pipes will need to cut across several mountains, which will cost a lot and require considerable support in operation and maintenance.

Trouble in the rural areas

The villages around Manakha city traditionally depend on rain and a lack of rain over the last few years has made access to water difficult, according to director of the public water project in Manakha city, Ali Sunbul.

To tackle a lack of water in the rural area around Manakha city, the government established three dams there about

four years ago to provide residents with water.

However, distribution remains a problem. In particular, because there is no mechanism to distribute water from the Arjaz dam to the west of Manakha between the villages, there have been arguments between these over access.

Over the last few years, an argument with the government over the water's distribution escalated into an armed struggle leaving one soldier and one villager dead, said Ali Ghalib Al-Arjazi, a social leader. "These problems haven't been solved yet," he said.

"Our women walk about 10 km to fetch water for the village on the backs of donkeys and on their heads," said Abdelaziz Al-Qashem, a resident in a rural area outside the city.

In these rural areas, a water truck is an

unrealistic solution to his family's daily struggle for water, because of a lack of paved roads as well as its cost.

"We can't get water in from a water truck because the road to our village is unpaved, and the long distance from Manakha city to the village where I live in means it would be too expensive," he said.

Some residents have accused the local water authority of selling water off to qat farmers for a profit.

But these are just false accusations against the public project, according to Sunbul.

"The water to irrigate my qat comes via truck from about 4km away from the qat farms," said Fawaz MUSAAD, a qat farmer.

A truck-full of water costs more than YR 20,000, he said.



Because of Manakha city's geographical situation, piping in water to the city will be expensive.

HEALTH WATCH

By: Dr. Siva



This weekly column is to disseminate health information to the readers in Yemen and outside. Dr. Siva is currently working at Aden Refinery Company Hospital. Life style diseases and cancer prevention are his special interests. Complementary medicine and Naturopathy are his passions.

High blood pressure, the silent killer

Samira accompanied her mother to her family doctor's clinic when her mother went for a regular medical checkup. She asked the family doctor to check her blood pressure too. At 43, Samira was more than a little surprised to find that she had high blood pressure. "I never had any symptoms," she said in disbelief.



High blood pressure (or hypertension) has long been called a "silent killer" because it often causes no symptoms. High blood pressure is more common in women than men after they reach middle age. Persistent hypertension is one of the risk factors for stroke, heart attack, heart failure and arterial aneurysm, and is a leading cause of chronic renal failure. Even moderate elevation of arterial blood pressure leads to shortened life expectancy. High blood pressure can drastically shorten the life span of a person unless appropriately treated.

What is blood pressure?

Blood is carried from the heart to all parts of the body in blood vessels called arteries. Blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. Each time the heart contracts, it pumps blood into the arteries and at this time the blood pressure is at its highest. This is called systolic pressure. When the heart is at rest, between beats, the blood pressure falls. This is the diastolic pressure.

Blood pressure is always given as two numbers, the systolic and diastolic pressures. Both are important. They are usually written one above the other, such as 120/80. The top number is the **systolic** and the bottom, the **diastolic**. If the blood pressure of a person is 120/80, we say that it is "120 over 80" mmHg ("millimeters of mercury"). The diastolic blood pressure is given more importance in deciding whether the blood pressure is under control or not.

Blood pressure changes during the day. It is lowest when you sleep and rises when you get up. It can also rise when you are excited, nervous, or active.

Hypertension occurs when blood is forced through the arteries at an increased pressure. With high blood pressure, the heart works harder, the arteries take a beating, and the chances of a stroke, heart attack, and kidney problems are greater.

Risk for high blood pressure

High blood pressure can have a number of causes and often runs in families. Lifestyle habits can increase one's risk for high blood pressure. People who are old or have a family history of high blood pressure are prone to develop it. Similarly those who are overweight, physically inactive, and diabetic are more at risk.

How high blood pressure affects your body

People with high blood pressure often have no symptoms initially and feel fine. However, much before high blood pressure causes symptoms it can damage vital organs of the body. If it is not treated, high blood pressure can lead to very serious health problems.

Long-term high blood pressure can damage blood vessels. Cholesterol plaque causes the arteries to narrow and harden. This is called **atherosclerosis**. The combination of atherosclerosis and high blood pressure sets the stage for stroke and heart attack.

As blood pressure rises, the heart has to work harder to deliver oxygen to the tissues. Over time, the heart enlarges and may have trouble doing its work. This can lead to heart failure.

High blood pressure can cause a blood vessel in the brain to burst and

lead to stroke. Brain cells in that part of the brain may die. A stroke that continues for a few minutes can cause permanent brain damage or death. Depending on the part of the brain affected, signals from that part of the brain to the body can be disrupted and can affect speech, movement, and other bodily functions.

The blood vessels in the kidneys can be easily damaged by high blood pressure. When the kidneys are not working normally, it can result in kidney failure.

High blood pressure can also narrow the blood vessels in the eyes. This can cause the vision to become worse and may even lead to blindness.

Managing high blood pressure Lifestyle modification

You can lessen your risk of high blood pressure and its long-term effects by adopting a healthy lifestyle. The following methods may help lower your blood pressure:

- Weight reduction and regular aerobic exercise (e.g., jogging, brisk walking, swimming, or bicycling) for at least 45 minutes a day are recommended as the first steps in treating mild to moderate hypertension. Even as little as a 3-4 kilo weight loss can make a difference.
- Cutting back on salt will help in lowering blood pressure.
- A low fat diet will help decrease the chances of atherosclerosis. Additional dietary changes beneficial to reducing blood pressure includes the DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), which is rich in fruits and vegetables and low fat or fat-free dairy foods.
- Discontinuing tobacco and alcohol has been shown to lower blood pressure.
- Stress management using relaxation techniques and yoga can go a long way in reducing high blood pressure.

Medical management

People who are not able to control their blood pressure by the above means may need medication to lower high blood pressure. Doctors will choose medication in such a way that it will have the best effect on your blood pressure with minimum side-effects.

Remember that high blood pressure medication may have to be taken for life. Do not stop taking your medication—this could make your blood pressure rise to a very high level (rebound hypertension). It is important to continue taking the medication even when you are feeling healthy or even after your blood pressure comes under control.

A 2004 study published in Phytomedicine found that people who drank 2 cups of hibiscus tea daily for 4 weeks lowered their diastolic blood pressure by 12%—results similar to those of a common blood pressure medication.

As you age, blood pressure tends to rise. It is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly. If your blood pressure is high, see your doctor to develop a plan of managing it that is right for you. If your doctor prescribes medications, stick with them. Keeping your blood pressure at normal levels can help you avoid other serious health conditions.

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مهرجان 2010 ماليزيا واليمن

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Novelist Ali Al-Muqri to the Yemen Times:

“Writing is a deep excavation into human suffering.”

Yemeni novelist and poet Ali Al-Muqri started writing at the age of eighteen. He started his career writing newspaper articles, short stories and poems, of which some were banned by the Ministry of Culture in North Yemen for being too erotic.

After the reunification of Yemen in 1990, he became the cultural editor for various publications. Since 1997, he has been editor of *Al-Hikma*, a literary publication of the Yemeni Writer's Association. He has headed a literary journal called *Ghaiman* since it was established in 2007.

In his latest novel, *The Handsome Jew*, he narrates the story of the educated daughter of a Mufti who falls in love with a Jewish man and marries him. The novel, set in seventeenth century Yemen, addresses the issue of tolerance of other religions and social classes. It follows *Black Taste*, *Black Smell*, the first contemporary Yemeni novel about the akhdam, a marginalized Yemeni group discriminated against because of their dark skin.

Khaled Al-Hilaly spoke to the novelist about the historical presence of Jews in Yemen, tolerance of the other, and publishing in Yemen.



The world and characters in your novel *The Handsome Jew* indicate that you have done research. How did you research the novel?

I have been writing three novels for fifteen years and the writing was in an intermittent manner. *The Handsome Jew* is one of them. The preparation involved my astonishment of a different worlds and culture live among us in a vast majority Islamic society.

I was astonished by the culture of a minority which has its own religious, literary and musical characteristics. Because I am a researcher and I like reading history, I have been astounded by the huge history of Jewish culture in Yemen. I have found it a rich and magnificent. From that culture, today's culture was born.

Before Islam, Judaism was the official religion in Yemen before and after Christianity. Two of the kings who ruled Yemen were Jewish, As'ad Al-Kamel and Dhu Nawas. The latter was then considered as a national hero because he fought the foreign occupation of Yemen.

The artistic and aesthetic aspect of history has always impressed me. I knew of early dreams of Jews about Jerusalem, dreams of religious roots. After the coming of Islam, Muslims had the same dreams of keeping Jerusalem as a holy city. I realized that this might be the historic and cultural root of the present conflict and I continued researching the Jews history from all aspects.

I even researched the origin of Yemeni Jewish music that was sometimes mixed with Islamic musical traditions, like prayers and hymns. I found that there were points of convergence and divergence. The Jews were pioneers of music in Yemen, as were the akhdam. In a certain period of history, music and singing was forbidden among Muslims and only Jews and akhdam performed and entertained.

What about the research for your previous novel, *Black Taste*, *Black Smell*?

I was obsessed with research the historical roots of akhdam, and their social reality was even more exciting for me than the history of the Jews.

The Handsome Jew was a novel to reveal a memory in the form of an intimate love story that goes beyond dislike and class hatred between the two religions.

I considered myself close to the akhdam and the novel was not about love but rather about what happens after love. The body in its sexual meaning was present.

Unlike the novel about the Jews where they were searching for home, for the akhdam home doesn't mean anything. They don't have religious, geographical or historical ideologies. The akhdam don't have something called history in *Black Taste*, *Black Smell*.

Even when society wants to free them as they say, it tries to impose new values on them and these values are the same that have been enslaving them for the last centuries. The people who enslave them want to free them, so the freedom doesn't originate from them.

One of the characters says, "We need to choose the form of our freedom." Many people who read the novel have asked what I want by the novel and if I want to free them. But, actually, novels don't give answers.

How does Al-Muqri the poet affect Al-Muqri the novelist?

I wished I could destroy the poet in me while writing *Black Taste*, *Black Smell*,

however the title still poetic. I wanted the language to be close to the simple and daily language of the akhdam. A language in an easy aesthetic structure that others also see as cruel or direct. I don't know if I have managed to destroy the poet in *Black Taste*, *Black Smell* or not. In *The Handsome Jew* which is set in the middle of seventeenth century, the language of that period was recalled especially in the style of correspondence. The language did not fully match the seventeenth century though, because I have written for today's readers.

There is news that a third novel will be added to *Black Taste*, *Black Smell* and *The Handsome Jew* under the theme of minorities in Yemen. Could you tell me about it?

The third novel is not about any another minority, it is a novel about a social issue taken from a different angle. It can be social and political. I have already entrusted it to the publisher and I can't reveal its name, I leave it as a surprise for reader. It is a novel close to me, but not about a minority.



What would be your reaction if someone wanted to translate *The Handsome Jew* into Hebrew? What would that add to it?

Anybody who reads *The Handsome Jew* will see it as essential that the novel is translated into Hebrew as it addresses two different cultures. In fact, I haven't given it much thought. There was request by the publisher to translate the *Handsome Jew* into the Hebrew but I don't know what happened to it. I wonder why many of the Arab authors refuse to translate their works into Hebrew.

When I hear news about this, I remember Averroës who was charged of being an infidel and whose books in Arabic were burned. It was his books translated into Hebrew that survived. I don't mean that Arabic will become extinct and the Hebrew will prevail and or even save Arabic culture, but why not translate as long as it passes through safe channels?

You wrote a book entitled *Liquor and Wine in Islam* that was published in 2007 that suggested that alcohol might not be prohibited in Islam. Did this book get you into trouble with Muslim scholars?

This book was not based on the religious perspective, but it was analytical research into Islamic culture. I recovered the hidden tolerance towards alcohol in

Arab Islamic culture. These are ignored by scholars, who instead only highlight the forbidden extremes.

There has been a movement in Arab Islamic culture that called for alcohol to be dealt with from a legal perspective. The drunk can be punished for committing errors but not for drinking.

I made the distinction between wine and liquor. This enraged Muslim clerics because they wanted the hidden to be kept as it is. While tolerant Islam should be predominant, unfortunately the forbidding conservative mentality always predominates in Arab Islamic culture. Clerics interfere with people and their religions.

I had published four articles from the book in the cultural supplement of *Al-Jumhuriyya* newspaper in Taiz two months before the book was scheduled to be published. After the first article was published, Nasser Al-Shaibani, the imam of a mosque in Taiz city, attacked me and the newspaper supplement in his Friday sermon which was broadcast on the local radio. This affected the members of my family who live Taiz and led to a dispute between us.

After the second article was published, Al-Shaibani, who became a minister for endowment a few years, later repeated the attack on me and many other imams -especially from the Islah party- followed him. This was followed by another attack by the *Al-Sahwa* newspaper, the mouthpiece of Islah party, which made almost all the mosques repeat what was published in the newspaper, i.e. that my book is deviation from Islam.

Besides affecting my relationship with family, this affected me financially when my job contract with a newspaper in the Gulf was terminated. Publishing the book was delayed and ten years later it was published in Beirut after it was published in a popular edition.

Do you think any of the akhdam have read your novel *Black Taste*, *Black Smell*? What would be his or her opinion?

Of course, a number of akhdam I know have read the book. I have akhdam friends because I have grew up in a village near Taiz called Humara and I used to frequently go the nearby akhdam community. I know some of them who have gone to school and can read.

Some of them read the novel before it went to the publisher, because I wanted to know their initial impressions. Many people believed that I misrepresented the akhdam, but akhdam are more open minded and all those fears were because of a conservative social culture.

Unlike the expectations of some people about the akhdam's reactions, they considered the novel to be their own book and this made me happy. It was for the first time that a book was written about them.

For whom did you write the *Black Taste*, *Black Smell*?

In fact, I have written it for myself. It was to express my close relation with this group of people since my childhood. I found that the akhdam are part of me, the akhdam with their distant and open horizon, those who don't accept any borders whether cultural, geographical or ideological.

I was like writing about myself free from any geographical or ideological frame. The akhdam is a community like that of the gypsies who live in terrific disobedience.

In a country with a high rate of illiteracy, how does literature play rule in the social change?

I don't think literature has any role in this concept. This is connected to political, social and cultural issues.

Unfortunately, enlightening projects for cultural development like the nationalism, the communism, the secularism and liberalism have collapsed in the Arab countries. Now, tribalism rules in these countries. In literature, the vernacular and Nabatean poetry have become a source of pride. The Nabatean poet can recite poetry even though he is illiterate. It seems to me that the powers in the Arab world sponsor this kind of culture by promoting the impulsive and vernacular literature of the tribe.

The culture of liberation, rationalism and civil society has turned into a culture of racism and tribalism. Furthermore, the authority has become held in the hand of one family in the Arab countries.

Arab literary critic Jabir Asfour said that symbolism in *The Handsome Jew* confirms human interaction between people whatever their religious differences. Could you please tell me about the symbolism in *The Handsome Jew*?

I can't say that the novel has a symbolism in its literal meaning because the reality in its historical fossil is actually symbolic. Writing is a deep excavation into human suffering. It might directs you to the Arab-Israeli or Islamic -Jewish conflict.

A reader told me, "Your novel answers the question of who Jerusalem belongs to." I asked, "Whose it is?" He said, "Nobody's." The reader has his own point of view and he is free to say what he finds in the novel. In the novel, I have put forward questions but I don't think I have given answers. I don't have any.

The character of Fatima in *The Handsome Jew* seems to tell us that an in-depth reading into the culture of the other can make it possible to accept and live with him. Do you think we need this today to reconcile ourselves with the other?

Maybe, the culture of the other sometime is not found in books. Fatima discovered

the handsome Jew by his smile, behavior, and treatment. In the same way, he might have discovered Fatima's Islamic culture by her tolerance. We can be what we are, without that great ideological inheritance. Culture can be a terrific barrier and lead to supremacism. Unfortunately, Yemen has lost many of its Jews because of this supremacism. They [the Jews]

Historically, different cultures have never fallen out as they have now. Arab literature used to be written in Arabic as well as in Hebrew, and the same can be said for Jewish culture.

In both novels *Black Taste*, *Black Smell* and *The Handsome Jew*, escaping was the last solution. Why?

Many critics reviewed *The Handsome Jew* writing, "She escaped with him to Sana'a." But in the novel Fatima does not escape with the handsome Jew. She married him and she was confident as they left the village she was leaning on a religious and cultural reference.

In *Black Taste*, *Black Smell*, it was escape, from where come the akhdam's chaotic existence, beauty, and rejection of everything.

You books are published by a Lebanese publishing house. Aren't there publishers in Yemen?

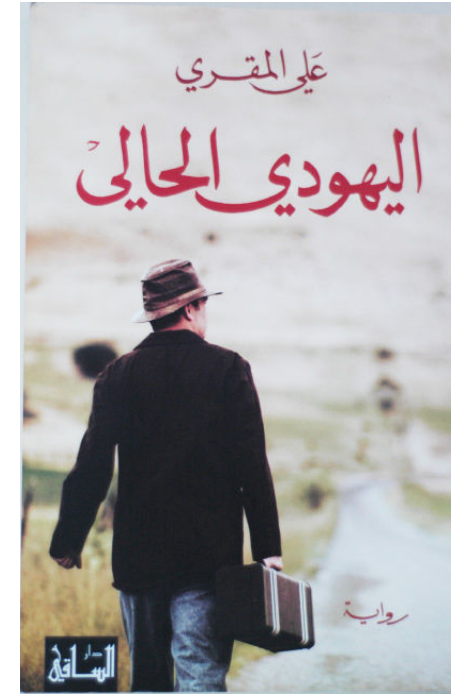
Publishing houses in Yemen are not up to standard. Publishing includes the relation between the author and the publisher, the author's rights, the publisher's rights, printing, cover design, marketing and distribution of the book.

This ensemble is not available in Yemen.

On their own, authors in Yemen send their books to [small] printers or photocopy them to be then sold at a promotional price or to be distributed to friends. I have had the opportunity to publish my books in the well-known Dar Al-Saqi publishing house in Beirut.

Your novel *Black Taste*, *Black Smell* was nominated for the Arabic Booker Prize in 2009. Do you expect *The Handsome Jew* novel to be nominated?

I don't know whether the publisher will nominate *The Handsome Jew* to the prize or not. For me, whether it wins or not, I am not losing because, since the initial reactions to the novel, I have felt that I have written a good novel.



used to be part of the country's identity.

How can interaction with the other happen without communication, when, for example, the translation of literature is considered to be betrayal?

I think that Arab governments mislead Arab intellectuals, authors, writers and artists. These governments do normalize their relations with Israel politically and economically, but continue misleading their people.

The most oppressive Arab governments are those who claim that their priority is to fight Israel. In this way, they make Arab intellectuals their followers to them and the last to know.

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Project Administration Unit (PAU)

Basic Education Development Project (BEDP)

Credit No. 3988-Yem & Grant No. TF-053721 & KFW2004 66 268)

Request for Expressions of Interest

Technical Assistance (TA) for In-Service Training Program Impact Assessment Study

This request for Expressions of interest follows the General procurement Notice for this project that appeared in the UND Business and Dg Market dated of Feb 2, 2005. The Ministry of Education (MOE), Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA), Multi Donor Grant and Kfw Grant; intend to apply part of the proceeds of this to payments under the contract for the above -consulting service.

The Project Administration Unit now invites eligible consulting Firms to indicate their interest in providing the service for conducting Technical Assistance (TA) for In-Service Training Program Impact Assessment Study.

The main objective of this TA is to help MoE to develop an informed view of the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of short-course training programs at grade 1-9 level in basic education which were implemented by the Training Sector in the MoE and financed by BEDP and other partners. Interested consulting Firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the service profiles, description of Core Business & year in Business, experience in similar assignments, Technical & Managerial organization of the firm and General Qualification of the firm and number of key staff.

The selection of the Consulting Firms and training institutes will be made in accordance with the procedure set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: "Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, May 2004". Interested consultants may obtain further information during working days Sat. -Wed. From 08:30 AM to 3:00 PM at the address below to which the expression of interest must be delivered by March 20, 2010.

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Yemeni coppersmith sells imported copperware

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For the Yemen Times

Lutf Al-Sairafi's family has been working with copper for generations. But today, although he owns two shops that sell all sorts of copper objects in Old Sana'a, hardly any of them are made in Yemen.

The competition of cheaper copper products from India and China has meant that producing original Yemeni copperware is no longer worth it, he says.

In his family, traditional copperware production ended when his father died in 1988, explains the 29 year-old. Since, the family has become the wholesaler for copper products from abroad in Old Sana'a.

Today the few remaining Yemeni items in the family shop are on sale for about the double of the price of their Chinese equivalents, because they were decorated by hand not formed in a pre-decorated mold. And, although the Indian products are also sometimes embossed by hand, they are still cheaper.

The imported copper trays and jugs come in different patterns, sometimes agilely imitating the old Yemeni style. Chinese manufacturers for example now produce copper trays inscribed with Quranic verses, according to Al-Sairafi.

Yemen's coppersmiths have become mere traders, and less and less now work with the metal they sell. The descendants of artisans famous for turning the metal into swords and daggers, trays, pots, jugs, pendants, and even coins, see no point in keeping up the family's craft.

"My father used to be excellent in making copper objects," recalls Al-Sairafi. «He made pots, pitchers, plates and pendants. He decorated them with verses from Arabic poetry, wise words, and proverbs often taken from the poems of Imam Al-Shafi'i [an Islamic scholar who was also a poet]."

"He also made copper lanterns,

some round and some in the shape of cages. The base of the lanterns was made so that it could contain a candle," he recalls.

In addition to these, perfume bottles, water glasses, jewelry, incense burners, candlesticks, and cutlery are made wonderfully from copper. Yemen's artisans decorated copper with gold and silver.

Al-Sairafi, who inherited his profession from his grandfathers, says that producing his own copperware costs him more in effort and money than



Al-Sairafi holds one of the only Yemeni items left in his shop.



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importing copperware from abroad. Even the copper crescent that traditionally adorns the tops of mosques is made in India these days, he says.

A disappearing profession

In 2008, a survey by the official Tourism and Historic Monuments Office Monuments found that the coppersmith profession would disappear with the passage of time unless immediate measures were taken to prevent this.

The survey counted many copper products in Yemen, but did not record their date or place of production.

Al-Sairafi recommended that the state encourage this profession's survival by banning the import of imitation copper products from abroad and establishing institutes that to teach the fundamentals of the profession.

He said that the disappearance of coppersmiths may result in the disappearance of the other traditional Yemeni crafts.