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Farmers in Dhamar uproot qat and replace it with food crops

By: Yemen Times correspondent
For the Yemen Times

DHAMAR, FEB. 27 — Two farmers from the Jahran district, Dhamar governorate, 70 km to the south of the capital Sana'a, took the initiative of uprooting qat in their lands and replacing them with potatoes, fruits as well as wheat.

The total area of the two farms together is around 250 lebnas (11,000 square meters) and this is the second instance in which farmers from Jahran district have uprooted qat at their own will. Last year, around 1,300 lebnas (57,200 square meters) in the center of the same district were cleaned totally from qat plantations to be replaced with food crops.

Local government authorities were also present for to witness the uprooting of qat, in the land of the two farmers, which took place on February 23. The local authorities promised assistance to farmers for uprooting qat.

"We the local authority in the governorate of Dhamar are ready to encourage farmers who are themselves convinced to uproot qat from their lands and re-

place it with food crops," said Yahya Al-Amri, the governor of Dhamar.

The governor promised to provide farmers, choosing to uproot qat at their own will, with optimized seeds, fertilizers, modern irrigation techniques as well as agricultural guidance.

Al-Amri commended the step and described it as successful initiative and an indicator of increasing awareness among farmers of the hazards of qat cultivation and marketing.

"Qat cultivation exhausts water the country's reserves and the expansion of this crop happens at the expense of food crops, which threatens its food security as qat competes both with food and cash crops," said Al-Amri.

He said that the hazards of qat further extend to social, economic and health aspects as well, negatively affecting individuals and the society as a whole.

According to Al-Amri, this increased awareness of the farmers of Dhamar about the hazards of qat cultivation is a result of the cooperation between local authorities in the governorate and other interested institutions to raise agricultural awareness.

The awareness campaigns organized last year in the governorate as well as the benefits and assistance offered to farmers who took the initiative to uproot qat encouraged farmers to respond positively to government calls to stop the expansion of qat cultivation this year.

In February 2006, the cabinet approved a decree introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture to ban qat cultivation on agricultural beds.

The local government banned the farming of qat in the Jahran valley of Dhamar, considered one of the largest agriculture areas within Yemen. Efforts from the Ministry of Agriculture in Dhamar had encouraged a number of qat farmers in Jahran district to uproot the tree, especially after providing them with alternatives and technical support.

Farmers in these villages received improved seeds as well as technical and logistic support, provided by the agricultural office and through the General

Authority of Agricultural Research and Guidance (GAARG) in the governorate. Such farmers are also promised priority in distribution of agriculture machinery and equipment.

Ali Al-Rawdi, the General Manager of the General Company for Potato Seeds Produce, which is attached to the Ministry of Agriculture, said that the company is ready to assist farmers with potato cultivation.

He also added that the expansion in cultivation of potatoes is an important step in reducing food insecurity in the country since potatoes are used in many Yemeni dishes.

The two farmers who uprooted the qat from their lands this Tuesday said that they had uprooted qat at their own free will because they were aware of the hazards linked to qat cultivation and were convinced that uprooting qat to grow food crops instead was the right thing to do.

"I uprooted the qat from my land at my own will and I am totally convinced that qat cultivation is useless, not only because it exhausts water storage and efforts, but also because it drives young students away from education," said Ateeq Al-Bukhrani, one of the two farmers who totally uprooted his qat



Farmers now uproot the qat from their farms of their own willing and that is an indicator of awareness of qat hazards among some farmers.

trees on Tuesday.

Al-Bukhrani called on all farmers to quit qat cultivation and start growing food crops which have much better economic prospects.

The other farmer, Ahmed Al-Maybadi, said that he decided to uproot qat

because he lost the opportunity to continue his education to the qat business.

"Qat cultivation requires round the clock efforts and needs you to stay on the lands guarding the qat leaves from thieves," said Al-Maybadi

Continued on page 2

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Southern Movement demands support from Riyadh conference

By: Fuad Mussed
For the Yemen Times

AL-DHALE, Feb. 28 — The leadership of the Southern Movement in Al-Dhale governorate organized a rally on Saturday to coincide with the conference held in Riyadh to demand support in their secession from the rest of Yemen.

Leaders of the Southern Movement in Al-Dhale said that the protest was in response to a call by Ali Salem Al-Baidh by that the movement consider him as the legitimate president of any southern state.

"This activity is a response to an invitation the movement received from Ali Salem Al-Baidh and it aims to convey a message to the Riyadh conference to back the southern people in their legal demands," said Shalal Ali Shayi, one of the leaders of the Southern Movement in Al-Dhale during the rally.

After the rally, hundreds of protestors walked around the streets of Al-Dhale and repeated secession slogans.

They held up pictures of Al-Baidh and green flags according to Al-Baidh's recent speech from Germany in which he invited his supporters to raise green flags as a symbol of independence.

State of emergency

In the same context, the police and the local authority in Al-Dhale announced

a state of emergency on Saturday morning.

An official from the local authority said that the declaration of a state of emergency aims to maintain security and stability in the governorate, and to protect residents after rumors of armed elements destabilizing the area.

The police says that it has surrounded Al-Dhale and closed down all main entrances to the city and neighboring villages.

The chief of police in the governorate said that the movement in Al-Dhale is not peaceful any more and that it had become armed.

Violence in the governorate

Last Friday, an attack targeted state security and a high ranking official was killed.

However, police in the governorate have announced that they have identified the people behind an ambush on Friday in which the director of criminal investigation was killed.

Investigations showed that seven men were involved in the ambush, leading to the murder of Ali Ahmed Al-Halmi, along with one of his soldiers. Two men present at the scene were also injured. The director was heading back from the district of Al-Razeq in Al-Dhale.

Following the attack, a large protest took place condemning it and demanding

more state control in the area.

Attack in Lahj

On another front, in the Radfan district of Lahj Governorate, unknown armed groups attacked two vehicles carrying diesel and oil for the Yemen Mobile local transmitter station at Jabal Shafan. The vehicles were completely destroyed by fire.

In the same governorate ten days ago, the home of the deputy governor Yaser Al-Yamani was attacked by another armed group who opened fire on his house. This is the second attack on his house.

According to the deputy governor, the attackers were the same perpetrators as those responsible for the attack on several shops belonging to people from northern cities in Al-Hawta in Lahj.

As a direct result, earlier this week security officers in some southern cities arrested 16 men suspected of being involved in "secessionist activities." The suspects were carrying anti-government signs and leaflets advocating for the secession of the southern governorates from the Republic of Yemen.

Others members of the Southern Movement launched attacks on security officers by throwing rocks in the three governorates of Abyan, Lahj and Al-Dhale last week. As a consequence, there has been a series of arrests.

Consultative meeting discusses national health strategy

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Feb.28 — The Ministry of Public Health and Population organized, on Wednesday, February 24, a two days consultative meeting to discuss the National Health Strategy for 2010-2025. The meeting was attended by the prime minister and the country director of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The discussion gathered together the health leadership from all governorates of the country and the funding organizations working in health care, to come up with recommendations regarding the National Health Strategy.

"The objective of the strategy is to ensure good health services for all Yemenis and to make sure that all the Yemeni people have an access to quality health care," said Dr. Abdul Kareem Rasae, the Minister of Health.

According to Dr. Rasae the strategy also aims to optimize the performance of the health system by raising the qualifications of the health personnel working at health facilities.

"The strategy will focus on raising health awareness which will in turn contribute to reducing the population

growth rate of the country," said Dr. Rasae.

Dr. Rasae also said that the strategy will identify financial resources to support the health services in Yemen through creating a health insurance system.

The Ministry of Health aims to control the spread of diseases in the country as well as controlling the mortality rates through this ambitious strategy.

Participants in the meeting pointed out that optimizing the health performance requires the commitment of the health personnel and recommended improving their living conditions and providing them with training courses, in order to motivate them.

The participants also said that the strategy should focus on the adequacy of health personnel at health facilities and to fill the current gaps between availability and demand.

The strategy, which has taken around four years for its preparation, will identify district-wise community needs in partnership with donors, as it is based on data collected from health facilities all over Yemen, according to the Dr. Rasae.

Dr. Rasae also said that the ministry is making progress in the health care

and that the main health indicators show this success. For example, the child mortality rate (for children under the five years of age) has reduced from 102 deaths per one thousand live births in 2003 to 78 deaths per one thousand live births and the infant mortality has declined from 75 thousand cases to 68 thousand cases.

There are now about 3,853 health facilities in the public sector. 2,774 out of this number are health units, 842 are health centers and 237 are hospitals, according to the ministry's statistics in 2008.

Although the private health facilities are much more than public health facilities (there are 11,694 private health facilities), they are mostly centered in the main cities, according to the draft of the strategy.

The strategy also says that it is difficult to separate between private health facilities and public health facilities as the personnel who work at the public facilities work at the private facilities as well.

The country director of the WHO, Sabri Balqasem called on the political leadership in Yemen to keep its commitment on optimizing the level of health care for Yemeni people.

The 19th conference of the Yemeni-Saudi Council

By: Mohammad Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Feb.28 — The 19th statutory conference of the Yemeni-Saudi Council was held in Riyadh in the Saudi Arabia, in the presence of the Yemeni Prime Minister, Ali Mohammad Mojawwar, and the Saudi Deputy Prime Minister, Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz.

The two sides signed nine agreements; four of which are to finance development projects in Yemen to an amount of USD 114,800,000.

The amount of money obtained will be used to finance projects for generating power, water and sanitation systems, in addition to financing the Al-Hodaidah Hospital and equipping laboratories in the colleges of Engineering and Education in Ta'iz.

Furthermore, the Saudi Arabia declared its willingness to finance the further Yemeni projects promised earlier in the London Conference for Donors.

In addition to the Saudi Arabia, during the conference, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) approved the allocation of an amount of 3.2 billion to finance specific projects in Yemen, according to

SABA News Agency.

The conference was attended by delegations from the US Britain, Japan, European Union countries and representatives from the United Nations and the World Bank.

During the conference, the government of Yemen presented their strategies to combat terrorism, unemployment and poverty. On the other hand, Abdul Kareem Al-Arhabi, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economy and International Cooperation, expressed his dismay over the unwillingness some donors have shown in fulfilling their promises to finance projects in Yemen.

Al-Arhabi said that there is no time to lose, especially knowing that 2010 is the last year that the five-year plan can be implemented.

He added that there are specific challenges that halt Yemeni improvements. In particular, problems with the Houthis in the north and the secessionist calls in the south, in addition to the Al-Qaeda presence, are obvious examples.

The Middle East Times newspaper asked him about whether or not the Yemeni government is responsible for this

delay in assisting the donors to fulfill their obligations toward Yemen. His reply was that Yemen is only partially responsible.

"Most Yemenis are under the age of 24. They need opportunities to divert them from idealistic traps or political directions that may lead them towards extremism," he added.

Al-Arhabi stressed the necessity of creating a calm atmosphere for all Yemeni citizens.

At the end of the conference, the barriers to the starting of these projects were discussed, in addition to other possible proposals that can be implemented. Furthermore, the improvements that should start be starting from 2011 to 2015, were debated as well as advice that would improve the way donors are dealt with.

It is worth mentioning that during the conference, held in 2006 in London, donations to finance projects in Yemen from 2007 till 2010 were approved. These donations were offered from the GCC and regional funds, such as the Arabic Fund, OPEC Fund and the Islamic Fund. The GCC alone offered around USD 3.7 billion.

Tribesmen demand state to release detained weapons dealer

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Feb.28 — Tribesmen of Sa'ada held a meeting, with Sheikh Hassan Mana', the former

governor of Sa'ada, last Monday. The meeting was held to form a negotiation committee to ask President Saleh to release Sheikh Fares Mana', an arms dealer arrested by the government and who is also the brother of Sheikh Hasan Mana'.

During the meeting, Sheikh Hassan Mana' asked the president to form investigation committees in order investigate into the matter of financing the Houthis and said that the charges made by the government against his brother were all false.

According to media sources, Sheikh

Hasan Mana' had earlier declared that he would reveal the real names of the persons who were behind financing the Houthis and providing them with ammunition.

A tribal source mentioned that people from Sa'ada staged a sit-in in front of the president's palace demanding the release of Fares Mana', but were dispersed by the security.

According to the same source, around one thousand people from Sa'ada gathered in Al-Sabeen Square demanding the release of Fares Mana' who was arrested three weeks by the government under the accusation of being an arms dealer.

Following the traditional way of seeking forgiveness, the crowd offered Hajjar (camels and oxen) to the state begging it to forgive Fares Mana', said the tribal source.

It is worth mentioning that the state has dismissed Hasan Mana' from his post for his defending his accused brother.

The government has recently published, in the Al-Thawrah newspaper, a blacklist containing of the names of arms dealers for trial in the court. The list includes the names of Fares Mana', Jurman Mohammad Jurman, Ahmad Awadh Maskha, Hosain Abdullah Al-Houthaili, Abdullah Mubarak Al-Sagheer and Ali Dhaif Allah Al-Sagheer.

The names published in the black list were said to be of those involved in importing weapons from China, illegally, using false official forms for the deals. An official source said that Chinese companies were made aware of this and requested to deal with the Ministry of Interior only and to confirm the identities of the people engaged in the deals.

Continued from page 1

Farmers in Dhamar uproot qat and replace it with food crops

"Although qat can bring cash daily, its cultivation is hard and demands all the family members to engage in the process," said Al-Maybdai.

According to Al-Maybdai, the effort and resource inputs in qat cultivation double in winter when it becomes imperative to buy a large quantity of cloth as a cover to protect the plantations from the damage that frost can cause.

"Throughout the winter season, we set up cloth tents on the qat plantations to protect them from the frost," he said. "Some farmers use other techniques such as placing cooking gas cylinders on the boundaries and in the center of qat plantations and lighting them up at night, in order to reduce the cold," he explained.

Qat cultivation on the agricultural bed of Jahran in Dhamar has been on a rise since 2008, when the areas of qat cultivation in the district increased from 100 lebnas (4,400 square meters) to 150 lebnas (6,600 square meters) per

village, according to a survey conducted by a technical team at the Ministry of Agriculture.

The survey reports that in 2007, the area of qat cultivation per village was only between 15 to 20 lebnas (660-880 square meters).

The groundwater of Dhamar basin has been on a decline since 40 years and has been declining at a rate of 2.2 meters per year, according to a recent scientific study.

The Jahran bed exhausts most available groundwater in Dhamar as it consumes around 36.5 percent of groundwater from the Dhamar basin, mostly for cultivating qat, according to the study.

The study also indicated that there is an increase in random drilling of wells in the area and presently there are more than 5,000 wells, of which nearly half in Jahran.

Qat cultivation dominates around 25 percent of the agricultural areas in the country and consumes more than 30 percent of water that goes to agriculture, according to the Ministry of

Agriculture.

Qat constitutes around 33 percent of Yemen's agricultural produce and 30 percent of its population are employed in qat cultivation.

Over 3 million Yemenis chew qat daily and 60 percent of them are youth, according to previous studies.

Around USD 6 million and around 20 million hours -at an average of six hours per individual per day- are spent on a daily basis chewing qat.

Usually a qat chewing session starts at 14:00 pm and ends at 18:00 pm, although in some cases these sessions start at 12:00 noon continuing until midnight.

Qat leaves are considered to be a kind of drug, according to the United Nations list of drugs, but in Yemen the cultivation, selling, buying and chewing qat is legal.

And although many international reports warn that in 15 years Yemen will run out of water, the business of qat in Yemen is still on rise and forms an important source of income for many families.



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Position Summary:

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3. Support research and data collection on exploitative child labor
4. Strengthen country capacity to combat exploitative child labor and promote education;
5. Promote long-term sustainability of efforts to combat exploitative child labor

Position Responsibilities:

1. Lead development of annual work plans related to direct educational services for children and the improvement of basic education in the program
2. Provide technical guidance to partner organization and local Ministry of Education offices for activities that improve and / or complement basic educational services for children withdrawn from or prevented from entering exploitative child labor, including psychosocial support, teacher training, and curriculum development.
3. Contribute to awareness raising activities for community stakeholders (including parents, community leaders, and employers) that promote the importance and benefits of education.
4. Contribute to developing program approaches aimed at strengthening sustainability and ensure continuation of interventions following program completion.
5. Provide follow up guidance to target schools in order to optimize implementation of program activities.

Qualifications:

1. Advanced degree in education, international development, or a related field required
2. At least 5 years experience in basic education projects in developing countries in areas including student assessment, teacher training, educational materials/curriculum development, educational management, and educational monitoring and information systems.
3. Understanding of child labor issues, particularly the specialized needs of children withdrawn from exploitative child labor when they enter/return to school, and/or have experience working with this target population required
4. Experience working successfully with ministries of education, networks of educators, employers' organizations, and trade unions or comparable entities required.
5. Previous work experience in the Arab world highly preferred.

Foreign Language Required:

Fluent in spoken and written English and Arabic.

Interested candidates are requested to submit their CV's and applications by mail to info@chfyemen.org (Please type the position title in the subject box)

The deadline for submitting applications is 10/03/2010

In Brief

SANA'A FM undersecretary meets Russian official

Undersecretary of Foreign Minister Ali Muthana Hassn met here on Wednesday with the special envoy of the Russian President Anatoly Safonov. During the meeting, the two officials discussed the relations of mutual cooperation between the two countries and means of enhancing them in fields of fighting terrorism and organized crime.

Premier heads for KSA

Prime Minister Ali Mujawar headed on Saturday for Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for a two-day visit.

During the visit, Mujawar is to chair the Yemeni side in the meetings of round 19th of the Yemeni-Saudi Coordination Council (YSCC) to be launched later today, Saturday.

Upon his departure, Mujawar said that the 19th round would deal with the several issues of bilateral cooperation.

Yemen and Saudi Arabia will sign nine cooperation agreement, including agreements for financing projects in areas of education, water and power, he said.

The Premier valued the role the Saudi Arabia plays to support the development process, security and the unity of Yemen.

Yemen, EU discuss 2010 decent work program

Yemen and European Union (EU) have discussed the action plan and program of decent work for 2010.

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Amat al-Razaq Humad has held talks with Development Cooperation Advisor in the EC mission in Yemen Philip Jacque on the priorities of the decent work program for 2010.

The talks also dealt with achievements on the ministry's reconstruction funded by EU within the project of updating the civil service.

During the meeting, Humad praised the EU's assistance for Social Welfare Fund (SWF) through supporting the SWF institutional construction and conditional cash assistance for the education-deprived poor families.

On the other hand, Social Affairs Minister has held a meeting with the members

of the Decent Work National Committee, the three work parties (government, employers, employees), and a delegation of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

The meeting reviewed evaluation on the Decent Work program for the previous period and to identify the difficulties that delayed the program's implementation.

Kuwait concerns to enhance economic ties with Yemen, says diplomat

The Kuwaiti ambassador to Sana'a Salem al-Zamanan has affirmed concern of Kuwait to enhance its ties with Yemen in economic fields.

In an interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), al-Zamanan said that many Kuwaiti companies are investing in Yemen in domains of oil, tourism and transportation, highlighting investment opportunities in Yemen.

He also pointed out to concern of the Kuwaiti government to receive the Yemeni labor in Kuwait market as Yemeni community has good reputation in the Kuwaiti society.

The ambassador said that the embassy issues 160 working visas monthly for Yemeni workers, considering it a big figure compared to past years.

He also praised good brotherly relationship between Yemen and Kuwait under sponsorship of leaderships of both countries.

Yemenia to launch new services soon

Yemenia airline company is to launch new services soon including cargo services and sell via internet in the Yemeni market and through its agents in the world.

In a statement to Saba, Deputy Director General of Commercial Affairs Munir Jahwash said that the company would also buy more ten modern airplanes to extend its fleet, pointing out to policy of the company to use modern technologies.

The company could now compete strongly by offering best services to its customers, he said, the company's leadership also concerns to improve systems of work in the company in order to offer good services.

He made it clear that the company managed during recent period to open new

destination to China and Nigeria, saying that the company would open further new destinations soon.

Oil minister meets delegation of Russian Gazprom Company

Minister of Oil and Minerals Amir al-Aidarous held talks on Thursday with the delegation of Russian Gazprom company headed by director of projects at the company Dimitri Katski over opportunities of investment in oil and gas in Yemen.

The minister said that such talks with company come within policy of the Yemeni government to attract big world oil companies to invest in oil and gas in the country.

He wished cooperation between the ministry and the Russian company to achieve new explorations in fields of oil and gas.

The visit of the delegation is one of results of recent visit of President Ali Abdullah Saleh to Moscow when investment opportunities in Yemen were demonstrated to Russian oil companies including Gazprom Company, the minister added.

He said that the delegation would pay visits to several locations of oil blocks where the company might explore in. For his part, Katski affirmed concern of the company to see available chances of investment in Yemen.

SOQOTRA

Over \$5 mln for fish, water projects

The Public Works Project has adopted implementation of a number of infrastructure projects in the sectors of water and fisheries in the archipelago of Socotra, at cost of over \$ 5 million.

The director of the project in the provinces of Hadramout and Mahrah and Shabwa Abdul Rahim Omar told Saba that these projects include the establishment of two fish compounds, four fish landing centers in some areas of the archipelago as well as construction of the Fisheries Office's building in the archipelago.

These projects also include construction of a water reservoir and two schools of 12 classes, and rehabilitation of three caravans of water in some areas in the island, Omar added.

He noted that the fish facilities the proj-

ect intends to implement in the archipelago would contribute to the fisheries sector development through providing the fish landing and marketing services to fishermen so as contribute to improve their productive activity and living conditions.

HODEIDA

7 fishermen presumed dead as boat destroyed in bad weather in western Yemen

At least seven fishermen went missing and are presumed to have died after their boat was destroyed in tough weather in a second accident in almost a week in western Yemen, alsahwa-yement.net reported on Wednesday.

About 15 fishermen were aboard the boat that was afflicted at Al-Sawabe Island in the Red Sea. 8 of the fishermen were rescued by their fellows who were near to the accident site but the seven remain missing and their fate is still unclear.

An intensive search for them is underway, according to sources at the west-based Coastguard.

On the other hand, an officer and two soldiers vanished while on their way to one of the Yemeni islands in the Red Sea where they would have been on a ration distribution duty.

They were lost in late January and their fate has not been established yet. According to informed sources, the boat of the three was attacked by a missile fired by one of foreign anti-piracy warships patrolling the region.

6 days ago, 17 fishermen drowned in the sea when their boat capsized in bad weather.

Yemen to deport fresh 150 illegal African migrants

Yemen's Interior Ministry has ordered to deport about 150 Africans who have illegally arrived at Luhaya coast, Hodeidah.

A ship called, Al-Aseel disembarked the illegal migrants in western Yemen on Friday.

A coastguard boat pursued the ship and caught it with its crew. They have been turned over to interrogators.

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HADRAMOUT

Ministry: Pirates kill Yemeni fisherman off Somalia

Yemeni fisherman has been killed at the hands of Somali pirates, the Interior Ministry has reported.

The security authorities in Yemen's eastern province of Hadramout received an alert about the murder of Yemeni fisherman Muhammad Khal BaWazeer while the pirates tried to take over a Yemeni boat off Somali coast, the ministry said.

The boat, so-called al-Shura, left Alshahr city on February 20 with 9 fish-

ermen onboard.

The fate of the boat and the other fishermen is still unclear, the ministry said, adding that an investigation is underway.

In western Yemen, Coastguard said that nine Yemeni fishermen had arrived in Midy port, Hajjah, after they had been released by Eritrean authorities.

Eritreans intercepted the fishermen while hunting in international waters in the Red Sea and they have been in their custody with their boat for more than 20 days, according to the fishermen.

Their News

Inaugurating and handing-over project in Sana'a City funded by the Japanese Government

The Government of Japan extended a grant to a project in Sana'a City for the project for Improving Bus Operation System of Yemen Society for Care and Rehabilitation for the Blind - Sana'a Head Office. Inauguration and handing over ceremony for the above-mentioned project took place today, at the presence of Mr. Matahiro Yamaguchi, Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Japan, together with the concerned Yemeni Officials including Mr. Ali Saleh Abdullah-Deputy Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, Mr.Hamoud Al-Naqeeb - the Chairman of the Social Affairs Committee and Abdullah Al-Hamdani- the Executive Director of Disable Fund.

The Japanese Government's scheme called "Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects" helps the disability and rehabilitation projects as well as water projects over the last 10 years, hoping that these projects will contribute to the safer and better living standard for the inhabitants. In the last Japanese fiscal year (2008-2009), Japan has funded 16 projects in Yemen under the same scheme with a total amount of more than USD 1.2 million.

Workshop on corruption

The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists (APHRA) in collaboration with the Human Rights Information & Training Center in Yemen (HRITC), organizes in 20- 21 February 2010 in Flamenco Hotel - Zamalik- Cairo, a workshop entitled "Monitoring and Writing Corruption Reports" within the framework of APHRA's campaign Together against Corruption. The workshop takes place with the participation of large number of trainees and experts in anti-corruption domain.

The workshop aims at preparing specialized cadres to combat corruption. Meanwhile, the participants will be trained on monitoring and reporting corruption in Egypt in addition to introduce the definition of corruption, its motives, characteristics and risks.

Moreover, the workshop will analyze and evaluate the local and International reports with taking into consideration the United Nation Convention against Corruption. It will also tackle the ideal form

for writing reports and checking information.

The 4th Arab Free Press Forum, 6-7 June: What Lies Ahead for the Independent Arab Press?

Beirut, Lebanon, will host the 4th Arab Free Press Forum in the first of a series of exceptional events planned for the city this coming June. Organized by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), this year's edition of the Arab Free Press Forum will be held in the build up to the 63rd World Newspaper Congress and 17th World Editors Forum.

As leaders throughout the Middle East and North Africa have been securing their hold on power or making sure it remains "in the family", the independent press continues its work, despite repressive government policies and economic hardships.

Yet what are the prospects for the Arab independent press to fully play its role as a counterweight to power and an opponent of governmental abuse? Can it investigate, challenge and provoke within the current political environment? Can it report critically and hold those in power to account if faced with immense political, judicial and financial pressures?

Editors, publishers and journalists from across the Arab world will come together in Beirut to address those questions, as well as the business challenges and opportunities facing the independent Arab press.

Contact Virginie Jouan (vjouan@wan.asso.fr), Director of Press Freedom and Media Development at WAN-IFRA, for more information on how to register for the Arab Free Press Forum.

Visit www.wanlebanon2010.com for information on the World Newspaper Congress.

Youth Employment Project launches youth activities in its target governorates

Tuesday, 16th of Feb. 2010- Save the Children - Youth Employment Project (YEP) in cooperation with USAID launch youth activities in four governorates (Sana'a, Aden, Ibb and Abyan) which aim to empower vulnerable youth in livelihood opportunities field, capacity build-

ing etc.

On Sunday, 14th of Feb, Youth Employment Project concluded school elections in the YEP target schools (Hayial School, Omar Al-Mokhtar school and Rabia'a school)in Sana'a in which about 9000 students (males and females) participated in the election in a democratic environment, after three months preparations for the election. And today, YEP arranges training program for the students' councils in the target schools. The training aims to build and develop students councils members skills in improving their own activities plans for the students councils and to know their roles in developing the learning and teaching

processes.

On Tuesday 9th Feb., YEP has funded an initiative for its partners in Al-Braqa district, Aden. The partners (Al-Fardous foundation, child protection foundation from distortion) arranged one day training for 35 youth from the vulnerable , marginalized and Somalis youth in the voluntary work and youth initiatives. The outcome of the training was arranging on Wednesday 10, feb, one day cleaning campaign in Al-Braqa beach by the participants, coordinating with Al-Braqa district and the Cleaning Fund.

Also, in Sana'a, YEP launched on Tuesday 9th of Feb , the training program in livelihood opportunities field for 100

youth (males and females)from all the districts in Sana'a for 40 days. The training aims to develop the participants skills in the technical and knowledgeable skills in the livelihood opportunities and marketing fields. On Saturday, 6th Feb, YEP launched its sub office in Abyan with attendance of some official and social and media sectors such as Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Education ...etc. In the launch, the YEP partners made an exhibition for their productions which was supported by YEP project.

In addition, YEP has funded some youth initiatives and projects in the four target governorates such as in IBB governorate, YEP has funded three Youth

initiatives for three Youth foundations (Sabab Salah foundation, Life Makers Foundation, and YEP voluntary foundation) to launch a training program for 10 days (16- 26 Jan. 2010) in Information Technology, self marketing and livelihood opportunities field and preparing and writing proposals . The training targeted 80 youth participates (males and females) from Ibb University

Save the Children in Yemen emphasizes the important role of youth in developing countries as they are the future leaders. Save the Children recognizes the tremendous opportunity of positively engaging youth in defining their futures and that of their communities and society at large.



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Oxfam, an international NGO, works with others to find lasting solutions to poverty and suffering. Oxfam has been working in Yemen since 1983. Oxfam announces the following vacant position for its development and humanitarian programme in Yemen:

Programme Policy Advisor

You'll have proven expertise in programme policy and advocacy analysis work and that will show your ability to deliver persuasive lobbying and communications that influence governments, donors and global institutions. Committed to promoting basic human rights, you'll know what levels of negotiation, diplomacy and tact are needed to influence individuals with strongly held beliefs. In particular, you'll have experience of using evidence-based policy research, media and lobbying to influence governments and donors. Added to that, you will be a natural leader and an excellent communicator, ideally fluent in Arabic as well as English.

To find out more about this role and to apply, visit www.oxfam.org.uk/jobs and quote ref: INT3667.

Closing date: 8 March 2010.



National Consultant

Oxfam (GB)-Yemen Programme, is planning to conduct a study on the consequences of early pregnancies on girls under 18 years, based on medical data and case studies from hospitals and define the exact safe age of marriage for girls based on medical grounds for the project " Integrated Actions on the Safe Age of Marriage and Women's Economic Empowerment" funded by the Danish- Yemeni Partnership Program (DANIDA).

What we're looking for

The Oxfam GB- Yemen programme invites competent medical researcher or relevant consultancy firms to apply; therefore a detailed resume showing their technical, institutional and demonstrated experience will need to be submitted.

The role

The consultant will be responsible for developing a comprehensive proposal detailing the methodology, work-plan, time frame and the report structure of the assignment in both English and Arabic languages, according to the specific terms of reference & under the overall supervision of the Campaign and Policy Coordinator.

To apply

The applicants should submit their resume to e-mail sal-qadiri@oxfam.org.uk / ymubarak@oxfam.org.uk or Fax: +967-1-450170. Only those short-listed will be forwarded with terms of reference as part of request for proposal.

Closing date: 06/ Mar/2010

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Violated Women: Part 2/3

Initiatives to alleviate Yemeni women's suffering

Yemen is 134rd out of 134 countries in the 2009 Gender Gap Index. This means that Yemeni women are deprived in the four main fields addressed in this index's calculations: health, economy, education and politics. Not much statistical information is available as to the extent of abuse and violence against Yemeni women, although it is quite visible in society. The Yemeni Women's Union is one of the leading organizations working to defend abused women through its hotline, legal support and shelter for abused women.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

According to the specialists at the Yemeni Women's Union, the cause of most violence and abuse against women in Yemen is a lack of education or awareness, coupled with women's dependency and weakness.

"Self worth is very important and a pre-requisite to achieve women's contribution to the community. Women in our male-dominated culture are surrounded by an environment that demeans them. Which eventually leads to zero self worth and hence passiveness and sometimes dangerous pessimism," explains psychologist Dr. Dia Fadhil who is head of the National Program for Psychology at the Ministry of Health and director of the Health and Family Guidance Department at the Yemeni Women's Union.

Dr. Fadhil believes that economic empowerment works miracles for women. Not only does it make them believe in themselves, but also proves their worth to their family, especially to the men.

"It is not just education that would make the difference. Yes, it is important but I have come across so many cases where the women were holding high degrees and yet were desperate to be recognized and appreciated. It is about awareness, intellect and economic empowerment. When women started to earn money, it made a world of a difference to their lives," explained Fadhil.

Economic empowerment does miracles for women. Not only does it make them believe in themselves, but also proves their worth to their family, especially the men.

The "listeners"

The Wiam Family Home is refuge to an average of five women at a time. The number varies as it totally depends on the circumstances and access of the abused women to the shelter. The Yemeni Women's Union has posters and leaflets placed at public places, usually visited by women, inviting

them to visit the union's offices if they need help as well as giving them a number to call if they were in despair. The poster says: "Do you suffer from violence? Call this number."

The service is free and includes listening to the women's problems and providing them with social and legal assistance. It is advertised to the public through the union's branches in all governorates. It started in only five governorates with dense population as a part of the Legal Protection and Advocacy project, which started through funding from Oxfam in 2003. These five governorates include Aden, Hodeida, Taiz, Hadramout and Abyan.

In 2008, the Yemeni Women's Union partnered with UNFPA and expanded the services to three more governorates: Mahwit, Hajja and Ibb. In the same year, Al-Waleed Bin Talal Foundation funded legal protection services and training in the remaining governorates around the country.

Just a few months ago, an additional service was launched which is the hotline. Now women who cannot come to the union's centers can call and talk about their problems.

"This hotline service is unfortunately not yet available 24 hours and is not as much as we thought it would be. Nevertheless, it's a start,"

explains Najla Al-Lisani, the union's officer in charge of the legal protection project.

The sociologists who are responsible for handling the cases of abused women who come to the union are usually referred to as the listeners. "We are called listeners because our job is to listen to the distressed women first, and then provide consultation through this hotline service," laughs Shuhd Al-Bukari a 'listener' based in Hodeida.

She has been a listener at union's branch in Hodeida city since 2005. With a degree in psychology and experience as a sociologist in girls schools, Shuhd is able to comfort women and provide them with the advice they need.

"I have to be strong and separate my work from my personal life otherwise I will go into depression because of the sad stories I deal with. Sometimes I get three or four cases a day and I derive my strength to help those women from the happiness they get when their issues are resolved," she said.

But sometimes getting the right support is beyond the union's ability or her personal expertise. She remembers a case of a woman who came to her from Zabeed, which is out of the project's scope in Hodeida.

The woman was living in Saudi Arabia with her husband and came to Yemen, when her well-off father died, in order to claim her share of the inheritance. But her brother



The Yemeni Women's Union's Center provides courses in handicrafts, sewing, hair dressing and make up, English, computer applications and internet, and even literacy classes basic and advanced.



cut her off and not only did they deny her of her rightful share, they beat her, kidnapped her and threatened to kill her and her family. When she heard of the union's service she traveled from her village in Zabeed to Hodeida. However, Shuhd could not do much for her except drafting a legal request to be submitted in court on her behalf and giving her contacts of lawyers in Zabeed who could help her.

The social and legal assistance service started with the legal protection project in 2003. It started off slowly as the women were not sure whether to trust this service or not. The fact that the Yemeni Women's Union branches had been providing much appreciated community services for decades, helped.

Gradually the union expanded on the project and hired sociologists in every of the union's 21 branches. These women work until 3 or 4 in the afternoon and try to be available to callers as much as they can. In addition launching the hotline service recently, is expected to extend help to many more women.

There are some district offices as well, that help to reach women in the rural areas but the outreach is still not that much. In large governorates the listeners dedicate certain days and are positioned in the centers of the union's district offices in order to encourage local women to visit the office and avail the service. The specific days are announced through the posters and through the union's staff.

"The problem is that women take a long time to trust themselves and be empowered enough to speak up against any violence they are exposed to. Sometimes they don't recognize that they are abused until they talk to us. The Yemeni Women's Union works with the community to empower women not just through this project. And I feel we have come a long way," said Ramzia Al-Eryani director of the Yemeni Women's Union.

As the union's services became known through either the word of mouth or the posters, women started calling. There is no trend as such, and no studies have been carried out to judge whether calls are related to certain social or cultural events.

The cases documented by the union show that violence against women does not always come from the men as it could come from misinformed women, who raise their children to believe that women are inferior to men. The lack of affection and passionate expressions in the families, even between the husband and his wife in the bedroom, are causes of many of the domestic problems reported to the union and its branches across the country.

The listeners have a confidential form ready in hand to fill whenever they get a call. Documentation is yet to be made electronic, but still they have documented many of the cases they got.

The form includes information on the person/ agency reporting the abuse, their contacts. Then it includes the type of abuse and details on the abused woman and who did it and their relation to the violated woman. It also includes information whether this was

the first time and whether the authority has been notified, and if so what did they do.

The women come to the union, especially those who are able to get out of the house. When they report their story, the listener fills a form and then decides how the case should be followed through. Many times the cases are solved amicably through mediation especially since the union is respected in the community for the services it provides. This program is also supported with a group of volunteer psychiatrists and lawyers and even religious men who come to help when needed.

Sina Salem is a listener in the union's Mukalla branch. She has a sociology graduate and has been working with the project since 2004.

"The union's involvement gives

women strength and an edge over their oppressors. Even if the cases are solved amicably and do not reach the court, women are empowered and the oppressors who are usually the husbands or brothers come to the union and relent," she said. She has seen 20 cases between November and January and most of the cases were alimony demands of divorced women with children. "I have been working since 2004 and I have seen that there are more cases every year than the year before," she added.

If the case needs legal action, then one of the pro-bono lawyers takes it up and follows until there is a breakthrough in favor of the women. If the women require other kinds of help such as shelter or economic empowerment then they are referred to the YWU Empowerment

Center or Wiam Home, just like the girl from Hodeida.

Dry culture and lack of passion

Currently there are four girls in the shelter, all from Sana'a. They had come to the center directly. Some are referred through partner organizations such as Arrahama Foundation for Orphan Girls. Arrahama Foundation often receives cases which fall outside its specialization, which is helping unmarried female orphans below 17 years old.

We are called listeners because our job is to listen to the distressed women first, and then provide consultation through this hotline service.

4U

If you would like to know more about the hotline service call: Yemeni Women's Union Executive Office in Sana'a at: 01- 480489
If you would like to know more or support the women empowerment center or the shelter call: 01-403404



A poster advertises a hotline service in Mukalla: "Do you suffer from violence? Call 05/ 303170 we will help you for free."

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THE PREFERRED SOURCE

Alhuthely Corporation and TG Engineering Inc. launch new Engineering and Construction Company in Yemen



Mr. Hussein A. Alhuthely – The Man with Vision



Hussein Ahmed Alhuthely

We always try to convince foreign companies to invest in Yemen, as well as to display the real picture about Yemen that Yemen is a safe country.



Todd Wunderly

TG Engineering is excited to join forces and combine talents with Alhuthely Corporation in order to create a new venture, YemCan, a local company offering full Engineering, Procurement and Construction Services to the oil and gas industry in Yemen.

A new company offering EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) services to the Oil & Gas industry has been launched. This is a joint business venture between the renowned Yemeni petroleum services company Alhuthely and TG Engineering Inc which is a Canadian Engineering Inc. based in Calgary.

The Sana'a based new company, YemCan Engineering & Construction Ltd., aims to combine the unique strengths of its two mother companies in order to pursue existing and upcoming opportunities in the Yemeni oil and gas services market.

Alhuthely Corporation

Alhuthely Corporation offers oilfield services, products, and logistics in the Republic of Yemen and specializes in crude oil and hazardous material hauling.

Alhuthely's commitments are customer satisfaction and growth for both its staff and its business, while its utmost priority remains the safety of its staff and everyone involved in their projects.

Since 1981, Alhuthely has worked with oil companies and the government sector earning an excellent reputation and trust of customers. Alhuthely has at its disposal, all the necessary know-how required for successful business in the areas of logistics, transportation and procurement with the oilfield sector in Yemen. Alhuthely, with its increasing number of equipment and truck fleet, as well as its new engineering office in cooperation with TG Engineering of



Canada, is all geared towards growth. "We are working with high technology, and all our equipment and machines are equipped with modern systems. We always try to convince foreign companies to invest in Yemen and make it a point to give them a realistic and positive im-

YemCan is already actively exploring unique ventures and opportunities within the Yemen oil & gas sector. Details shall be forthcoming.

age of Yemen, as a safe country it really is," said Hussein Ahmed Alhuthely, Chairperson of Board of Directors of Alhuthely corporation.

According to Alhuthely, YemCan became operational in January 1, 2010.

"We ensure protection of the environment in our work as well as systems safety. We have an excellent reputation with the government, private sector, international partners and investors and this has helped us achieve the success of today," he added.

TG Engineering Inc.

TG Engineering Inc. is an International Engineering firm offering a full range of Engineering, Procurement and Construction Management (EPCM) services.

From project conception to completion, TG Engineering Inc. offers professional engineering services. It maintains effective and prompt client communication during all phases of the project. Its commitment and pride in the field of exper-



YemCan a unique business model

and the best equipment (reliable & new vehicles)," said Al-Absi.

"YemCan will provide engineering and construction services in Yemen. We are bringing more investment into the country as well as providing employment to the local people," explained Fred Di Tomaso, P. Eng. President.

Todd Wunderly, P. Eng General Manager of YemCan expressed his pleasure in evolving from providing engineering services into a group that provides engineering, construction and fabrication services. "We are excited about this opportunity and look forward to it," he said.

YemCan Engineering & Construction Ltd.'s (YemCan) product and service offerings shall include

(but not necessarily be limited to): Engineering, Procurement and Construction Management services (EPCM); Equipment and materials; Full EPC services

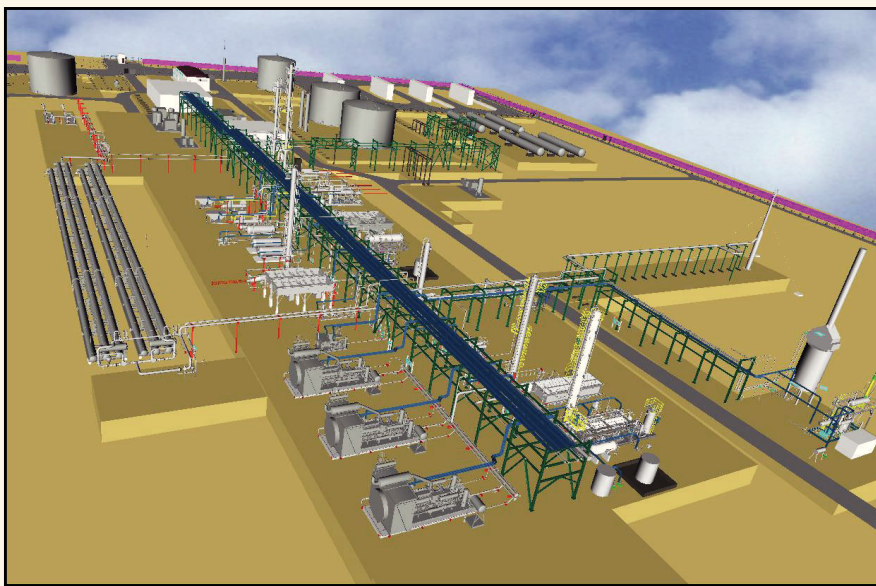
and Fabrication of Oil & Gas production and processing equipment.

YemCan will enjoy the unique attributes and assets of its two mother companies and capitalize on them to achieve results in providing, for the first time, Yemen based EPC services with the help of Canadian, international and local staff. This will save time, communication and cost paid by Oil & Gas companies operating in Yemen.

One of YemCan's strengths is that it has internationally recognized expertise in engineering design and project management of oil & gas production facilities, pipelines, and water treatment facilities.

YemCan is ready to take on the full range of EPC projects, whether it is a small field modification such as adding a new vessel or designing and building a new oil & gas facility.

Besides, YemCan has all necessary qualifications (technical, HSE, financial) which will prequalify it to bid on projects. It has the necessary expertise at the level of senior management in business development and in planning and preparing tender submissions in order to compete in all sizes of EPC

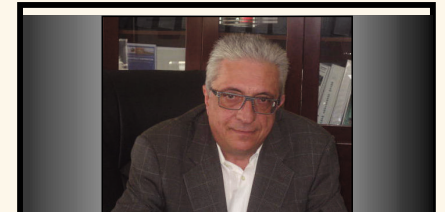


YemCan Engineering & Construction Ltd. has been established under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Yemen. YemCan Engineering & Construction Ltd. will focus exclusively on the Yemen market. Engineering & Fabrication of oilfield and process equipment and offering EPC services to the oil and gas

sector, will be the major concern of the YemCan.

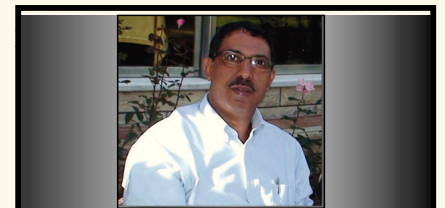
Mr. Salahadin S. Al-Absi, the vice president of Alhuthely Corporation says the most important benefit of the Canadian-Yemeni partnership is transfer of know-how including training future Yemen engineers to be able to meet the requirements of the Oil & Gas companies operating in Yemen.

"We believe our success stems from our well trained staff. We provide our staff with the best training to do the job,



Fred Di Tomaso

Our relationship with Alhuthely started more than five years ago and it has always been excellent. We decide that it is time to form joint business venture and hence we created YemCan.



Salahadin S. Al-Absi

Alhuthely Corporation will always contribute to the improvement of Oil & Gas services offered locally to meet the increasing demand for professional services and equipment based and made in Yemen.

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JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE CAPITAL (20)

The capital's villages: Almond blossom and dry river beds



By: Judith Spiegel
For the Yemen Times

Somewhere I heard or read that Sana'a is the fastest growing city in the world. Whether this is true or not I cannot say. What is undeniably true though, is that Sana'a grew in little more than 50 years from a small town that only consisted of the Old City into an ever expanding city, now nibbling at the feet of old villages and creating new ones. They are the outer limits of the city and are not often visited. I decided to go and see if there still is a village feel to them.

At the final stop of the dubab Tahrir-Hadda a brand new road turns to the right, to Bani Matar. Straight ahead is the road to Hadda village. An old woman is waiting in the light February rain. She is dressed in the traditional colourful dress of a village woman. On her head she carries a bundle of groceries wrapped

in a cloth. She is waiting for the dubab to her village, three kilometres up the road. Three kilometres of climbing, along a green valley, until there is no more asphalted road. The dubab stops at a small square surrounded by equally small shops. One side of the square is dominated by a huge school building. This is downtown Hadda village. This is where the dubab turns around for its trip downhill.

This is also where you can walk further uphill, to an old mosque (Turkish, according to a shop owner) and old houses, glued to the mountain. The path is slippery and there is a nice smell of wet earth. The houses are surrounded by blossoming almond trees. Sheltering from the rain under an iron roof, Abdelkadir and Saif are merrily chewing their qat. They are not from Hadda, they live and work in Sana'a. "But originally we are from Ibb and Taiz and here we find at least some greenery which reminds us of our hometowns".

In the distance, the top lights of the minarets of the Saleh-mosque reminds us of the big city down there. Which, despite the distinctive village feel Hadda still has, is closer than it ever was before. There are the usual signs such as the chips bag (Lay's, Chili taste) sitting on top of a heap of donkey dun. Or the satellite dishes on the rooftops of crumbling houses. Not to mention the enormous white SUV creeping down the hill from a new built house.

There are also the three middle-aged women on their way up to their house, coming from school. "This is the first time we go to school", they say, beaming with joy. For them, the city coming to the village is a good thing. "Also, the hospital is not far, which is good", they say. The shopkeeper on the square, born in Hadda, is less enthusiastic. He stares at the mountain ahead and moves his hand up and down like a snake. "Twenty or twenty five years ago there was water coming from that mountain. Nice and

fresh water. Now there is no longer any water coming down."

Most people of the village now work in Sana'a, "the capital", the shopkeeper explains. "They work as soldiers, dubab drivers or engineers". But, he continues, "people who are originally from the village still feel from Hadda, not Sana'a. And the weather in Hadda is much nicer than in Sana'a." He points into the air, showing the nice weather. It is pouring with rain. The sloshing sounds of wet tyres announce the arrival of the dubabs from the city. Soon, they will turn around the corner, carrying people who have finished work, returning to their village.

In Noqom people do not call themselves Noqomi, nor is Sana'a a remote capital. Where Hadda is still easily recognizable as a village, this is much harder for Noqom, at the east side of Sana'a. The dubab for Noqom has its starting point near the Thawra hospital. Amira climbs in the dubab. She is on her way home from her work as a nurse at the hospital. "No, Noqom is no longer the country side, it used to be, but the city is there now", she says.

The dubab passes by the big cattle market of Noqom before it climbs towards Berlin Street. From Berlin Garden – a playground – narrow streets meander uphill. Apart from one or two old houses, Old City style rather than village style, most of this area seems new. There is no village vibe here. The two enormous buildings of the Mövenpick-hotel and of the Ministry of Public Works and Highways do not help either. They tower over the narrow streets as if they may start swallowing the neighbourhood any minute.

Continuing uphill, past the ministry building toward Noqom mountain, and after a small hill, there is a surprise. Not only there is a huge dusty football pit, there is also a view on a new built neighbourhood, which nestles between the hills like a village. There is a dry river running through it. Now littered with plastic bags, but after some good rainfall Amira – who turned out to be an excellent Noqom guide – says it is filled with

water.

Stumbling down the steep narrow streets of Noqom, women in village dresses appear on rooftops. It smells like cow dung and smoke here. The roads were paved in 2000 and here and there a tired looking tree is leaning against a house. There are hardly any cars and laundry is drying everywhere. The city seems to have created a new village

here. For the time being, that is.

For most probably Noqom, and according to many Sanani's also Hadda, will one day be taken over by the city's expansion. The city will creep further up and over the hills. New village type neighbourhoods will sprout, and disappear. Why? Because new people will keep coming to the city. Where they come from? Often from villages.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position at the UNDP Office:

Post Title: Procurement/Travel Associate

Pre-classified Grade: GS6

Duration: one year renewable

Duty Station: Sana'a

Responsibilities:

- Full compliance of procurement activities with UN/UNDP rules, regulations, policies and strategies
- Country Office Procurement business processes mapping and elaboration of the content of internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in Procurement and Logistics in consultation with the direct supervisor and office management.
- Compliance of travel activities with UN/UNDP rules, regulations, policies and strategies
- Preparation of Purchase Orders (PO) and contracts, preparation of Recurring Purchase orders for contracting of services.
- Implementation of the internal control system which ensures that Purchase orders are duly prepared and dispatched. Timely corrective actions on Purchase Orders with budget check errors and other problems.
- Preparation of cost-recovery bills for the procurement services provided by UNDP to other Agencies.
- Conduct semi-annual PO closure exercise
- Development and update of the rosters of suppliers, implementation of supplier selection and evaluation.
- Organization of travel including purchase of tickets, Daily Subsistence Allowance(DSA) calculation
- Conduct DSA, Travel Agencies, hotel facilities surveys.
- Prepare letters to various government offices requesting visa, resident permits, etc.
- Receive bills from the travel agent and sort them out before submitting them to finance for payment.
- Organization of trainings for the operations/ projects staff on Procurement.
- Synthesis of lessons learnt and best practices in Procurement.
- Sound contributions to knowledge networks and communities of practice

Qualification:

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Words of Wisdom



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

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

Tough battle in Yemen aid

By: The Advocate and WBRZ News 2 Louisiana

When they run out of oil in Yemen, really run out, what are the United States' chances of reining in terrorist activity there? Probably not great.

Even if, as President Barack Obama has promised, America doubles its aid to one of the poorest of the Arab countries, and one that is riddled with al-Qaida activists and sympathizers.

The small country at one corner of the Arabian peninsula has farms, which are consuming its scarce ground water, but virtually all government revenue comes from oil. Industry analysts predict production could fall to zero by 2017, according to Richard Fontaine and Andrew Exum of the Center for a New American Security.

Fontaine was with a U.S. Senate delegation that visited Yemen in August. The two, writing in The Los Angeles Times, outlined the depressing prospects for the country. "The government has done little to plan for its post-oil future," they said. The population is exploding, and "an incredible 45 percent of Yemen's population is under the age of 15. These trends will exacerbate large and growing

environmental problems, including the exhaustion of Yemen's groundwater resources."

While Islamic extremism is not purely an economic phenomenon, there is no question that Yemen could be a breeding ground for disaffected youths willing to blow up themselves and others. The Nigerian bomber who attempted to blow up a U.S. airliner on Christmas Day is said to have trained with Yemeni backers of al-Qaida.

What good will American aid do? Surprisingly enough, Fontaine and Exum suggest that if targeted toward not only anti-terrorism work but basic governance and a government drive against corruption, there's reason to believe U.S. aid could make a difference.

"The goal of U.S. foreign policy toward Yemen should be for the country to emerge as a stable, functioning state, one that presents no sanctuary for transnational terrorist groups," Fontaine and Exum said. "U.S. policy alone can't bring this about. It can, however, attempt to mitigate the worst of the coming challenges that will plague Yemen."

To avoid a failed state that is a base for al-Qaida terrorism is apparently going to bring Americans into more contact than they ever expected with an end-of-the-alphabet country.

COMMON SENSE

Mr. Al-Baradei returns home:

A chance for a real new Arab renaissance?



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

The recent return of Dr. Mohammed Al-Baradei after having served the international community faithfully and professionally for over twenty years marks an important moment, not just for the Arab Republic of Egypt, but for the entire Arab World. This return was greeted rather unwarily to say the least by officialdom in Cairo and certainly the Egyptian official media considered the hopeful welcome accorded by the independent press and some partisan circles to Mr. Baradei as near treason. It is not so clear why the Egyptian people should entertain a fear or even caution of the return of a man who has been honored by the international community by a Nobel Peace Prize. Mr. Baradei was a man who stressed that any military action by the international community against any nation of this planet should be based on factual and demonstrated proof of the danger that such a nation poses to world peace. We have seen how the minds of entire citizenries can be coaxed into believing that the actions of political leaderships can be misleadingly outside the context of a sincere application of the Social Contract. In fact there is enough evidence to suggest that such actions can sometimes be based on service to evil and an accommodation to narrow interests.

We have seen in the first decade of this Century that when narrow interests defined policies of nations, the consequences are deadly and costly, leaving a myriad of social and economic ills that are sometimes irreparable. We were told, for example, that the "removal of Saddam Hussein" provides sufficient justification for a war that has yet to see the finale of its ongoing devastation. However that was not the initial declared rationale provided by the promoters of one of the most costly military and legally dubious military coups in human history. This also does not take into consideration that the intended effort meant the elimination of a heretofore non-existent threat of terror, which was not backed by any substantive evidence to speak of from any legal or moral standpoint. Mr. Al-Baradei clearly understood this in his former highly sensitive position as head of the International Atomic Energy Agency of the United Nations and sought to try to diffuse the flames of war, even when the world found difficulty in rejecting the deliberate efforts to mix a seemingly genuine anti-terrorism global effort with latent devious intentions and a more obvious disruption of world peace.

But Mr. Al-Baradei stands for more than just the propagation of world peace throughout the world. This observer could not fail to remember that about a year or so ago, Mohammed Al-Baradei was in front of the official TV cameras of the Egyptian television network (there are still no independent Television radio or television channels to this day in Egypt or in the overwhelming majority of Arab states). Obviously, this interview was only permitted because the man had not then declared himself a candidate for the Presidency of Egypt in the upcoming very long overdue Presidential Elections of Egypt. Yet the significance of the interview could not be easily ignored and the hour or so chat with the internationally renowned public servant of the world told the audience that the man had more insight and more concern for the pathetic plight of not only the Egyptian people, but of the entire Arab World. This sad plight can be seen for obvious reasons, manifested by the failure of the political leaderships in the Arab countries to deliver their part of the bargain of the Social Contract. He mostly talked about the awesome failure of the Arab governments in taking advantage of the vast resources of the Arab World to upgrade the cultural and educational standards of the Nation to keep pace with a rapidly changing world that has no room or even respect for the educational and cultural retardation. Surely, such observation is obviated by the pathetic standing of the Arab World and its helplessness to confront the highly systematic and humiliatingly sophisticated hostility being unleashed by Israel against not only the Arab people of Palestine, but as can be seen now, against the entire Moslem World. Surely, the time has come for the Arab World to instigate tangible changes in its political and social frameworks that are more favorable to producing a more effective synergy of their vast resources and capabilities. What Mr. Al-Baradei conveyed in that enlightening interview was that he had a vision of where the Arab World should be and had a clear perception of what ills need to be overcome to realize such a vision. Mr. Baradei knew well that the Arab people; are sick and tired of exhaustive political and national rhetoric that serves only to inflate the pockets of the penholders and mouths that bellow all that empty rhetoric, which the Arabs have been hearing for the last fifty years. For this alone, I can vouch that Mr. Baradei will launch a highly warranted movement for most enlightened Arabs to start leading their people for a peaceful transformation of their political and social fabric. The Arab World must find a way of relinquishing the existent dead meat that has characterized our political frameworks and the establishment of more vibrant and interactive body politics that understand what the true aspirations of its constituencies are and how to go about realizing them.

Needless to say, the political establishments of the Arab World must recognize that they cannot regard public coffers as a free for all to rob and steal while they are protected by a political cover provided by the failing regimes that continue to hold the reigns of authority in the Arab World. The observer anticipates that the people of Egypt will indeed lead the way to this refreshing Arab renaissance. For this alone then we should welcome Mr. Al-Baradei home if he launches this momentary and called for true revolution in Arab political thinking.

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>



OUR OPINION

Using the women card in political bargains

There is no legitimate reason whatsoever that stops the parliament from passing a law to define a minimum age for marriage. The ruling party's General Peoples Congress's block forms the majority constituting more than 79 percent of the total members and can pass any law it wants, provided there is a political will.

Even those members of the opposition in minority who base their objection on religious grounds are actually trying to be even more royal than the king, so to speak, because even the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is supposedly the most religiously conservative country in the Islamic world, is passing a law for 18 years as the minimum age for marriage.

So what are we talking about here in Yemen? Reading between the lines, apparently early marriage is one of the several bargaining cards President Saleh is using to achieve his personal political interests. Saleh is the most influential man in Yemen, and it is he who has created it this way so that whatever he says goes regardless of any laws, institutions or administrative structures.

"I am the law," he has declared more than once to his opponents. If he is so powerful, why can't he pass this law exactly the way he has passed many other laws, such as those concerning oil revenues, budgets and so on from among the endless list of laws and deals that doom the country to disaster?

As for those religious fanatics who oppose any initiative that would empower women, they will eventually wake up and realize that they are alone. Not only will they be regarded as behind their time, but they are also oppressors and sadists who enjoy and dictate women's suffering in the name of Islam.

Why is it that, when it comes to qat, cigarettes, bribes, corruption, they are fine? Why haven't I seen them launch a campaign to fight the injustice taking place in prisons? Why is it that, when it only comes to women they take a stand, promptly, and are ready to attack? Is everything in Yemen so perfect and "halal" (religiously right)? Are only women the cause of all evil and religious misbehavior?

When will our political leadership acknowledge the existence of women in the country and not just that of the men? And more importantly, when will they realize that women have rights and that they do not exist solely to entertain men?

Women's day is coming soon, so let's see how that is celebrated and what hollow speeches our leaders give praising how far Yemeni women have come.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Yemen and the Houthi game

By: Abdul Rahman al-Rashed

Oversimplification in dealing with the Houthi problem is what led to this becoming a larger Yemeni crisis that now threatens the ruling regime. Whether the Houthi rebels number in the hundreds or the tens of thousands - estimates are uncertain - they are capable of doubling the numbers of their supporters if they win important victories on the ground.

There are a series of questions that we cannot ignore, for example why do the Americans repeat their denials of the existence of a relationship between Tehran and the Houthis?

Is there a threat to Sanaa from the southern Yemeni [political] star [and former Vice President] Ali Salim al-Beidh, who is calling strongly for the division of the country?

Everybody can see that the U.S. is putting a spin on the Houthi rebels, and one phrase is being repeated on the lips of every U.S. official when this question is asked and that is "we have no evidence of Iran having any ties to the Houthi operations in Yemen" and sometimes they go further than this and say "the insurgency is an internal Yemeni problem." In reality, if there is one side that knows of the Houthi [to Iran] it is the United States, and this is by virtue of its specialization in monitoring Iranian activity and the magnitude of their capabilities in the region. This either means that Washington believes that the Sanaa government is lying by sticking to their accusations that Iran is involved in order to incite western public opinion against the Houthis, or that Washington itself is lying and is truly ware of the depths of the Iranian involvement [with the Houthis] but does not wish to expand the scope of its conflict [with Iran]. I am inclined to believe the second interpretation because the relationship of the Houthi leadership with the Iranian regime is confirmed by accurate information, and this relationship is more than 10 years old.

If we assume that Washington knows [the truth] then why are they covering up for the Houthis?

In my opinion, the Americans are pursuing two policies; a silent policy to provide important logistical support and information to the Yemeni army against the Houthis, and a public policy to reject the accusations against the Houthis, avoiding openly supporting the [Yemeni] regime. This is a different tactic from the usual U.S. policies when supporting its allies.

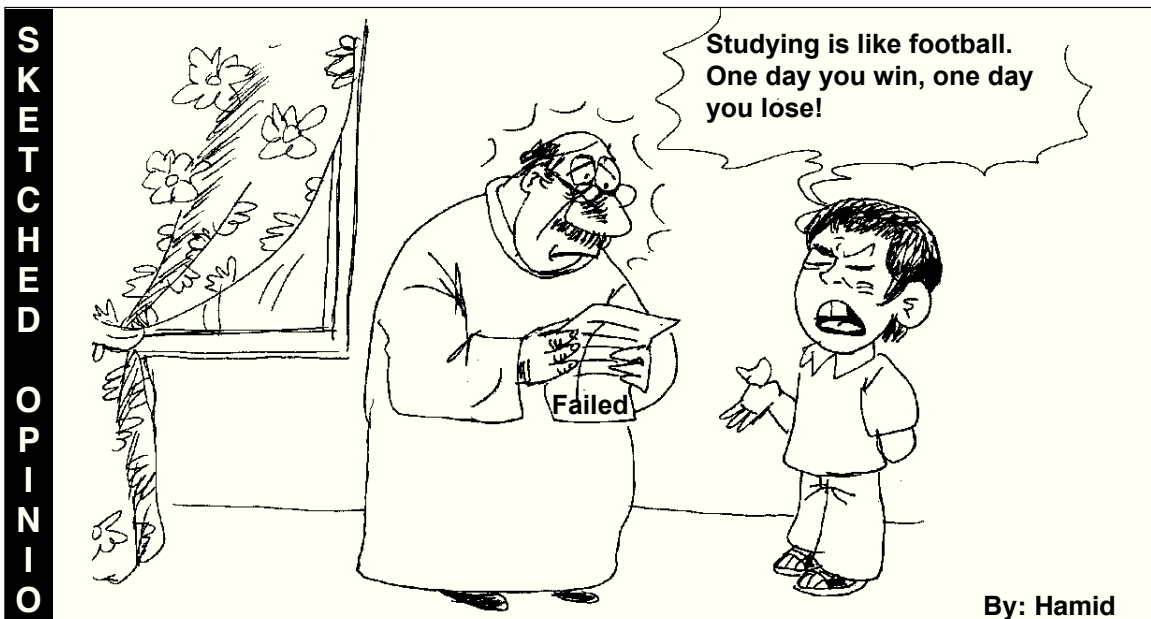
Perhaps the U.S. is being the most intelligent this time by maintaining - even faintly - their relationship with the Houthis, and thereby not pushing the rebels to ally with al-

Qaeda. However this relationship, however faint, will collapse because the rebels - by the nature of their ideological beliefs - are most likely to become involved in anti-American operations, and evidence of ties with al-Qaada and Iran will also appear in the future, and so Washington will not be able to remain silent on this issue [in the long-term]. When this happens this will be good news for Sanaa, as the Yemeni regime wants to incite the world against the Houthi rebels.

We cannot put an end to this talk about an existing problem even if it is not [publicly] acknowledged by the two allies, Washington and Sanaa. The Yemeni regime has been accused of exploiting crises for internal purposes, and was accused of turning a blind eye to the presence of al-Qaada on its territory, forcing US troops to carry out [military] operations on Yemeni soil themselves. President Ali Saleh is accused of inciting the Yemeni public to criticize the Americans, and occasionally even maneuver against them. He is also accused - despite his conditional support of them - of abandoning his pledges for economic and political reform.

Today the opponents of the [Yemeni] regime have increased and they have allied against the President despite the fact that they have nothing in common with each other except for their desire to weaken or even cause the collapse of the regime. From here, the profile of Ali Salem al-Beidh has appeared to plague the regime. It is true that he has taken advantage of the chaotic state of affairs [in Yemen] in order to impose his presence, but the blame for this falls upon Sanaa who made no attempt to contain him when the President decided on reconciling and absorbing the southern [separatist] leaders who lost the war, for if al-Beidh had returned [from exile] at that time there would be no threat to the Yemeni regime. Today the situation has become complex and this requires re-opening the door to those [separatists] in the south that remain to return and participate [in politics] for this is the least damaging of the available option. President Saleh launched a new reconciliation initiative in parliament, but this does not include any courageous concessions that may result in the required momentum. I do not want to exaggerate the situation by saying that the regime in Sanaa is under siege, but it is facing serious challenges by three rebel military fronts, and opposition activity from abroad, as well as the US backing away from supporting the regime, and regional considerations that are greater than the considerations of Sanaa.

*Published in the London-based ASHARQ ALAWSAT on Dec. 22, 2009.



By: Hamid

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LUFTHANSA WELCOMES NEW GENERAL MANAGER TO YEMEN






On Thursday, Lufthansa employees gathered around the Sheraton swimming pool to bid farewell to Patrick Bong-Hedley, former General Manager of Lufthansa in Yemen, and to welcome his successor Frank Langsdorf to the post. The event was attended by diplomats from the German, Dutch and British embassies in Yemen, as well as clients and Lufthansa Regional Director Klaus Fussi

"In 2006, his star rose over Sana'a," said Fussi of Bong-Hedley. "I would like to thank him for his efforts, for his achievements here in Sana'a."

During Bong-Hedley's time in Sana'a, the number of Lufthansa flights via Sana'a was increased to four a week. Flights to Europe will now transit via Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

"We have, for the first time, Lufthansa flights flying four times a week through Yemen," said Bong-Hedley thanking the crowd. "It was very hard work but we managed thanks to you, our customers, our travel agents, also our general sales agents ... thank you very much."

Langsdorf, who has been working for Lufthansa since 1970 and has extensive experience working in Africa and Eastern Europe, notably Byelorussia, introduced himself to the crowd.

"It will be my last posting," he said. "I would like to thank Patrick for all that he has done in the last years. It makes it easy for me, but somehow not easy because he is leaving big footprints here. I will try to continue in the same way as he did."

Amin Dirhem, Lufthansa agent in Yemen, bid farewell to Bong-Hedley who has been posted to Cyprus: "When I go to Germany, I will pass through Cyprus because I have a friend in Cyprus," he said.

He also welcomed Langsdorf to Yemen: "We are here to help you... Consider us as friends and brothers," he said.

"Mr. Fussi we were under your supervision in Cairo," he said. "Now the news came that it will be in Riyadh. We don't know anybody in Riyadh and we hope that they are nice like you. Nobody can be better than you."

"Lufthansa first starting operating in Yemen in 1986, first through Amman, then Cairo, and then it changed to Addis ... Now it will be through Jeddah," he continued. "Jeddah will be good for everybody -for you, for us- because it is only one and half hour to Jeddah, and then you can sleep from Jeddah right the way to Frankfurt."

"Next year, we will celebrate our 25 years of operation in Yemen," he said.

At the end of the ceremony, Dirhem presented Bong-Hedley, Fussi and Langsdorf with a gift from Yemen.



Lufthansa

Yemeni-Americans in the spotlight

Media coverage of the Fort Hood killings and the Christmas day plane attack has thrown unsuspecting Yemeni-Americans into the spotlight. They have been approached by neighbours and colleagues eager to know more about Yemen, a country described in the media as a training ground for terrorists. Naji Gazali wrote to the Yemen Times about reactions in the Yemeni-American community.

do have a serious problem with corruption and even the ordinary citizens see that. Yemen needs vocational training, hospitals, water, food and gas. When the population doesn't have that, that's when dissident elements can come in and brainwash the youth, using religion as their reward."

"The security of Yemen is closely tied to the security of the Gulf states and the security of the Gulf states is the security of the entire world," he concluded. Mohamed Saleh, a Yemeni-American who has served in the American army, said, "I speak the language. I have four kids and an American wife

who I've been married to for 41 years. I think once you know the culture and the country, nobody is going to pick on you." Farouk Abdulmutaleb was allegedly trained in Yemen. The media has reported that he lived in Britain longer than in Yemen and yet why is Yemen

- not Britain - slapped with this degrading label? Recent events have shown that Yemenis' love for their native country is irrefutable and that, even though they may be living away from their homeland, they are still offended when it is defamed or attacked by anyone.



Yemeni-Americans have been swift to condemn the actions of a few, says Gazali.



Over 100,000 Yemenis live in the US, according to the Yemeni Embassy in the US, of which approximately 35,000 to 40,000 live in the state of Michigan.

By trying to detonate explosives on a Detroit-bound plane on Christmas day, alleged terrorist Farouk Abdulmutaleb has shone an unwelcome spotlight on the Yemeni-American community in Detroit and its suburbs.

While Yemenis love to see their name mentioned in local or international news, they would readily pass up on any recognition tainted with terrorism.

The community's response was swift in condemning such action. Large demonstrations of Yemenis and other Arab-Americans took to the streets in front of the federal court in Detroit, Michigan, where the infamous Farouk Abdulmutaleb was tried.

Local media coverage of the event has helped lessen incidents of any backlash, intimidation, or harassment of Yemenis here in Detroit to a great extent. But the debate is ongoing, and Yemenis continue to be singled out at school, in the workplace, or at home. The question is this: Is it true that Yemen is becoming a training ground for terrorists?

Yemeni-American Sheikh Anwar Al-Awlaki has become a target for the US, the Yemeni government, and the media both here and abroad. Does this man really support what Major Nidal Hassan did in Texas and did he really support Abdulmutaleb? Most importantly, did he encourage or was he in any way involved in these two terrorist attacks?

Yemenis here desperately want to know if he is complicit in the failed Christmas plot in Detroit or the attack on military personnel in Texas. Second and third-generation Yemenis, as well as the many Muslims who have enjoyed Al-Awlaki's Day of Judgement series of the life of the Prophet together with his sermons about loving others and appreciating the diversity of human

race, cannot imagine that such allegations against the cleric are true.

His silence and the fact that he seems not to be defending himself against these allegations, will have drastically tainted his reputation and proven his guilt without any proper defence on his behalf.

Many Yemenis here in Detroit are involved and believe that we must better convey who we are to the larger American community, when asked about Yemen becoming a Mecca for terrorists.

Rasheed Al-Nazeli wrote in Al-Yemeni Al-Amriki, a newspaper published here in Detroit, that he responded to his neighbour Jimmy as follows, "I mentioned to Jimmy that the war on Iraq was a major mistake which led to the flourishing of a radical ideology. Nevertheless, there are fundamentalists in every religion, though the situation in Yemen is different due to the country's economic status, high unemployment and geography. This can make it fertile ground in which these radical organization can grow, not to mention the Shi'ite fundamentalists' involvement in the fight."

Moad Taleb of Dearborn, a suburb which has the highest concentration of Yemenis (roughly 10,000 to 15,000) said regarding this issue, when interviewed last week by the Detroit News, "Yes, there are bad people, but that's true in every culture, every community and every region."

Wali Al-Tahif was amongst those interviewed by the Detroit News who linked Yemen's security with the rest of the world and depicted corruption as one of the barriers that affect the livelihood of Yemenis back home.

"You don't want to be sending USD 50 million in aid, that Yemenis won't ever see in their daily life," he said. "We



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Sabafon celebrates on the occasion of handing over the Inbound Roaming award



Reported by: Bakr Al-Junaid

Sabafon, Yemeni Mobile Phones Company celebrated the handing over of the Inbound Roaming prize that was launched in the middle of 2009 for the visitors coming to Yemen.

The celebration was attended by the General Director of Sales & Marketing, Pierre Imad, and the General Director of the Financial Department, Shareef Riyadh and the Primary Director of the Auditing Department, Mohammad Al-Obitery. The Saudi Telecom, STC's, General Director of Interconnection, Dawood Al-Khatheri also attended the celebration in addition to many journalists and media people.

The Inbound Roaming prize for 2009 which is a luxuries House in Aden was given to Dhafer Bin Mohammad Al-Karni who has Inbound roaming and used sabafon network.

The prize was given to him by Pierre Imad, Riyadh Shareef, Rania Al-Qubati, the Manager of the Inbound Roaming Department, Fahd Al-Ariqi, the General Director of the Technical Information and Muhammad Al-Ahdal, the Manager of the Communication.

Sabafon congratulated the winner and said that it has many other agreements on the Inbound Roaming services for all its subscribers from all around the world in which they will be automatically involved in the draw for the Inbound Roaming.

Pierre Imad said that the Inbound Roaming service enables the subscribers to use the line while on plane or on ship that they can either call or send messages. They can also use the net and the outlook wherever they are.

The winner Dhafer Bin Mohammad Al-Karni said expressed his grateful feelings regarding the credibility Sabafon shown to its customers.

In the end of the celebration Pierre Imad said that there are many other surprises by SabaFon. "There are a lot more to be presented by SabaFon. We intend to surprise our customers and to make them feel satisfied. We will never ever stop our achievements and we will try our best to meet the needs of society." Imad concluded.



Dr. Sultan Al-Qubati to the Yemen Times:

“The health situation in the IDP camps is an impending disaster”

Dr. Sultan Al-Qubati is a Yemeni histopathologist who has spent over a decade of his professional life working with the Al-Salam Hospital in Sa'ada. As well as witnessing the various stages of the war, he also has come to know the people of Sa'ada closely and the many foreigners who have come and gone across the years. Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Dr. Al-Qubati on his work and his impressions on both health and political matters.

After receiving his MD in General Medicine and Surgery from Iraq, Dr. Sultan Al-Qubati lived in Prague, where he specialized in histopathology. Then he completed his PhD in histopathology from Vienna in 1997.

After his PhD, he came back to Yemen and worked in Sa'ada from 1998 until 2010, at the Al-Salam Hospital. He now teaches in Dhamar University's medical college and has had a private laboratory in Sana'a since 2002.

Sa'ada is similar to any rural town in Yemen. Yet in a way it is not. Many of the rural areas are systematically disadvantaged as compared to the main cities which usually enjoy a better infrastructure and development projects. Sa'ada is no exception although it is one of the richest agriculturally productive governorates of Yemen when it comes to fruits such as oranges, pomegranates, grapes, apples or vegetables such as tomatoes and cucumbers.

One of the main reasons why Dr. Al-Qubati thinks Sa'ada has remained such a poor governorate is that there has been very little investment in the infrastructure especially when it comes to the storing and marketing of these agriculture products.

“The farmers do not have experience in transporting perishable goods, such as tomatoes for example, for long distances and delivering them intact. A large percentage of their products get wasted due to these complications. If just this was taken care of, the situation would improve significantly for middle class farmers,” he explained.

Many of the very rich farmers who own a lot of land are not affected in the same way. In addition, there are other farmers whose main income comes from other trades and so the farming business is only there for social reasons.

Al-Salam Hospital

The governorate lies next to Saudi Arabia in the north and Yemenis from Sa'ada continually cross the border to sell their produce to Saudis. As a result,

the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has contributed to supporting Yemenis through various projects, not only in Sa'ada but around the republic.

In Sa'ada, the KSA had funded the establishment of schools as well as other development projects. The Al-Salam health clinic was one of these projects, although it has remained inactive since it was opened in 1982 and since then has been funded by the Saudis.

According to what Dr. Al-Qubati has heard from local people, a group of Yemeni sheikhs from Sa'ada, during their trip to Saudi Arabia, visited Prince Sultan bin Abdul-Aziz and complained that the Saudi funded project never came to fruition. Motivated by their argument, the prince ordered not only the activation of the clinic but decided to turn it into a fully fledged hospital, which was eventually launched in 1982 and since then has been funded by the Saudis.

The hospital was furnished with modern medical equipment and Dr. Al-Qubati used this apparatus in his laboratory.

The staff in the Al-Salam hospital included Yemenis from outside Sa'ada, as well as Egyptians, Filipinos and Indian nurses. Many of the assistant nurses, however, were from the Sa'ada governorate. They were trained over the years through various capacity building programs and integrated slowly into the local health system.

In 1982, when the hospital started operating, it covered the needs of the surrounding community. The population did not exceed 120,000 back then but just before the recent war broke out, an estimate of 800,000 inhabitants made use of the hospital's services.

This is an 85 percent increase in demand but there was no increase in the hospital budget to accommodate it.

Situation in Sa'ada then and now

“Before the wars, especially the last one, the people of Sa'ada had got used to the irregularity of services. For example the power was always disconnected for four hours every day. But during this last war things became much worse. When it came to electricity for instance, the power was only



Dr. Sultan Al-Qubati

available for two hours a day,” explained Al-Qubati.

However, throughout the 11 years that Dr. Al-Qubati worked in Sa'ada since 1998, his impression of the people of Sa'ada is that they are peaceful, friendly and not at all aggressive.

“Foreigners have felt safe in Sa'ada for decades. Some western doctors and nurses have lived there for over 25 years. The Jumhuri Hospital was even called ‘Waleed’s hospital’ in reference to a European ophthalmologist who had long worked there and even adopted an Arabic name. In fact I met him more than once and he spoke fluent Arabic with a Sa'adi accent. Unfortunately, like many other foreigners, he had to leave the country when the work broke out especially seeing that the Jumhuri hospital was located right in the center of the recent war’s zone,” explained Al-Qubati.

Despite the rumors that many of those foreign volunteers were in Sa'ada for missionary work, Dr. Al-Qubati says the rumors were exaggerated. “Yes, they prayed and they sometimes referred to Jesus as their God. For some Yemenis that was a sign of missionary work. But nevertheless, their first priority was to help the local community whether through humanitarian aid or medical services,” he said.

The war, especially this last one, has affected the people of Sa'ada greatly. To start with, it has extended into the city center as compared to previous ones, which were conducted only on the outskirts of Sa'ada. The blocking of roads to and from the city has made it impossible for farmers to sell their products. A time came when, for example, tomatoes were given away almost free because they were grown in abundance and there wasn't anywhere to sell them.

“The war has made people poor, who were previously living a decent life. It has made the poor poorer, but ironically, there are a few who became rich overnight,” he said.

War casualties

During the war between the state and the Houthis, the Al-Salam hospital received many wounded soldiers, innocent citizens and some Houthi followers. To the doctors it did not matter who the wounded were; their responsibility was to treat them regardless.

On some occasions, even the staff of the hospital feared for their lives. “I was afraid that I would be wounded by mistake. We, as health practitioners, felt relatively safe as it was in everyone's best interest that we stayed alive and remained capable of functioning,” he explained.

Although as a person who works in a laboratory, Dr. Qubati did not have to deal directly with the patients, but he did see many wounded men. He ex-

plained that only those who were still alive were brought to the hospital because there was no point bringing the dead. Hence they had no clear idea of actual war casualties.

But Al-Qubati realizes that the health damage immediately caused by the war is nothing compared to the potential risks for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in camps.

“The health situation of the IDP camps is an impending disaster and we are yet to see the true health damage resulting from this war. There is a sanitation problem, a shortage in health facilities and medicines, and an increasing number of IDPs appearing on a daily basis,” he warned.

He was especially concerned with diarrhea among the children. While he was working in the hospital in 2009 and 2010, they received many cases of infants with diarrhea, meningitis or gastroenteritis and because of the shortage of beds, they would have to put three or four infants in the same bed. Inevitably, the risk of catching these contagious diseases grew higher.

Dr. Al-Qubati is glad that the war is over. It will allow for the governorate and its people to put themselves back together. He feels that the use of force was a huge mistake and believes the state should have used logic and not an army to deal with the rebellion in Sa'ada.

In his experience, Dr. Al-Qubati did not feel that faith based segregation in Sa'ada existed. He had met many of the Zaidi Shiite of Sa'ada and wasn't aware that they manifested extreme thoughts or behavior.

“The only times we felt there was more than one sect was during some Friday sermons, when the Imams of different mosques would send critical messages about each other through their sermons,” he said.

Sa'ada town today is very different from what Al-Qubati remembers eleven years ago. Today the streets are deserted and the lively markets have turned to empty streets.

“The people of Sa'ada are kind. They adjust well with foreigners, who have been around for many years. When the Germans, British and Koreans were kidnapped, the locals were very upset because they knew and loved them. They had socialized with them and been to their homes,” commented Al-Qubati about the kidnapping and murder of the hostages in Sa'ada last year.

If the reason behind the Sa'ada war is the Houthi Zaidi sect, then Dhamar and other places are time bombs too, as many of this same sect are living there.

“But does this mean we have to have yet another war in those places? I don't think so. The state should take more care of its citizens and not discriminate on any religious or geographical basis.”

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.



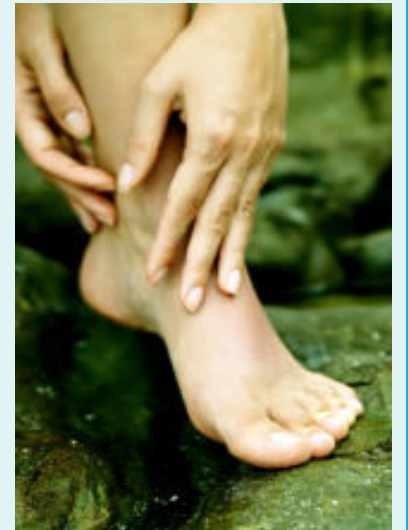
Ow! My aching feet

Take care of your feet, and they'll take care of you

—Maggie Spilner

Mona had disturbed sleep and was lazing on the bed. It was still dark outside and she looked at the wall clock. It was already time for her morning prayer. However, she didn't feel like getting up. The act of getting up in the morning simply put her off. Placing the feet on the ground each morning was an ordeal for almost three months. She has a nagging pain in her feet which get aggravated as soon as her feet touched the ground. The pain is especially bad over the heel. She has to hobble around for sometime before the pain becomes bearable. It takes about half an hour for her to walk normally.

Mona is not alone. Many men and women develop aching feet as they grow older. In fact, more women seek medical help for aching feet than men. Women's unforgiving footwear fashions may contribute quite a bit to painful feet.



The foundation for the body

Leonardo da Vinci once remarked, “The foot is the work of art, a marvel of engineering”. With 28 bones and 35 joints it is a wonderful construction. Many muscles, ligaments and tendons surround the bones of the foot. Ligaments are strong connective tissues that join bones. Muscles help the foot move and provide padding, especially along the sole of the foot. Many of the foot muscles are in four layers along the sole of the foot. Tendons are cord like tissue similar to ligaments. They connect muscles to bones and bring forth movement of the joints.

The feet are like the roots of a tree; if the roots are weak, the tree is weak. Unfortunately, most of us don't give any attention to our feet. Indeed, we think of them only when they hurt.

The feet are often abused and neglected. From the day we were children, they support our weight; they anchor the entire body to the ground; they get crammed into high heeled shoes; they take a pounding when we walk, dance, play sports, stand and slog all day long. They get hot, itchy and smelly. It's no wonder that many of us have a foot problem. Needless to say, the feet deserve all the care and attention that we can lavish on them in order to enjoy a lifetime of painless locomotion.

Causes of foot pain (metatarsalgia)

Pain can affect any part of the foot, including the ankle, heel, sole, arch and toes. The cause of foot pain can be a local one or a result of another disease. For example, diabetes can result in damaged, painful feet. Gout can present as swelling and inflammation of the big toe.

Metatarsalgia is pain in the ball of the foot, which may be caused by bunions, hammertoes, poorly fitting shoes or high-impact athletics such as running.

Ill-fitting shoes are the prime causes of painful feet. They can result in a callus which is an area of hard skin that forms on the foot from excess pressure. Similarly, a corn is an area of hard skin that forms on the toes. A bunion occurs when compression forces the big toe joint to enlarge and turns the big toe toward the other toes. A painful, reddened area forms near the joint. Bunions can be caused by tight or high-heeled shoes that compress the toes. Flat feet may contribute to bunions. Hammertoe occurs when compression forces the lesser toes to bend over in a claw shape, shortening their tendons. They are usually caused by shoes that compress the toes. Conditions that affect the muscles and nerves, such as diabetes and arthritis, may contribute to the development of hammertoe.

Plantar warts

Warts result due to growth of virus on the sole (plantar surface) of the foot. Unlike a wart on a finger which will grow outward, plantar warts grow normally inward because of the pressure of standing. They can become intensely painful and may spread to form other warts.

Trauma to the feet and ankles include breaks or stress fractures of the bones, joint dislocations, and strains and tears of the ligaments and tendons. High-impact exercising, such as jogging or strenuous aerobics, can injure the feet. The most common tendon injury in the foot is to the Achilles tendon, which connects the calf muscle to the heel. Although most of the tendon is in the calf and ankle, the injury usually causes heel pain. Jumping, running or abrupt movements can strain, tear or even rupture the tendon.

Plantar fasciitis can occur at any age but has a peak incidence in women aged 40-60 years. It causes stabbing or burning pain which is usually worse in the morning. It can occur as sharp, stabbing pain in the inside part of the bottom of the heel. The heel pain tends to be worse with the first few steps after waking up, when climbing stairs or when standing on tiptoe. Wearing special shoes or slippers with arch support and getting heel cushions can be helpful. Avoid flat, hard slippers. Soaking the feet in warm water and regular massage to stretch the plantar fascia will help relieve the symptoms.

Shoe fitting tips:

Apart from injuries, most foot ailments are caused by neglect, poorly fitting shoes.

According to American Podic Medical Association, two third of foot problems are caused by wearing ill fitting shoes. Women are especially at risk of developing foot problems, because they are more likely than men to wear narrow tapered shoes, not to mention high heels. High heel shoes are often pointed and take the centre of gravity forwards with the result 80% of the weight falls on the ball of the feet. Women should be aware of the fact that the size of the feet increases during pregnancy. The bottom line is that if you are wearing shoes that are too big or too small, you are probably going to develop foot problems. Wearing right socks is as important as shoes. A good pair of socks can protect your feet by reducing friction and rubbing between feet and inside of shoes, in addition to keeping the feet warm and absorbing moisture.

Maintaining optimum weight, walking on bare feet on the sand, foot baths, massaging of the feet with essential oils, reflexotherapy, foot stretches and regular physical exercises go a long way to keep you well and on your feet.

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Comedian Salah Al-Wafi to the Yemen Times:

“It is very important to introduce a message in a light and funny way.”

Salah Al-Wafi, a young man from Taiz, regularly appears on Yemeni television. Through his plays and his roles in Ramadan television series, he has built a strong fan base.

By: Raghda Gamal
For the Yemen Times

How did you start out as a comedian?

I started in theater class at the Institute of Science in Taiz. Then, I moved to Taiz Secondary School and there I participated twice in the School Theater Festival, first in Sana'a and then in Aden. During this festival, I received the Best Actor award both times.

After that, I founded a small theater group with my brothers and friends. We used to perform plays during concerts.

Then you performed at Taiz University. Is this correct?

Yes, I participated in the performance of the play Arabian Pride in 2002 at a ceremony for the Taiz University Student Union.

The ceremony was attended by the rector of the university and then minister of civil service Dr. Abdul-Wahab Raweh. They showed great admiration for my performance and the rector of the university suddenly announced that he exceptionally accepted me as a student at the University of Taiz.

I joined the Performing Arts Troupe

at the university and we performed in several Arab countries in a number of student activities. During one of those activities, I had the chance to meet the son of Mr. Ibrahim Al-Abyadh, who introduced me to his father, which allowed me to start over the television screen.

Who encouraged you to be an actor?
Fahd Al-Qarni, Mohammed Hassan, and Mansour Al-Awadi were among my first fans since school and university days.

Did you qualify yourself to become a comedian?

Of course, I attended many acting courses and workshops in Syria, and even here in Yemen. I attended several courses led by many talented teachers like Fahd Al-Qarni, Ahmed Jabarah and Ahmed Qaid.

You are well-known for acting in the Taizi dialect. Have you ever worried that you might be offending anyone by using the Taizi dialect all the time?

No, I use my dialect because I am a Taizi man, and I'm proud to represent my dialect.

Can you imitate other Yemeni dialects?

Sure, and if I will continue working in this field. I should perform in all the other dialects such as the Sana'ani, Adeni, and Zabydi ones. Once, in one of my plays, I played the role of an Adeni man, but television is not like the theater. Television series need more practice and training on new dialects.

Most of the time, you choose to play a naive or good character. Why?

All my roles were not necessarily about good characters. I played a bad character once in Al-Bazzi ("al-bazzi" means the son of a sister). I also played the role of a kidnapper last year, so it depends on the character itself.

You started your career in children's series. Do you still count children as part of your audience?

Of course! Actually, I played the character of Mahyoub in four episodes of the Kashkoosh series (named after a character in the series), as well as the main role in the series Halloum and Salloum (also named after the two main characters).

Children represent an important part of my fans. They contributed to making my name in the beginning, and a lot of adults got to know me during Halloum and Salloum through their children.

In your opinion, what makes a good comedian?

In the comedy world, it is always the man with a case who is successful. A comedian should focus on choices

and goals, not just only making people laugh. It is very important to introduce a message in a light and funny way.

For example, in one episode, we talked about black magic, and my character said a line about how wrong and forbidden it is to go to such people. At the end of the episode, I was surprised by the number of viewers who called in. So, simply, comedy is the way.

To what extent does comedy play a role in changing society?

We have changed in the past because of US films in terms of changing our way of dressing or our haircut.

Surely, nowadays we can change the concepts of society through comedy as it is a strong means of doing this.

Do you feel more at home on stage or behind the television camera?

I feel more comfortable in the theater, but television gives an actor popularity.

What can be done to improve comedy on Yemeni television?

A lot of things. For example, we have a big problem with television scripts, as we only have one script writer. But I have some hope that the situation will improve. I have recently read a script by Esam Al-Qaisi and he is very talented writer script.

Also, freedom is a very important factor to improve Yemeni drama in general.

How did freedom of expression at the Al-Saeeda television channel help you



Salah Al-Wafi

along with your career?

Al-Saeeda channel gave me the freedom which I need, although we do not have complete freedom of expression in our country, either for the discussion of social issues that will not be accepted by society or the discussion of political issues.

Unfortunately, everything in Yemen get politicized, so it's not about Al-Saeeda channel, it's about the whole situation of the country.

In your acting career, what work are you the most proud of?

I love all my work and I do not distinguish between it. Sometimes, I feel much more proud after performing in

a tiny sketch than in a whole television series.

I am proud of a lot of my works, like the play Arabian Pride and the play Arab Blood by Fahad Al-Qarni and the play Emerging Light by me.

What are your future projects?

We have already shot five episodes of the second season of Hammi Hammak, in addition to a new series, namely Bajshat (named after the name of the hero) on which I will work with Fahd Al-Qarni, which I hope that series will be in the spot light as a new kind of drama in Yemen.

Both of them will be shown at Ramadan on Al-Saeeda.

Preacher Huda Al-Yafi'i:

“The best way to prevent terrorism is to educate people.”

Preacher Huda Al-Yafi'i, Yemeni, 46, has published more than 60 short stories in the magazine Al-Shaqa'iq.

Al-Yafi'i is a consultant at the Ministry of Endowments and Guidance, a preacher at the Saleh mosque and an activist in civil society organizations, focusing on issues involving women and children.

She has two sons and three grandsons. Her family had lived in Kuwait for 60 years before they came to Yemen in 1990.

When she was young, her father used to gather his sons and daughters around him and tell them interesting stories about the prophets and saints. With the passage of time, she recognized the gift that God had given to her.

So, in turn, she too gathered all the children in the neighborhood and told them those same stories from her father. She was also an active participant in school activities. She went on to study for two years, at an institute in Kuwait, for teaching according to the Azhari school of thought and its interpretation of the Holy Quran.

She said that when preaching, she depends on many sources, not just the Azhari interpretation. She feels that a preacher should collect information from all Muslim sheiks – deliberately not choosing a particular one- so that people can be given an objective viewpoint.

She said also that a preacher should confer with all sheiks before publishing a fatwa.

By: Ameera Al-Arasi

Does your husband understand the nature of your job? Can your work and your role as a wife coexist?

My husband is a very understanding person. He always encourages and helps me so that I have no problems with being both a wife and a preacher.

Do you think that a woman can be a preacher? How do men accept this?

I follow the fatwa which legitimizes women to be preachers. As to those who may support the fatwas forbidding women from preaching, I think that in this field women can be equal because God did not forbid us from this as long as we are not doing anything wrong.

When I preach, I often use Power Point presentations and other modern approaches, so that people - especially the young - do not get bored and stop listening.

There are many considerations that need to be taken into account before becoming a preacher. The first is the ability to listen to people and yet give them the chance to talk as well. The second is to follow Islamic rules like wearing the hijab and to be mindful of manners when conversing with people.

Aisha, the wife of the Prophet, used to spread the word and the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) did not say that it was

haram (forbidden). When I left Kuwait, I established a school to teach the Holy Quran in Abyan, where many people welcomed my teaching methods and the response was so positive that many people sent their children to the school.

As a result of being watch in my work, many of my friends became preachers like me.

From your point of view, what are the reasons for extremism in Yemen and how can it be prevented?

There are two reasons for extremism. The first is people's frustration at not being allowed to voice their opinion. When frustrated, they may find other ways to hurt those who did not listen to them.

The second reason is people's ignorance. Unfortunately, most people are not aware of the true meaning of Islam. So when terrorists find those who are weak in their religious knowledge, they tell them that that attacking establishments in their country is the best way to express themselves. This is the path to indoctrination.

The best way to prevent terrorism is to educate people and guide them on the right paths by explaining the true meaning behind Islam, instead of leaving them to search for it in the caves of terrorists and extremists.

Unfortunately, extremists use the

enthusiasm of youth to convince them that the only way to prove themselves is through extremism. Young people may well be led to assume that they are following the correct path of Islam if they kill those who they think are non-Muslim.

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) once said, "The extremists are destroyed, the extremists are destroyed, the extremists are destroyed."

What do you think of preachers who are biased towards a particular party?

My wish is that all Muslims scholars remain neutral and do not belong to any specific party. They should not discriminate, because it causes conflict between them.

Civil society organizations call for

abandoning the lessons of jihad from the Islamic education curriculums in schools so that students do not feel attracted to terrorism.

I do not agree with anything that makes Islam look like a religion involved with terrorism. Islam is our identity and abandoning it means abandoning who we are. Nothing written in the Holy Quran or what has been said by the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) should ever be interpreted as calling for terrorism, so these texts should not be deleted from the school curriculums. It is important to make students feel drawn to Islam.

In your opinion, when do you think a preacher should be called a scholar?

Being a preacher does not necessarily mean being a scholar, but a scholar can

be a preacher. From my point of view, I think that I should not be called a scholar because I only guide people on the right path. Titles are of no great importance to me. The most essential outcome is that people are willing to listen to me.

Why do you think that women are separated from men? Do you think that women should avoid being in contact with men?

As a matter of fact, women can be the main source of temptation to men if they are not wearing the Islamic hijab. They are a source of evil if they are not educated in how to avoid tempting men using their bodies. Every woman should know how Islam wanted her to be aware of the issues she may face and how to behave in a proper manner.

What are your future projects?

"Give me your hand" is my next project. It is a non-governmental project in which we intend to show all Yemeni offspring of non-Muslim mothers to be proud of their Islamic and Arabic identity and not to be drawn to any other foreign identity.

In addition to this, lectures in the Al-Saleh mosque will be delivered to women in order to educate them about the interpretation of the Holy Quran.

I also intend to run self-development sessions for women. There will be first aid courses in addition to lectures that show women how to work as a Muslim, and how the rules of Islam have a positive effect on our daily life.

A preacher should be like a candle that lights up the lives of others.

Source: Al-Yemen

بِقُلُوبٍ مُّؤَمَّنَةٍ بِقِضَاءِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْرِهِ نَتَقَدَّمُ بِأَحْرَ التَّعَاذِي وَأُصَدِّقُ الْمَوَاسَاةَ الْقَلْبِيَّةَ إِلَى

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Yemeni secondary school students to represent their country online



Students from the Ibn Majed School want to improve their country's image in the US.

meet teachers and students as well as visit Washington DC and New York in the US, he said.

After participating in Global Youth Service Day, on April 23-25 in Yemen and in the US, participating students will discuss the experience via videoconference using Skype, and post stories and images from their project on a webpage.

«We have chosen the best students in the school, who can argue in English and communicate with people online,» said Abdul-Wahab Al-Badani, the coordinator of the project.

The project aims to enhance mutual understanding between students and teachers in the US and Yemen, through dialogue via a webcam as well as through sharing photographs and stories online.

But it will also improve educational tools, resources and learning through the application of information technology, online resource development, and empower students through online projects and leadership skills development to act as catalyst of change in their communities, according to Al-Badani.

«We started with six students but when the news got around the school, many students showed interest in the project,» said Al-Badani. «These students have had some lessons about the US, the role of government, and poverty in Yemen.»

«I expect that the project will give us a lot of information about

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Yemen and will provide us with information about health, poverty, technology, and environment, moreover, the project will help students to communicate with people and teachers from America,» said student Shadi Ahmed.

«The project develops our skills, especially IT,» said student Mohammed Abdul-Rahman, «Since the beginning of the project, we have worked hard to gather information about Yemen.»

«We will provide all the facilities for this project, and we are taking serious steps in this theme,» said Ahmed Al-Hada, the Principal of Ibn Majed School. «We have qualified students to work in this project, and they are very enthusiastic about the project.»

«The project will give us more confidence and background to

events in the country,» said student Abdul-Rahman Najeeb.

«I'm interested in the project idea and through it I've absorbed many issues of poverty, multicultural societies, and policies,» said student Abdullah Al-Hamzi.

«The project is very important, therefore the students have made a concerted effort to promote the idea, and we will do our best for this project,» he added.

«The project is about cultural exchange between several countries and I can give a civilized and positive image of my country,» said student Moath Nasher.

During the program, students will be asked to brainstorm and design a service project for their community. They will discuss how to use technology in their community projects.

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By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi
For the Yemen Times

About 30 male students from Ibn Majed School have joined in the Global Connections and Exchange Program (GCEP). This program, initiated by the US State of Department, will involve a series of projects centered on the theme of civic activism and the role of technology.

Yemen is the latest country in the Middle East to join a project aimed at encouraging dialogue between the US and the Arab world. Other schools participating in Yemen include the Al-Quds School for girls and the Al-Baihani School for boys.

The program is overseen by the Center for Democracy and Election Management (CDEM) at the American University in Washington DC, said Sami Al-Uthari, the representative of the American University in Yemen.

CDEM provides the schools with video cameras and webcams that students have started using this week to communicate with teachers and students in the US, he said.

From April 10 to 28, one student and one teacher from each of the participating Yemeni schools will

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