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**Inside:**  **5** A law that conceals more than it unveils  **7** YALI: A 35-year journey in English language teaching in Yemen  **12** Bouldoukianto the Yemen Times: Yemeni banks are some of the best performing banks 

## Reem, a Yemeni girl divorced at the age of 12, cries out for help Why has the world forgotten about me?

The issue of early marriage is still one of the most controversial in Yemen despite intense lobbying from civil society and women's movements. Amongst all this debate to prevent future marriages, the issue of rehabilitation for previous victims is yet to receive the attention it deserves.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, April 7 — She lives with her mother and younger brother Ma'moon. Reem is one of the three girls whose story was highlighted in the media on the issue of child brides. She was married off by her father at twelve as a way to take revenge against her mother who had left him. It has taken her one year to get the divorce because her family could not afford to pay the husband off and the judges would not sympathize with her. Because of the intervention of some influential people, she managed to obtain the divorce earlier this year. But her divorce, by no means, has meant that her life will actually be better. "I wish I could go to school. I wish I

could afford to study English. I wish I don't have to hide my face in the street where we are live, to avoid being pointed at. And I wish we could move to a nicer home than this one," said Reem, narrating her wish list. She only wants a chance to be educated and become something good. "I want to be a doctor," she said with gleaming eyes. However, this year she could not even complete her sixth grade and her mother had to pull her and her brother Ma'moon out of school. Mostly due to poverty, 40 percent of Yemeni girls are married under the age of 18, with 15 being the most common age, according to a 2006 survey on early marriage carried out by Oxfam-GB. Most of these girls become mothers by 16 and

There aren't any rehabilitation programs or family support centers dedicated to girls who have escaped early marriage. They land up emotionally shattered and financially in need, especially seeing as through their struggle for freedom and defiance of tradition, they alienate their socio-economic support system, which is mainly men, and end up on their own. "We don't have any source of income. Reem's father abandoned us long ago. There have been three men already proposing to marry Reem, who has only just got her divorce after so much difficulty. They say, 'give me your daughter and I will make sure you all live comfortably.' But I promised Reem that her ordeal would not be repeated and I need help to fulfill my promise," said Aisha Alawi, Reem's mother. Nujood, the other divorcee, sometimes visits Reem as they have a common background. "Nujood tells me her book has been published in 20 languages, the French publisher has built them a house and she is finally feeling secure. I too want to feel secure. I want to be able to go to school and not worry about where our next meal will come from. Why has the world forgotten about me?" Reem cried out bitterly. Reem is a little tall for her age, which in the past has caused her problems as the judges refused to give her the divorce until they were forced to. But today she has used her height to her advantage. When she could not go to school anymore because of expenses, she decided to go and find a job. At thirteen years old, Reem put on a veil and, armed with the years of maturity she gained from being married and divorced at 12, she headed for the streets to look for a job. Somehow, she managed

to get an internship at a medical center, where she learnt first aid and other simple medical procedures. She then joined another medical institute and built on her medical knowledge. "I was hiding under my veil and did not talk much. I did not want them to discover that I am only 13 otherwise they would not allow me to study." She remembers the first time she saw a dead body when she ventured into the hospital's morgue. "I saw a chilly room full of drawers. Out of curiosity I opened the first one and there was a dead old man in it. I was shocked but still intrigued. He was very cold and his skin was so hard. I opened another one and there was a young man, I think he was only 22 or 23 years old. I swear he was smiling at me. His eyes were open, I tried to close them but they were so rigid. I visited them every day of my internship. I thought they were lonely and I knew what it is like to be abandoned," said Reem, remembering her experience at the medical institute. Hiding away from society The extensive media coverage of Reem's story has not helped her much in her daily life. In her previous school, the other girls used to point at her and talk whenever she passed by. "They used to come to me and say, 'Is it true that your father sold you for money to an older man? Is it true that you have been raped for two months continuously? Is it true that you are a divorced woman?'" explained Reem in despair. It was a public school and the administration could not control the students. They had not created any awareness or sensitizing sessions for the other stu-



At only 13 Reem has already been married and divorced and now, due to lack of financial support, she is a school dropout from the sixth grade.

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## Row in parliament over corruption report

By: Aqeel Al-Halali  
 For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, April 7 — A report on corruption cases in Hodeida governorate caused two parliamentarians to fist fight during a session yesterday Wednesday April 7, 2010. This is the first incident of its kind where parliamentarians engage in a physical fight inside the parliament. The report named names of corrupt officials in high level positions and accused them of appropriating public or private lands illegally. It indicated that there are currently 410 land dispute cases in the governorate. After many citizens in Hodeida com-

plained of the land disputes, the parliament management assigned five parliamentarians from different political blocks and committees to head off to Hodeida and investigate the issue. Their report did not please many parliamentarians and, on Monday when it was first discussed, it also unnerved Yahya Al-Raie, speaker of the parliament, because of its boldness. Al-Raie entered a verbal argument with one of the investigative committee members on Monday, and yesterday MP Mohammed Sharda from Sana'a attacked MP Abdullah Ahyaf from Hodeida after they disputed over the report's findings. Neither MP is a member of the investigative committee or mentioned by name in the report, however, MP Sharda felt that the report criticized high level people in the government and fought for their reputation, literally. MP Ahyaf from Hodeida was one of the parliamentarians who demanded the investigation after he received many complaints on land disputes from citizens in his constituency. The report discussed the issue of land disputes that has been taking place so long in Hodeida governorate. Military officials, officials, businessmen and even social figures take over lands illegally especially since the paving of new roads on the coastal line which increased the land prices. The report mentioned that the factor that encourages corruption is that offi-



cials remain in their post for very long durations. It also accused the security committee in Hodeida of allowing the culprits to run free without fear of law or law enforcement officers. It is worth mentioning that the quarrelling MPs are both from the ruling party, the General People's Congress and are also both in the Constitutional and Legal Committee in the Parliament. Other parliamentarians came to the rescue and broke off the fight, and MP Sharda was kicked out of the session. The parliamentary committee of Hodeida governorate is considering disposing the attacking MP of his immunity as a result of his 'uncivilized' conduct, according to Sakhr Al-Wajeh Member of Parliament from Hodeida. The report revealed that there are armed gangs in Hodeida ready for rent at the disposal of any influential officials or rich individuals who would pay for their services. The report recommended the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior not allow any of their affiliates to get involved in the land disputes and to enforce the judicial system and allow appropriate state regulations to take their course. Discussion of the report will continue for the next two weeks, and the parliamentarians would vote on whether to implement any of its recommendations and how.

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Continued on page 2

## Houthi prisoners of war released

By: Mohammad Bin Sallam

SANA'A, April 7 – The Ministry of Interior announced on its website on Monday that it had released 54 Houthis who were taken prisoner during the sixth Sa'ada war from the Central Prison in Hodeida.

The army's website announced that the about 161 Houthi prisoners have now been released in total, after the release of 75 in mid March.

According to political analysts, the Houthis were released according to the implementation of the ceasefire agreement between the government and the Houthis.

The agreement included six points in which Houthis agreed to release prisoners on the condition that the government releases the 166 Houthis.

A seventh point has been added by the government, demanding Houthis not to penetrate into Saudi territory.

The six earlier points were ceasefire, opening roads, removing landmines and withdrawing from the districts and not interfering in local state affairs. Moreover, Houthis were asked to release Saudi and the Yemeni prisoners and to follow the law.

Houthi welcomed this move. They considered the release of prisoners as a positive step in the peace process in Sa'ada governorate. They expressed their wish to see every prisoner released so that they can return to their families.

The Ministry of Interior stated on its website that the release of Houthis comes after the Houthis released 178 prisoners from the national army, among

them eight military engineers.

The government is still demanding the Houthis to allow the displaced people by the Sa'ada war, estimated at 300,000, to return to their homes.

On Friday, the Saudi government returned 32 dead bodies of Houthis who were killed in the Saudi border.

### Situation in Sa'ada

Five people were killed in Shatha district, Sa'ada, near a military site.

Amnesty International obtained photos from an independent source in which they showed the destruction in Sa'ada.

The organization published the photos taken in March in Al-Nadera district, in which the buildings appear destroyed. They were destroyed between August 2009 and February 2010 after a series of clashes between the Yemeni forces and the Houthis.

The photos showed destroyed mosques, markets, fuel and power stations, shops, schools, health centers and dozens of destroyed houses.

The organization stressed the fact that international humanitarian law prohibits targeting civilians. The photos, according to the organization, proved that testimonies by people were true. People reported to the human rights organizations that violations committed by the Saudi forces were worse than the Yemeni attacks.

Philip Luther, deputy director of Amnesty International's Middle East and North Africa program, said that the photos show how intensive the conflict in Sa'ada was.

Tribal sources from Sa'ada said that

the situation is quiet now and that the Houthis move slyly and do not trust the tribes that are related to the state. Houthis are also said not to be sure of the wills of the militant leaders in the governorate or those who, as they claim, are war merchants who wanted nothing but to sell weapons.

According to a press statement, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Yemeni Red Crescent have sent a team consisting of 40 members to visit Sa'ada where they can define the needs of people in a better way. Earlier, the team had departed from Sa'ada in September 2009.

Among the team there are a water engineer and a statistical health specialist who will be evaluating the needs of people according to the situation.

The ICRC said that the main concern is to provide shelter for the displaced and to reform the water and sanitation networks in the governorate. In addition, they need to extend medical services and to establish a center for prosthetics and orthopedics.

Both organizations showed their intention to help the displaced as much as they can.

### Government employees in Sa'ada

Representative of the government in Sa'ada and member of the parliament Abdul Salam Zabia called on the government to form a committee to check the situation of government employees in Sa'ada. He said that they have not received their salaries for six months.

According to him, Houthi supporters have received their salaries.

## Workers threaten to stage mass demonstration

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, April 6 – The Yemeni Workers' Union has demanded the improvement of their salaries, social and health benefits. If the government does not respond within two weeks, they say they will hold protests.

The union issued a statement last Monday calling on direct intervention to stop the deterioration of the Yemeni currency and rigid procedures against those who manipulate prices.

Among the demands in the statement, they demanded that minimum wage to in Yemen be increased to USD 300 per month.

In their statement, the workers urged the government to implement the Wages and Salary Law No. 43 for the year 2005, in which the articles 3 and 38 stipulate that a worker's salary must be YR 20,000 per month minimum and must be increased according to the poverty line.

The lower poverty line in Yemen currently stands at USD 2 a day.

The statement also mentioned that workers were shocked by the increasing prices of goods.

"The average workers' income in Yemen is USD 150 a month, but this doesn't cover the cost of living because of the high prices, increase in the price of gas and petrol, and high inflation," said Mohammed Al-Jadri, the head of Yemen Workers Union.

"Yemeni workers live under the poverty line and they are unable to provide their family with key requirements," he added. "Some workers have sold their cars, lands, and their wives' gold in order to live."



The average workers' income in Yemen is USD 150 a month, but this doesn't cover the cost of living because of the high prices.

Al-Jadri said that the beneficiaries of high prices are the rich.

"The businessmen here have no mercy," he said. "The price increase has badly affected the poor - even yoghurt was not excluded from the increase."

"Workers in Yemen are frustrated, and the government understands the importance of laborers in the building and construction industry, so it must meet their demands and rights," he said.

Two weeks to meet demands "We will resort to sit-ins and protests," he confirmed. "The motivation for these sit-ins will come from the workers and the poor."

"We gave the government two weeks to meet our demands, but if they don't, we will go ahead with protests," he said. "When we announced the time limit, many organizations and workers declared their support for us."

The Yemen labor Union demanded also tackling the problems of workers in all ports, calling on the improvement of municipal workers' and contractors' situation.

The statement said that the government must perform their duties as protector for retirees and all workers. The Employees' Union at the University of Sana'a declared its solidarity with the statement, saying that they will organize protests in the coming days.

"We have waited a long time to obtain our rights," said Mohammed Abdulqawi, rights activist at Sana'a University.

"We will strive to obtain our demands, we won't be quiet anymore because we have been silent for many years," he said. "I expect great anger from the poor in Yemen, and the government has to be responsible for this crisis."

## Japan assists in improving Yemenis' lives

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

SANA'A, April 7 – The handicapped students of the 26th September Association in Al-Buraiqa, Aden were having difficulties using the premises they were allocated by the government. The association was housed in an un-used school building and the students used to have difficulties moving about since the school was old and not handicap friendly.

"Thanks to the USD 85,200 grant from the Japanese government, we redesigned the building and the playground. Now it is physically-disabled friendly and the children enjoy playing with swings and other special playground toys. Our association has now become a teaching and leisure space for handicapped children, both male and female, who are under 18 years old," said chairwoman of the association, Rahima Qasem.

This project is one of many that the Japanese government has been funding in order to improve Yemenis life. In the last 12 months the Japanese government has carried out 18 projects across Yemen, totaling USD 1.5 million. Local communities and non-governmental organizations were the beneficiaries of these projects.

They fall under the Japanese Human Security Grant Program. These Japanese grants are extended to non-government organizations, local councils, health and education offices, hospitals and schools. They were carried out in 11 Yemeni governorates: Sana'a, Hudeida, Mahweet, Hajja, Sana'a governorate, Ebb, Aden, Mareb, Taiz, Mahweet, Lahj and Dhamar.

Under this scheme, the associations present a proposal to the embassy, and after completing the required applications they could get a grant according to their needs with a total budget up to 100,000 US dollars. The projects are tailored to the community's needs, for example, the Deputy Secretary General of the Blind Association in Sana'a confirmed that the Japanese government



First grade school students of Al-Fawz School in Al-Tazia district, Taiz, sitting on the floor because of the lack of chairs. The Japanese Embassy has agreed to fund the expansion of the school and build girls' toilets. It is also lobbying the education office to provide furniture and build new classrooms for girls.

has provided the association with two buses, each one carrying 16 passengers. They are used to transport the blind, male and female, from their houses to the association and home again.

The grants supported development projects such as construction, expanding and rehabilitating schools, providing medical equipment and installations, procuring ambulances, buses and training equipment for disabled children associations, improving water supply systems in the rural areas and many other services.

The aim of funding these projects is designed to meet basic human needs in Yemen, such as primary health care, basic education, water supplies, poverty relief and the environment, in order to elevate the living conditions of people in the beneficiary societies. This series of projects resulted in encouraging more students, particularly females, to go to school, providing better quality medical services, particularly for mothers and children, and supplying safe drinking water over a wider area.

Beneficiaries highlighted the assistance they got from the Japanese government and said that these projects have helped them promote the services of their respective institutions.

According to the Japanese embassy in Sana'a, the program will continue to provide financial help and human services to beneficiaries in different parts of the country. With the beginning of the fiscal year, 2010, the embassy has actually extended further invitations to local NGOs, as well as public entities in governorates and districts, to apply for the services of their program.

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## Increasing number of refugees in Yemen stretches out refugee-support resources

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, April 6 – After continuous bleeding for two days, at five months pregnant, Iftu Abdosh, 25, lost her unborn baby. Iftu is one of many African refugees who came to Yemen in search of a better life. However, because of the hardships of living as a refugee in an underdeveloped country, her life today is not much better than her original home.

Estimates indicate that there are over 300,000 African refugees in Yemen, mostly from the Horn of Africa. Despite the very risky journey to get here and hard life in Yemen, the influx of refugees is on the rise. This poses a huge responsibility on the Yemeni government and international aid agencies concerned with the refugee situation in Yemen.

There are several international organizations assisting the Yemeni government in handling these matters. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is probably the main organization dealing with refugees in Yemen. It works to provide them with basic needs whilst in the country and resettlement to a third country, according to the procedures. The ICRC also provides them with medical care.

By the end of 2011, the UNHCR plans to be supporting 213,000 refugees, 2,500 asylum seekers, 10,000 internally displaced persons and 10,000 returning displaced persons in Yemen.

According to the UNHCR strategy for 2010 and 2011, the agency will focus on improving the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers, while seeking sustainable solutions, in particular, their resettlement. The Office will push for the development of a national asylum system, the upgrade of reception conditions for refugees and asylum-seekers, and the improvement of relations with host communities.

UNHCR will increase efforts to improve the interim living conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers, pending more long lasting solutions, and will identify and prioritize those with specific protection needs. The Office aims to ensure basic care, safety, security and maintenance in the camps, while also seeking to improve living conditions in urban areas.

In addition, UNHCR will develop refugee access to education and vocational training, address the needs of women refugees, and raise awareness of HIV and AIDS. A particular focus in 2010 will be on encouraging refugees to become involved in their own protection through newly established refugee committees.

However, according to the accounts of hundreds of exiled people, they are just not getting enough attention or support. They accuse the UNHCR of corruption, favoritism and even inciting the state security to mistreat them.

Iftu and her family are a classic case of refugees who are desperate for help and would go to any measures to draw atten-



Iftu Abdosh (center with child in lap) camped for more than three months with her two children outside the UNHCR premises in Sana'a, demanding financial support, which she has still not obtained.

tion to their plight. After living in a plastic tent with her two children outside the UNHCR office for two months, Iftu felt angry and neglected. The financial help she was desperately seeking for her family was not forthcoming and last week she started a fight with the government security guards at the UNHCR.

A few days later, Iftu lost her baby. She said that this sad event had happened as a direct consequence of being assaulted by the government security guards of the Sana'a office of the UN refugee agency. She was then arrested and taken to the police station on charges of attacking security. However, they denied the assault and said that she had resisted arrest and they had to drag her by force into the police car.

"Why would we beat her?" said one of the guards. "She is a weak woman."

She was then taken into custody at Al-Mujama' police station because she assaulted the security guards and threw stones at them. She was released in the evening of the same day.

"When Iftu was brought to us in a police car, I didn't notice any marks of beating on her body," said the director of Al-Mujama' police station, Hassan Al-Hababi. "She stayed in the yard with her two children and she looked normal. Iftu was not even in jail because we don't have women's custody facilities," he said. "At the end of the day, we released her, after contacting the UNHCR security officer."

When she returned to her spot outside the UNHCR, she found out that her tent-home was gone.

"We had to keep her with some friends. Later that same night they called me and

said that she was bleeding heavily and so was rushed to hospital. The guards outside the UNHCR caused her to miscarry," said Osman, Iftu's husband.

Andrew Knight, external relations officer at the UNHCR, said that this claim is untrue.

"The Ethiopian lady was not attacked by UNHCR security, rather she attacked them with stones which resulted in her arrest and detention at the police station," he said in an email to the Yemen Times last Sunday. "We are shocked to hear the news of her baby and will certainly follow this up with the police in order to find out exactly what happened after she was arrested," he wrote. As for the women camping outside the office of the UNHCR, Knight said, "A solution has now been found for them and assistance provided."

Until 2007, UNHCR's budget in Yemen averaged USD 4 million, which fell well short of meeting the basic needs of refugees. To further support the Government and address the protection and assistance gap for the people concerned, UNHCR increased its budget from USD 6.8 million in 2007 to USD 19.9 million in 2008.

In 2008, the pilot global needs assessment for 2009 focused on developing activities to address the shortfall in basic needs, as well as ensuring a more suitable and protective environment, fair processing and a responsive asylum system. As a result, the 2009 budget has progressively been increased. The 2010 budget stands at USD 28 million, out of which some USD 5 million is to cover IDP needs and some USD 22 million is for further refugee programs.

## Continued from page 1

### Why has the world forgotten about me?

The main problem Reem and her family are now facing is a financial one. It is so severe that it has forced her and her brother out of school and the whole family out of their home three times, in less than a year. Reem says she wants a chance to live a different life. She has even decided to take on a new name if she can, "Alhanooif". She found this name in a Gulf Bedouin TV drama depicting a beautiful girl whose life was not easy, but she finally conquered all her problems. The literal meaning, in Arabic, of the new name Reem has picked for herself

aptly means 'joyously playful'.

Before her experience with marriage at the age of 12, Reem used to be a very delicate girl. "I used to be scared of my shadow in the night," she said. The ordeal has toughened her up to the extent that she did not mind keeping company with dead bodies in the hospital morgue.

"Sometimes I look at my 13 years old daughter and wonder at how she has changed. It saddens me as I realize that something in her has died," said Aisha, Reem's mother.

Despite this overnight maturing, she acknowledges that perhaps becoming stronger was the only positive result of

her marriage experience. She is emotionally shaken and she often suffers from pain in her lower back that she can't explain, but being able to hide behind her veil and introduce herself as an adult healthcare trainee has given her a sort of alternative ego which she wears assertively.

"I like it when the patients call me doctor. I wear the white coat and direct them to where they should go. I have also helped dressing wounds and taking temperatures and blood pressure. I feel useful and appreciated. I wish I could get the support to study and become a real doctor and really help people," she said.

In brief

**SANA'A**  
**UN special representative in Yemen**  
Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons Walter Kalin has arrived in Sana'a for an official visit to Yemen.

Well-informed sources said that the UN official would meet with a number of Yemeni officials to review displaced situations by the war in the far north of the country.

**Draft law to establish fund for lending to poor discussed**

The Parliament discussed on Monday the opinion of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs on a draft law of establishing an investment fund for lending to poor families, sponsored by the parliamentarian Mohamed al-Hazmi.

The draft law aims to adopt intensive programs to reach the poor and stimulate the economic growth and create a small investment and industrial base, which will form a strong tributary to the national economy. And this will help the government to overcome the poverty and unemployment and provide stable financial resources to support the small enterprises of the poor families.

In light of the discussion, the parliament approved referring the draft law to the relevant committee for consideration and to submit a report including the results that it will reach.

**Official report lists 148 land looters in Hodeidah**

An official report has listed around 148 persons as land looters in Hodeidah province, almotamar.net said on Monday.

The parliamentary report showed that with support of influenced officials, an armed gang has looted lands in the province.

The report attributed problems of the lands in Hodeidah to mixture between private and public ownership for lands, and new coastal roads encouraged looters to put their hands on further lands in the province.

**Yemen still worries about African refugee**  
Deputy Foreign Minister and Head of the Higher National Committee for Refugees Affairs Ali Muthana said growth of the African refugee to Yemen is a source of worry for the Yemeni government as it resulted in further economic, social and security burdens.

In his statement to al-Syasiah daily, the deputy minister said that Yemen has talks with countries of Gulf Cooperation Council to contribute to efforts of offering care for the African refugees.

The unstable condition in Somalia helped to increase the African refugee to Yemen, he said, the solution for this problem based on concern of the international community and neighboring countries of Somalia to find out a political solution for the Somali issue.

He affirmed that the recent security measures taken by the Yemeni government on refugees were because threats stated by al-Shabab al-Mujahid. These measures aim at protecting security and preventing infiltration of any group to carry out terror acts, he added.

The deputy minister made clear that decision of closure for sea outlets of Yemen was not against refugees, but it targets pirates.

**Alternative national flag draft law approved**

The Cabinet approved on Tuesday a draft law of the alternative national flag after being reviewed by a ministerial committee.

The cabinet directed the concerned ministers to follow up the completion of the

necessary constitutional procedures to issue the law.

The law, which consists of 18 articles, defines the status and specifications of the national flag and its greeting, as well as the places and times of events to raise the national flag.

In addition to, the law identifies the prohibitions of the national flag use and penalties for anybody harms to the flag in any way or violates its specifications in the manufacturing, printing, design, publication, raising, or using it as a trademark or to advertise for commercial purposes or other actions that may be meant to contempt the flag.

**Finance Minister flies to Khartoum**

Finance Minister Numan al-Suhaibi left on Tuesday for the Sudanese of Khartoum to participate in the annual meeting of the Arab Financial institutions which begins Wednesday.

The meeting will discuss a number of issues relating to Arab economies and financial institutions and their role in supporting of development efforts through their programs of providing grants, financial and technical assistance and soft loans as well as providing expertise in reducing the effects of the global financial crisis on the Arab oil and non-oil economies, said al-Suhaibi.

The meeting will also discuss ways to promote sustainable public budgets in the Arab World, he added.

**Yemeni-Tunisian trade, investment cooperation reviewed**

Yemen and Tunisia talked on Monday about aspects of mutual trade and investment cooperation relations.

During his meeting with the Tunisian ambassador to Yemen Tawfiq Jaber, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce at the

Capital Sana'a Hasan al-Kabous noted to the importance of such meetings, which aim at enhancing the trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

He also pointed out to the significance of promoting the real partnership between Yemen and Tunisia as well as supporting investment and improving its environment in Yemen.

He asserted the necessity of coordination between the chamber and the Tunisian embassy to push up the Yemeni-Tunisian trade and industrial relations.

In return, the Tunisian diplomat hailed the active role played by the private sector in the economic development in Yemen, affirming the Tunisian government's keenness to create a distinctive trade and industrial partnership with Yemen.

He also reviewed several trade and industrial areas, which would help in establishing partnership between the Yemeni businessmen and their Tunisian counterparts in the areas of industrial and trade investment.

**Yemen to take parts in Youth, Sports Ministerial Council meeting**

Yemen is to participate in the 33rd round of the Youth and Sports Ministerial Council, which will be kick off on Wednesday in the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

Minister of Youth and Sports Hamoud Ubad said, upon his departure, that the round will discuss a report and recommendations of the Arab Fund for Youth and Sports activities and the report of the technical secretariat of the council's 32nd-33rd rounds.

The round is to deal with the recommendations of the technical sport committee of the council and to discuss the coming 2011 Pan Arab Games to be held in Qatar, he added.

**Education Ministry honors WB education official**

Ministry of Education honored on Tuesday education official in the World Bank (WB) Aisha Foda for her efforts in supporting education in Yemen.

In the honoring ceremony, Education Minister Abdul-Salam al-Jawfi hailed the role of WB's official in supporting development programs in Yemen, especially in the strategy of primary, secondary and girl education development.

He appreciated the level of joint cooperation between the bank and Yemen, particularly in the education field.

For her part, Foda commended the cooperation of Education Ministry during her work period in Yemen which contributed to the success of the tasks assigned to her by the WB.

**ADEN**

**Indian-flagged warship attacks Yemeni fishermen**

A Yemeni fishing boat with 11 fishermen has been attacked by an Indian-flagged warship in the international waters, the Interior Ministry has reported.

Coastguard police has received a complaint from the Yemeni Fishermen Association in Hadramout governorate that a helicopter has taken off from the Indian ship and was flying over the boat named "Albarkat".

Then, two boats have been launched from the warship, and the soldiers beat the fishermen severely and threw them into the sea and returned to the ship.

Coastguard police is currently gathering all the required information, including attack sites' coordinates, description of the

warship's and soldiers' uniform, adding that the investigation is underway.

**HAJJA**

Saudi border guards kill Yemeni sheep's smuggler

A Yemeni sheep smuggler has been shot dead by Saudi border guards while trying to smuggle sheep to Saudi Arabia, which is banned in Saudi lands, across the Yemeni-Saudi border.

Interior Ministry reported on Monday that Yemen's security authorities of Hajjah province had delivered the body of the man, aged 20, to his family.

It is worth to mention the Saudi Arabia border guards shot 3 of qat smugglers in separate incidents over the past few days but their injuries were not serious.

**SOQOTRA**

**Indian ship catches fire off Yemen; crew rescued**

Yemeni Coastguard has rescued the crew of an Indian ship that caught fire 190 nautical miles off Socotra Island.

13 crew members were aboard the ship that was coming from Pakistan carrying a rice cargo en route for Somalia.

All 13 were Indians and rescued by a Yemeni naval ship near the accident site that received the distress signal the Indian ship had sent.

They have been taken to Socotra. On the other hand, Coastguard said it had received an alert from the South Korean Embassy in Yemen that Somali pirates had hijacked a S. Korean oil tanker off Aden.

It was taken 1200 nautical miles of Somalia, the alert said, adding that the pirates took it towards Somali coast.

Their News

**Sisters Arab Forum demands the release of Moath al-Ashahabi and appeals to the UN Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance**

'Sisters' Arab Forum for Human Rights demands the release of journalist and writer, Moath al-Ashahabi, who was sentenced by the press court for to the prosecuting of religious extremist. In addition, the court accused him of harming the Islamic faith. The Forum affirms that this judgment disregards the presumption of innocence and the right of appeal which are among the constitutional rights of Mr.Moath al-Ashahabi. This sentence is an example of intellectual terrorism as it impedes freedom of speech and press. Moreover, it is an assault on the right of expression that is guaranteed by the constitution of the Republic of Yemen and international conventions ratified by the country.

Sisters' Arab Forum for Human Rights believes that the continued incarceration of Al-Ashahabi in addition to the lack of response from judges to requests for his release, are signs of the extremism which endangers critics and writers.

In this regard, the Forum calls for immediate release of Mr. Moath al-Ashahabi, and gives him the right to appeal.

The forum sent a written complaint to the UN Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance in Geneva which detailed physical violations and death threats al-Ashahabi experienced as a result of this allegation.

**MTCP International Training Scholarship/Fellowship Awards**

The Malaysian Technical Co-operation Programme (MTCP) was launched in 1980 to promote and facilitate technical co-operation amongst developing countries based on the concept of self-reliance. The Programme encourages the exchange of relevant experiences, pooling and sharing of resources and the development of complementary capabilities through:

The MTCP training programmes FO-SEE, MMU in 2010 are:

- Managing e-University: A study visit for senior officers(MeUNI) Date: May 15 – May 23, 2010
- Multimedia Enhanced Instructions System for Education and Training (MEIST) Date: July 10 – July 25, 2010
- Groupware Applications for Electronic Commerce (GAEC)Date: October 16 – October 31, 2010

Readmore: <http://cambodiajobs.blogspot.com/2010/03/mtcp-international-training.html>

**Call for Contributions to a Book Project and Video documentary in Honor of Youth-Led Development Activists**

2010 is going to be an important year, and not just because of the football World Cup, the completion of the world's tallest building, and the release of the next Harry Potter movie. For us at YPWC it is an exciting and important year because the UN has announced the International Year of Youth beginning from August 12, 2010 to August 12, 2011. The theme for the year is "Dialogue and Mutual Understanding", with the aim to "encourage dialogue and understanding across generations and promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and freedoms, and solidarity."

With the strong belief that young people are not only the leaders of tomorrow but are partners of today, YPWC has been working to inform, empower and involve youth in their own personal development and that of their communi-

ties.

YPWC recognizes young people as change makers and agents of social transformation and hence encourages them to take leadership to bring about positive changes in the societies they live in while growing to their fullest potential.

As part of our efforts to promote Youth-Led Development[1], empower young people and also inspire youth to take action in their communities, we are calling for submissions from young people for our "Celebrating Youth-Led Development" book project, which will honor youth who are making a difference in their communities through various social and non-profit interventions. YPWC will give recognition to these young people in Global Youth Service Day from 23rd April – 25th April 2010. While these projects will form the content of the book we will publish about their interventions, we will also make sure that the work of these young people are given enough visibility through the media on Global Youth Service Day[2] and on International Youth Day through a complimentary video documentary, which is expected to inspire other young people and let citizens know that some youth are doing extraordinary things

which, when given the needed resources, can enable them to make great impacts on their communities.

Submissions can be made to address any of the following topics:

- Youth Leadership Development
- Peace Building Cross-cultural or inter-community Dialogue
- Youth Entrepreneurship & Employment Environmental Conservation
- Agriculture Health
- Tourism Promotion Youth Activism
- Education ICTs and Digital Opportunities
- Community/Social Development

**Submission Eligibility:**

- Young people aged 10 – 35 years.
- Must be resident in a region/state or country in Central Africa or West Africa
- Applicant should demonstrate leadership/entrepreneurial qualities.
- Should be an innovative/creative idea that has been able to produce some tangible results
- On-going projects or new projects can be proposed, completed projects or research proposals will not be considered.

- Application must be made by completing the Application Form (in English).
- The YPWC staffs or Youth Action Ambassadors cannot apply.

If you meet the above eligibility criteria please download the attached application form.

**Timeline:**

- Application process begins: 20 March, 2010
- Application Submission deadline: 15th April 2010
- Selected youth Profiled in Newspapers and internet platforms on Global Youth Service Day on 23rd April 2010
- Interview of the selected youth and other eminent people on their perspective of youth led development for video documentary: 5th May – 25th May 2010
- Video finalized: 10th July 2010
- Video documentary broadcasted on TV: 12th August 2010-International Youth Day

**CONTRIBUTE NOW!!**

When you are ready, please send your contributions or submission electroni-

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Yemen is inviting applications as follows:

1. House maid

**Essentials**

- Experience of working as a house maid
- Good English communication skill is desirable
- Applicants must be taller than 160cm

**Duties will include**

- House cleaning, helping with chores


**Working Hours**

- SAT - THUR, from 0900 to 1730
- Paid overtime work may be requested

**Basic Salary**

- 300 US Dollars

\*Applicants must be flexible and quick to adapt to works in demand  
\*Application(CV, Cover Letter and a photo taken within 6 months) should be sent by e-mail to [yemen@mofat.go.kr](mailto:yemen@mofat.go.kr) no later than 30 APR, 2010.




The US Embassy will be soliciting bids for cafeteria services.

A site visit will be held at the U.S. Embassy on April 14, 2010 at 3 p.m.

Please email [SanaaProcurement@State.gov](mailto:SanaaProcurement@State.gov) by April 13th if you would like to attend the site visit.

Copies of the solicitation will available at the site visit or via email after April 14, 2010.

All bids are due by 4 p.m. on April 28th.



**Copy editor needed**

The Yemen Times is looking for an **English native speaker** with a good eye for detail to check contributors' articles for correct grammar and spelling, clarity and consistency.

The successful candidate will live in Sana'a and have excellent written English.

The workload is 3 to 4 feature articles and 3 to 4 news articles an issue, twice a week.

He /she will be free to work throughout the week online and to come into the office on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons from 15:00 pm.

If you are interested, please send your CV and a writing sample to the following address:  
[alicehackman.yt@gmail.com](mailto:alicehackman.yt@gmail.com)

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## Remembering brainwashing

**It was a time of secrecy and fear. Fear of a strange enemy driven by an alien ideology, killing Americans abroad, threatening Americans at home. And it created a new terror.**

By: **Tim Weiner**  
The New York Times

In the early 1950s, American troops were being killed and captured by the thousands in Korea. Panic spread that China's Communists had learned how to penetrate and control the minds of American prisoners of war.

The technique was called "brainwashing." And suddenly it's worth recalling what brainwashing was about. Because now we know, from an article in The New York Times last week, that in a new time of anxiety America's own interrogators drew lessons from China's treatment of American prisoners of war for their treatment of prisoners in the war on terror.

The concept of brainwashing was the brainchild of Edward Hunter, a newspaperman born in 1902, who had covered the rise of fascism in Eu-

rope before joining the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner to the Central Intelligence Agency, during World War II. The Korean War had just begun in 1950 when The Miami News published his article, "Brain-Washing Tactics Force Chinese Into Ranks of Communist Party."

He determined that "the Reds have specialists available on their brainwashing panels," experts in the use of "drugs and hypnotism," as he later told the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Their ultimate goal was conquering America.

"The United States is the main battlefield," he testified, "the people and the soil and the resources of the United States." He warned that brainwashing would make Americans "subjects of a 'new world order' for the benefit of a mad little knot of despots in the Kremlin."

The idea that a totalitarian state could control people like Pavlov's dogs had appeared in 1940s novels, notably Arthur Koestler's "Darkness at Noon" and George Orwell's "1984." It took Mao's China — and the forced "confessions" of some American prisoners of war during the Korean conflict — to make brainwashing a centerpiece of 1950s culture.

After the war, thousands of Ameri-

can P.O.W.'s returned under suspicion of having collaborated with the enemy while in captivity. A handful, on orders from their captors, had, in fact, falsely accused the United States of conducting germ warfare against North Korea. Congress was transfixed by "the fear that the soldiers could have been brainwashed by the Chinese and still be spying for them," Col. Elspeth Cameron Ritchie wrote in the journal Military Medicine. Dread that the Chinese Communists had created zombie sleeper agents spread quickly and ran deep.

A Dutch psychologist, Joost A. M. Meerloo, caught the apocalyptic tone in a New York Times Magazine article in 1954: "The totalitarians have misused the knowledge of how the mind works for their own purposes. They have applied the Pavlovian technique — in a far more complex and subtle way, of course — to produce the reflex of mental and political submission of the humans in their power."

Orwell's hero in "1984," Winston Smith, holds out hope against Big Brother and his minions: "With all their cleverness they had never mastered the secret of finding out what another human being was thinking."

But the threat that they could rivet Americans — and the C.I.A.

Finding out what others are thinking was (and is) the job of spies. The Korean experience spurred the C.I.A.'s search for mind-control techniques to grill suspected double agents. The agency took on a task described in its documents as "overseas interrogations."

Clandestine prisons were created in occupied Germany, occupied Japan and the Panama Canal Zone. "Like Guantánamo," said a charter member of the C.I.A., Thomas Polgar. "It was anything goes." In these cells, the agency conducted experiments in drug-induced brainwashing and other "special techniques" for interrogations. These continued inside and outside the United States, sometimes on unsuspecting human guinea pigs, long after the Korean War ended in 1953.

"There was deep concern over the issue of brainwashing," Richard Helms, the former director of central

intelligence, told the journalist David Frost 25 years later. "We felt that it was our responsibility not to lag behind the Russians or the Chinese in this field, and the only way to find out what the risks were was to test things such as L.S.D. and other drugs that could be used to control human behavior. These experiments went on for many years."

While the government chased after truth serum, fiction raced behind reality. The theory of a robot-like Manchurian Candidate was posited by the C.I.A. in 1953, six years before Richard Condon published the novel of that name, nine years before the book became a movie. William Burroughs, in "Naked Lunch" (1959), created a drug-addled mad scientist, Dr. Benway, "an expert on all phases of interrogation, brainwashing and control."

In the 1960s, brainwashing began to fade as a nightmare, though it was revived when captured soldiers and pilots released by North Vietnam made antiwar statements. In 1967, a Republican presidential contender, Gov. George Romney of Michigan (Mitt's dad), was ridiculed when he

said he had been brainwashed by American generals about how well the war in Vietnam was going.

Flash forward to 2002. American military and intelligence officers, looking for better ways to interrogate prisoners in the war on terror, went combing through government files. They found that the best institutional memory lay in the interrogation experiences of American P.O.W.'s in Korea. They reprinted a 1957 chart describing death threats, degradation, sleep deprivation — and worse — inflicted by Chinese captors. And they made it part of a new handbook for interrogators at Guantánamo.

The irony is that the original author of that chart, Albert D. Biderman, a social scientist who had distilled interviews with 235 Air Force P.O.W.'s, wrote that the Communists' techniques mainly served to "extort false confessions." And they were the same methods that "inquisitors had employed for centuries." They had done nothing that "was not common practice to police and intelligence interrogators of other times and nations."

Brainwashing was bunk: no secret

weapon to control the human mind existed, America's best experts concluded in the 1960s. Yes, the Communists used time-honored and terrifying interrogation tactics during the cold war. Some, like waterboarding, had been perfected during the Spanish Inquisition. But Mr. Biderman concluded that "inflicting physical pain is not a necessary nor particularly effective method" to persuade prisoners of war.

Some veterans of the war on terror say that lesson should have been relearned, despite the urgent need to uncover whatever possible about terrorist planning — the administration's principal justification of its harsh interrogation policies.

Alberto J. Mora, the Navy's general counsel from 2001 to 2006, told a recent Congressional hearing, where the Biderman chart resurfaced: "Our nation's policy decision to use so-called 'harsh' interrogation techniques during the war on terror was a mistake of massive proportions."

Tim Weiner is the author of "Legacy of Ashes: A History of the C.I.A."

### Mind control

The term mind control (also known as brainwashing, coercive persuasion, thought control, or thought reform) refers to a process in which a group or individual «systematically uses unethically manipulative methods to persuade others to conform to the wishes of the manipulator(s), often to the detriment of the person being manipulated». The term has been applied to any tactic, psychological or otherwise, which can be seen as subverting an individual's sense of control over their own thinking, behavior, emotions or decision making.

Theories of brainwashing and of mind control were originally developed to explain how totalitarian regimes appeared to succeed systematically in indoctrinating prisoners of war through propaganda and torture techniques. These theories were later expanded and modified by psychologists including Margaret Singer, to explain a wider range of phenomena, especially conversions to new religious movements (NRMs). A third-generation theory proposed by Ben Zablocki focused on the utilization of mind control to retain members of NRMs and cults. The suggestion that NRMs use mind control techniques has resulted in scientific and legal controversy. Neither the American Psychological Association nor the American Sociological Association have found any scientific merit in such theories.

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



## National Bank Of Yemen Board of Directors in it's capacity as the General Assembly Confirmed the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2009



**Mr. Abdulrahman Alkuhali**  
Chairman and General Manager



The National Bank of Yemen Board of Directors in it's capacity as the General Assembly held its annual meeting on Monday 5th of April 2010, with the presence of all its members and the Bank Executive Management participation, to confirm the bank financial statements for the financial year ending 31st December 2009 and hearing the report of the independent Auditor M/S. / Dahman RSM for those statements.

The meeting started by a speech given by Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Kuhali the Chairman of Board, and General Manager indicating that the National Bank, of Yemen during the year 2009, has witnessed like other banks in the world the side defect of the consequences of the economic crisis, but the bank by preserving a conservative financial and banking policy depending upon a balanced procedures and it's commitment by a conservative banking policy has proved that it was the best methodologies in the banking business, and assisted the bank in lightening and decreasing the negative consequences of this crisis enabling the bank to keep a good profitability at the same profitability of the previous year, and to keep the quality and solidity of

bank assets, and increasing of the property rights, leading to increase the capital's efficiency average to become one of the best capital average in the world, and achieve high credit classification granted by one of the biggest international credit classification establishments, according to the report issued by the Capital Intelligence establishment in November 2009.

The Chairman of the Board added, saying, that the National of Yemen in the year 2009 witnessed a special distinguished presence in the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of its establishment (1969 – 2009), by sponsoring sports activities and symposiums and advertisement campaign at all levels of printed and viewed media.

These activities were enthroned by arranging a banking seminar attended by the board members, executive managers, Branches Managers and a number of specialists in field of economy, finance and banking sciences, where the seminar dedicated to study and analyze the experi-

ment of National Bank of Yemen and the stages of its development and its distinguished role in the economical development operation during the past forty years, aiming at evaluating the bank experiment since its establishment, and review the achievements in all fields, and identify it's future paths through enhancing the bank pioneer role in serving the national economy and in the economical development operation, and providing advanced banking products and services for its customers and dealers and improve its distinguished experiment in developing its humans resources and their income.

Furthermore, the chairman of the board expressed in his speech has clarified, that the National Bank of Yemen aimed to continue it's development and growth and keep its pioneer position in the domestic banking sector and enforce its identification representing its values and principles such as trust, experience, honesty, transparency and belongingness. The bank will continue developing its banking operations that reflects upgrading the performance criterion and providing distinguished banking products and services, and applying advanced technological systems, to achieve remarkable results during the coming year and after, which shall reflect positively on the bank customers and the owner (The Yemeni Government).

Mr. Dahman Awadh Dahman – the Independent Auditor in turn read his report showing accuracy of the financial statements of the

bank for the year ending 31 December 2009, which contains the financial position statement at 31 December 2009, and the comprehensive income statement, and variation of the property right statement, and the statement of the cash flow for the year ended in that date, in addition to a summary of the important accounting policies and the other clarifications expressions, prepared according to the international financial reports systems IFRS in preparing the accounts and the financial statements and directives of the Central Bank of Yemen.

The Board of Directors and the Executive Management and the Employees of the bank dedicated these achievements which implemented during the year 2009m to His Excellency the President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the president of the republic as a gratefulness and appreciation for his leadership and wise guidance to implement the comprehensive economical development in our country and the stability of the investment environment and rising up the Yemeni Economy they also expressed their thanks to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance and the governor of the Central Bank of Yemen and to all Ministers and Department Directors and the Government Corporations and the Bank Clients for their trust and continuous support promotion

The Board of directors also conveyed its greeting and thanks to the Bank Executive Management and all the Employees of National Bank of Yemen whose loyalty and efficiency form the pillar of the development of the bank the Board of Directors will always comply to face all the challenges in order to reach the targets and objectives which the National Bank of Yemen would like to achieve.

# YALI: A 35-year journey in English language teaching in Yemen

Established in 1975, the Yemeni American Language Institute (YALI) was the first English language institute in Yemen. Despite passing through several management and administrative problems, especially in recent years, the institute is still considered as one of the leading language institutes in Yemen.

This month YALI celebrates 35 years of operation in Yemen. Layla Asda interviewed three of the institute's most prominent member of staff, who joined the institute across different decades, to tell the story of YALI across its 35 years.

By: Layla Asda  
For the Yemen Times

**R**aja'a Ba Hassen joined YALI in 1986 when it was just starting. She had first been a student at YALI just after she finished high school and then throughout her university years at the College of Arts, where she obtained a BA in English and Arabic Literature. She was to be placed at level five but since there weren't enough students to fill this level, she started working with YALI as an admin person and soon was promoted to Program Assistant. She is probably of the very few people who have remained working with YALI for over two decades now. The institute closed during the Gulf war in 1990, but as soon as it reopened, Phyllis Crowell the then director, called Raja'a and asked her to join the teaching staff again.

Farhan Al-Saidi joined the institute in 1996, after he started teaching in another English college post graduation in English literature. He was directly headhunted by YALI's director at the time, David Godstand, which he did with pleasure.

Mohammad Naif was on the verge of completing his Masters of Arts in Linguistics and TEFL at the University of Arizona in the USA in 1998, when he heard of a vacancy in YALI. He applied, was successful and has been working there ever since. He started with YALI as a part-time teacher whilst completing his PhD degree in Applied Linguistics from the English Department, College of Languages at Sana'a University in 2003. This was the first PhD degree awarded by the English Department at the university. Today he is Director of Courses, with the longest history of English teaching in Yemen.

From his position today as Director of Courses, Mohammed Naif oversees the development of courses at the institute. His work requires that he maintains the institute teaching quality and refers to what has been done by previous managements. In his opinion, YALI has developed beyond all expectations in terms of the size of the population it caters for and the educational services it provides over the past 35 years.

"It is enough to say that there were only

tens of students when it started and yet, about a year and a half ago, we had about 3700 students. Moreover, there were only a few teachers and a couple of employees at the beginning, but now we have about sixty teachers and around 30 employees.

In the past, there were only students from Sana'a. However, now they come from Hajja, Mahweet, Mareb, Soqatra, Aden, Shabwa, Taiz, Hodeidah, Hadramout, Sa'adah, Abyan, Ibb, Thamar, Lahj, Baida'a, etc," said Mohammed.

Raja'a agrees. She has been with the institute since 1986 and says that YALI's journey has been strong and steady. It is still one of the best programs working in Yemen. "YALI has brought real changes to the life of Yemenis. It is a success story that has been replicated and adopted throughout the years at the other institute born out of YALI's umbrella. They are proof that YALI has a tested formula for success," she said.

She feels proud she was given the chance to teach Yemeni students at this institute for more than two decades and see their success. "I feel grateful because YALI has helped me a lot and really changed my life, mainly due to the support of people working here," she added.

Farhan felt this feeling of pride when he joined the institute as early as the mid nineties. He commented that 35 years is a long time and YALI has helped a lot in cultural exchange. "YALI has educated people and taught them the English language. It has given them the chance to better themselves and opened doors for many opportunities for its students. Moreover, YALI has helped them find jobs, get scholarships and prepare for higher studies including PHDs. As a result, YALI has done a lot for the people who work there as well as students," he said.

## More than just teaching English

According to Raja'a, YALI was created to strengthen the cooperation and cultural ties between Yemen and America and this was the reason behind its establishment; bridging the gap between two different nations. She points out that YALI enhances and improves the students' different skills, whether in communication or personality and confidence. "YALI doesn't only help students to get important jobs, because of



Director of Courses, Dr. Mohammed Naif: "Teaching English to Yemeni students helps them understand other cultures."



Students at the Multi Media Learning Center have access to visual and audio educational tools. Not only do they learn English, but they are also used multimedia technology, a skill they gain automatically.



One of the classrooms where the students learn in an interactive environment and form study groups to improve their communication in English.

the language, but also changes their life style," she confirmed. "Students don't only learn English but also improve their cultural understanding through reading in the library, where we have different books that expand their knowledge. In addition, we have Multi Media Learning that enhances the students' different skills."

Farhan commented that YALI provides students with a good atmosphere to practice English. "YALI is also a place for having fun, so students can enjoy learning," he said.

"Students do not only learn English, but are also exposed to other peoples' cul-

ture, and again is inevitable in every organization or educational institution. No organization maintains the same management forever. "This has its advantages and disadvantages depending on the way you look at it. YALI, of course, has had its ups and downs over the years, like everything else in life, but it is still successful and remains the number one language institute in Yemen, if not in the Middle East, in terms of the quality of English education it provides and the number of successful Yemenis who have studied at YALI," said Mohammed.

Whenever a new management is as-

signed to run an educational institution, it comes up with different styles of management and this affects teaching in one way or another. However, most teachers and staff at the institute have general guidelines, policies, procedures and a specific mission that every management has to follow.

"Of course, a new management may opt to introduce positive changes. Every educational institution needs to review its programs and curriculum from time to time. Sometimes you may have a teaching approach or curriculum that works for a certain period of time for a specific student population, but after a while you might see that it is not working anymore and you have to change it. Therefore, it is normal that a new management has a fresh look at YALI's mission and goals, avoid what is not applicable anymore and replace them," said Mohammed.

Raja'a puts it in another way. "A lot of different managements have operated within YALI during the last 35 years and their variety helps the foundation and the basic systems to be strong and survive for this long. It has helped YALI overcome their difficulties and live through them, as it will continue in the future," she said.

key, Italy, Germany, Ukraine, Romania, Spain, France, Iran, Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, Tunisia and Morocco. Mohammed Naif describes YALI as a little United Nations. "Can you imagine how much a Yemeni student can learn from socializing with people from many countries in one place (YALI), and how much this positively influences his/her way of thinking and view of the world?"

People in the past were not aware of the importance to embrace English but now they are more ambitious and eager to learn. Moreover, language is important not only

which are reading and writing, to be more sophisticated," said Raja'a advising English language students. She encouraged them to be more serious and make their best efforts to improve, in order to understand and eventually learn the best of different civilizations, as well as to nurture themselves and their own culture.

"I would advise them to keep up their good work and continue their journey in learning. They should get the YALI certificate because it is recognized everywhere, both within and outside Yemen," advised Farhan. Also, they need to practice English more and my advice is that they attend



A Yemeni-American cultural event organized by Georgia de Bell, deputy ambassador at the US Embassy in the late eighties. The right photo shows teacher Raja'a Ba Hassan (right) during the cultural session on Native Americans, while the right photo shows a traditional Yemeni dance.



Moreover, students come to YALI from all over Yemen, so they learn about the variety of traditions and customs that we have in the different parts of Yemen," explained Mohammed and he gave some examples. When students come to the institute for the first time, they find it hard to express their thoughts and opinions. This has nothing to do with their abilities in English. The problem is that they are not used to expressing views and ideas freely and openly.

At YALI, the communicative approach is applied in teaching. This encourages students to communicate right from the beginning so, after a while, they do not feel inhibited or scared to use their English, no matter how limited, to communicate with their classmates and instructors.

"Also, we have male and female students who study together in the same classroom, so they may find it hard to talk to each other at the beginning, but once they study at YALI for few terms, you will be amazed to see these same young men and women not only speak their minds freely but also respect each other as human beings, listen to each other and share their ideas and thoughts politely and respectfully. These are a few of the many aspects that students learn at YALI, besides just learning English," said Director of Courses Mohammed Naif.

## Winds of change

The institute was first run by the Cultural Attaché Officer until 2002. Then it was part of the embassy for two years. After that, the embassy hired an implementer (AMIDEAST) to run YALI for two years under the embassy's supervision. Finally another organization (YCMES) was given a grant to run YALI.

Farhan explained that the various changes in the institute's management have not affected the quality of teaching. "YALI has its rules, regulations and policies and these were never changed even under the different managements. Throughout the years, YALI has kept its good reputation that distinguish it and make it famous," said Farhan.

Mohammed agrees. He commented that changing management every now

signed to run an educational institution, it comes up with different styles of management and this affects teaching in one way or another. However, most teachers and staff at the institute have general guidelines, policies, procedures and a specific mission that every management has to follow.

"Of course, a new management may opt to introduce positive changes. Every educational institution needs to review its programs and curriculum from time to time. Sometimes you may have a teaching approach or curriculum that works for a certain period of time for a specific student population, but after a while you might see that it is not working anymore and you have to change it. Therefore, it is normal that a new management has a fresh look at YALI's mission and goals, avoid what is not applicable anymore and replace them," said Mohammed.

Raja'a puts it in another way. "A lot of different managements have operated within YALI during the last 35 years and their variety helps the foundation and the basic systems to be strong and survive for this long. It has helped YALI overcome their difficulties and live through them, as it will continue in the future," she said.

## A ticket to success and cultural understanding

English is the language of business, industry, research and the Internet. Nowadays, almost all job advertisements and scholarships require candidates to exhibit English proficiency.

"Teaching English to Yemeni students provides them with opportunities to understand not only the American, British, Australian, and Canadian cultures, but also to understand other cultures as well as their own (the Yemeni culture)," said Mohammed. He added that when students come across other cultures, they reflect more on their own and understand it better. "I know many Yemeni students at YALI and Sana'a University who always tell me they understand their Yemeni culture much better now because they are exposed to other ones."

Yemeni students study English with students from Korea, Japan, Russia, Tur-

for jobs but also for an awareness of what is going around them, added Raja'a.

She remembers some of her students who used the knowledge gained at YALI and made a bright future for themselves. Some of her students are now politicians and electoral candidates. For instance, she remembers Abdurrahman Al Kohalani, Taha Hajer, Judge Hamod Al-Hittar and Dr. Wahiba Farei.

She said that YALI students are successful men and women everywhere, not just in Yemen. In a visit to Austria last year, she found some of her former students who are now working there in the Yemeni embassy and also in the International Atomic Agency.



The library is one of the very important learning resources for the students.

Mohammed also remembers students who later in life became leaders in different organizations and educational institutions. His former students are working in embassies and oil companies. Some have become teachers at YALI or other English language teaching institutions.

Farhan recalls that he has taught some bright students that later became government officials, such as the General Manager of the National Museum in Sana'a, or in private companies, such as those who are now working in oil companies such as TOTAL and Ocean Petroleum.

## A word of advice

"I would tell students to be more careful and focus on their studies. Moreover they need to focus on two important skills,

YALI for more than two hours per day, to spend more time practicing English, he added.

Learning a language is not an easy task; it's a long journey, according to Mohammed. "Nevertheless, if you are determined and highly-motivated, you can master learning a language in a relatively short period of time. It all depends on how much time and effort you put into achieving your linguistic goals," he said.

One obvious way to master any language, according to Mohammed, is to practice as much as possible, but it is not necessary to practice it just with native speakers. A student can practice with classmates by forming study groups. "You

don't have to wait for a native English person to come and talk to you. Students underestimate how much they can learn from each other; they just think that they can only learn from a teacher or a native speaker," he said. The classroom is only a place to get guidance from teachers. Students have to do a lot of the work on their own if they really want to master a second or foreign language.

Mohammed Naif added that there are many things that can't be learned in a classroom; students should just apply both time and effort and then they'll learn a lot inside and outside the classroom. "I know you are going to say this is too much, teacher! However, I will have to remind you of the English proverb that says, 'There's no gain without pain.'"



Raja'a Ba Hassen in a group photo with American teachers from the Peace Core organization in 1989. Many of the teachers in YALI in the late eighties and early nineties were members of the Peace Core.



Teacher Farhan during a conversation class, showing the students how to carry out everyday conversations in English.

## How a Yemeni terrorist slipped through the cracks

By: David Ignatius  
The Daily Star

Last October, the Yemeni government came to the CIA with a request: Could the agency collect intelligence that might help target the network of a US-born Al-Qaeda recruiter named Anwar al-Aulaqi?

What happened next is haunting, in light of subsequent events: The CIA concluded that it could not assist the Yemenis in locating Aulaqi for a possible capture operation. The primary reason was that the agency lacked specific evidence that he threatened the lives of Americans — which is the threshold for any capture-or-kill operation against a citizen of the United States. The Yemenis also wanted US Special Forces' help in pursuing Aulaqi; that, too, was refused.

Even if the CIA had obtained hard evidence in October that Aulaqi was a threat, and Special Forces had been authorized for a capture operation, permission from the National Security Council would have been needed. That's because any use of lethal force against a "US person," such as Aulaqi, requires White House review.

The subsequent chain of events was a chilling demonstration of Aulaqi's power as an Al-Qaeda facilitator: On November 5, US Army Major Nidal Hasan killed 13 of his fellow soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas; Hasan had exchanged 18 or more emails with Aulaqi in the months before the shootings, according to the Associated Press. Then, on Christmas Day, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian who had been living in Yemen, tried to blow up an airliner bound for Detroit; he is said to have confessed later that Aulaqi was

one of his trainers for this mission.

The Aulaqi case is worth revisiting, for several reasons. In hindsight, it seems clear that he was indeed a dangerous person. If the US had helped the Yemenis capture him, this might have disrupted the actions of Hasan and Abdulmutallab. So it's useful to examine the rules that limited action in October and the quality of intelligence that was available for decision-makers.

Such retrospective analysis is unfair, to be sure, but it provides a useful lens for assessing policy choices. After September 11, 2001, there were detailed investigations of the Clinton administration's failure to capture or kill Osama bin Laden in the late 1990s and of the George W. Bush administration's failure to heed warnings before the 2001 terrorist attacks.

What's surprising about the Aulaqi case is just how much information the

FBI and CIA already had on him. At least two of the 9/11 hijackers had attended a mosque where he preached in San Diego. His phone number was found in the Hamburg apartment of Ramzi Binalshibh, often described as "the 20th hijacker." The FBI was interested in Aulaqi even before 9/11, because of his alleged fundraising for Hamas. So there was US intelligence concern about him as a possible Al-Qaeda operative dating back nearly a decade.

Hasan had attended another mosque where Aulaqi preached, in Northern Virginia. Indeed, according to Aulaqi, when Hasan first contacted him by email on December 17, 2008, he wrote: "Do you remember me? I used to pray with you at the Virginia mosque." In another email, Hasan is said to have told Aulaqi: "I can't wait to join you" in the afterlife.

Military-intelligence investigators apparently reviewed these emails before the Fort Hood shooting, but they did not prompt action. If they didn't meet the threshold for concern, then something was wrong with that threshold.

A US official familiar with the case responds: "Aulaqi didn't go operational until November. It wasn't a case of missed intelligence, not at all. The Yemenis didn't even think he had assumed an operational role." This official also notes that "there was an American policy decision not to put boots on the ground," limiting any military action.

In retrospect, it seems clear that the available information should have triggered closer scrutiny of both Hasan and Aulaqi. We'll never know whether such action could have deterred Hasan. As for Aulaqi, officials now say he is on the United States' target list.

Finally, does it make sense to require special NSC permission before a potentially lethal operation against a US citizen such as Aulaqi? My answer would be, yes. The higher threshold that was in place in 2009 was appropriate then, and still is: Use of lethal force always needs careful controls — especially when it involves Americans.

The "what ifs" about Yemen are troubling, not least because they are a reminder the intelligence agencies have to make life-or-death calculations based on fragmentary evidence — with catastrophic consequences if they're wrong. What was needed, we can now see, was hard information last October that could have met the legal standard appropriately in place.

Syndicated columnist David Ignatius is published twice-weekly by THE DAILY STAR.

## The challenge of Yemen

By Rep. Adam B. Schiff (D-Calif.)  
The Hill

For most Americans, Yemen is a distant and forbidding place, intruding upon our lives only in the context of terrorism — be it the bombing of the USS Cole, its status as Osama bin Laden's "ancestral homeland," or the attempted Christmas Day 2009 bombing of Northwest Flight 253. But while this parched, impoverished land at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula is unknown to many, it stands at the center of the struggle against al Qaeda.

Thousands of dedicated Americans throughout our government are focused on preventing another major attack on America that many believe will be masterminded from Yemeni territory.

As home to al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, a separatist movement in the southern part of the country, and

the Houthi insurgency in the northwest along the Saudi border, Yemen commands American attention and assistance. But, as I came to appreciate during a recent visit to Yemen's capital, Sana'a, the country faces three additional challenges: a young and chronically underemployed population, a severe water shortage and the depletion of the country's oil reserves. These three factors — demography, environment and economy — threaten Yemen's survival and could foster further instability in an already unsteady region.

As we flew over Yemen, the country's geography revealed itself as an additional challenge. Twice the size of Wyoming, Yemen is geographically diverse and sparsely settled outside of major cities and towns. It is easy to disappear there, as there are only 7,705 kilometers of paved roads in the entire country (neighboring Oman, by comparison has more than 16,000 kilometers of paved

roads, but is only 60 percent as large as Yemen). Yemen's lengthy land and maritime borders are also porous and difficult to defend. While much of our attention in recent months has been focused on the government's fight against Houthi rebels based along the western part of the frontier with Saudi Arabia, the longer-term threat emanates from Yemen's proximity to and longstanding historical ties with Somalia, whose present could be Yemen's future. Both countries have become a sanctuary for al Qaeda leaders who have been flushed from their redoubts in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The al Qaeda threat in Yemen has not gone unnoticed by American policymakers over the past decade. In the wake of the Cole bombing and the 9/11 attacks, our counterterrorism cooperation with the Yemeni government increased markedly. That effort has now moved to a new stage as economic and security as-

sistance to Sana'a has been greatly increased in the past couple of years (the Obama administration has requested \$63 million in fiscal 2011, a 20 percent increase over the previous year) and American and other allied nations are training Yemeni security forces.

Ultimately, however, this cannot be America's fight alone. Our military has been stretched by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; we cannot afford a new, large-scale financial commitment given our budgetary crisis; and the goal of resuscitating Yemen is better left to regional players, who cannot be so easily portrayed as anti-Muslim imperialists looking to broaden American hegemony in another Islamic country.

There are encouraging signs that Yemen's neighbors have come to appreciate the danger in their midst. In December 2009, the United Arab Emirates pledged \$650 million in aid. Saudi Arabia pledged a billion dollars in aid

in 2006 and was drawn into the Yemeni government's fight last fall with the Houthi rebels, a tacit acknowledgement that, as the Kuwaiti newspaper al Watan opined last month, "The security of Yemen means the security of the Arabian peninsula and the Gulf." This year there have already been two international conferences on Yemen. A January meeting in London, sponsored by the British government, drew Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and other world leaders, who discussed how best to counter the disintegration of the Yemeni state as well as ways to counter radicalization there. This was followed up by a donors' conference in Riyadh at the end of last month, at which the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the European Union, the United States and international financial institutions continued to hammer out a rescue plan for Yemen.

Leaving Yemen, I concluded that the threats to the country cannot be solved

by counterterrorism assistance and training alone, but will require sustained, multilateral engagement that relies on Yemeni and other regional players to assume the lead role. Time is not on our side, however, as Yemen's dwindling oil and water supplies will put even greater pressure on Sana'a's ability to reassert control over its own territory and people. America has a crucial role in helping our Arab allies in Yemen. Our technical expertise, military power and intelligence capability will play a vital role in helping to stabilize the country. Our ability to coordinate large-scale development projects will help to inform a multilateral aid program that may give Yemen's impoverished millions — 45 percent of whom live on less than \$2 a day — a chance at a better life, while bolstering our own security.

Schiff is a member of the House Intelligence Committee.

## A letter from Sana'a

### The link between governance and security in Yemen

By: James M. Dorsey  
Foreign Affairs

The inner courtyard of the traffic-police headquarters in Yemen's capital, Sana'a, resembles an open-air market. Across the sprawling yard, drivers haggle with men in uniform, and money changes hands in exchange for registrations and

authorizations. Offices in the two buildings that frame the courtyard are used for more complicated business, such as issuing certifications that only the director general can provide. One afternoon, a Yemeni businessman stood on a balcony overlooking the yard. "This is the problem," he told me. "I had to bribe the police five times just to report a theft from my car. It is everyone for himself," he said, scurrying off toward

a senior officer, a smuggled bottle of Johnny Walker Black in his briefcase.

Similar scenes showing a lack of state authority and of alternative power structures are found across the city. One morning, I visited the interior ministry and spoke to a senior military officer who was busy on the phone trying to prevent the escalation of a land dispute in Aden that had already left two of his cousins dead. As he explained, al-

though the land issue was being tried in court, the deaths had to be resolved between the families. He was trying to persuade the police to confiscate the feuding families' arms and to negotiate a deal that would compensate his family for the deaths. "This is madness," he told me in between phone calls.

In this landscape of competing political and tribal authorities, where officials leverage their individual authority to supplement their meager incomes, interest groups fill the voids. They exploit a situation in which President Ali Abdullah Saleh is able to extend his rule over parts of the country only through the proxy of favored tribal leaders. These groups buy the loyalty of segments of the population and manipulate local domestic conflicts to their perceived interests. For example, they emphasize the fact that the tribes in the resource-rich provinces do not share in the benefits of the country's oil and gas reserves. And al Qaeda's regional offshoot, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) garners favor by helping dig wells and paying for health care for the needy. Benefitting from these organizations' largesse are a number of tribal, religious and political groups including AQAP; puritan non-political Salafis, who seek to emulate the earliest successors to the Prophet Muhammad; Wahhabis, supporters of Saudi Arabia's puritan interpretation of Islam; and local tribes.

Conflict rooted in local grievances is inevitable. The absence of a coherent Yemeni government has sparked a bit-

ter war between Houthi tribesmen and Saudi-supported government forces in the north, has led to a secessionist movement in the south, and has provided grounds for powerful tribes to forge alliances with AQAP. Official incompetence and corruption have caused the proceeds of the country's dwindling oil reserves and water resources to be squandered. As a result, Sana'a is set in the next ten years to become modern history's first capital to run out of water, according to the Sana'a Basin Water Management Project, which is funded by the World Bank.

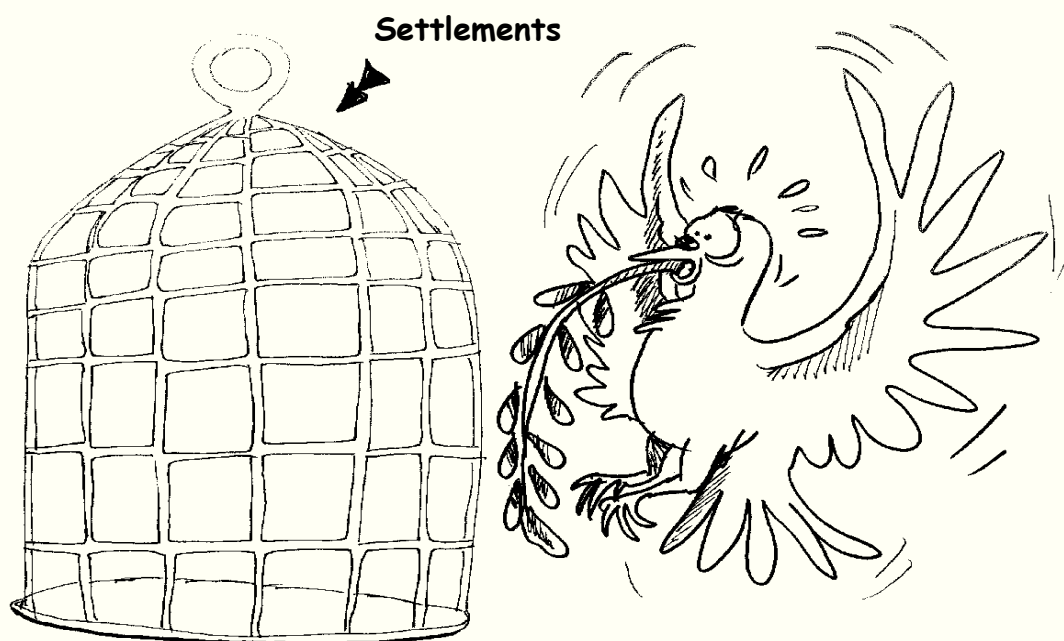
After the failed Christmas Day bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner, Yemen became the latest focus of Western efforts to defeat global jihadists such as AQAP. One of the poorest countries in the Arab world, Yemen is a study in the difficulty of containing militants and their ability to capitalize on widespread societal grievances, including those regarding cultural rights, bleak economic prospects, corruption, and gripes with the perceived inequitable distribution of power.

It also showcases the problems with the West's reliance on allies with questionable domestic policies, suggesting how hard it is to ensure that aid provided to a dysfunctional and corrupt government is, in fact, used to improve the population's quality of life. Meanwhile, addressing the grievances on which militants feed is complicated by widespread anti-American sentiment and distrust of Western policy interventions.

The reemergence of an al Qaeda affiliate in Yemen, seven years after the group was believed to have been shattered with the death of its leader Abu Ali al-Harithi in a U.S. drone strike, reveals the limitations of a security-dominated approach to defeating the militants. Al Qaeda in Yemen has reconstituted itself as a decentralized group that is more attuned to local grievances; again, decapitation is unlikely to do the trick.

In the United States and Europe, a consensus is emerging that Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich Gulf states will have to play a key political and financial role in coaxing the Saleh government to implement reforms. But this will require Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states to change their policies toward Yemen. They would have to stop manipulating Yemen's domestic conflicts and instead seek to resolve them. In recent months, Saudi Arabia has joined forces with the Saleh government in fighting tribal rebels in the north who are driven primarily by social, economic, and cultural grievances. A ceasefire with Saudi Arabia, declared by the rebels in January and portrayed by the kingdom as a military victory, has so far evaporated in renewed fighting. But an earlier ceasefire, mediated by Qatar in 2008, failed when Saleh refused to implement it on the advice of the Saudis. A recently agreed-on ceasefire between the Yemeni forces and the rebels is likely to be short-lived if the rebels' cultural and economic gripes are not addressed. To do so, Saudi cooperation is needed.

SKETCHED OPINION



By: Hameed

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## Egypt plagued with street children Cairo struggling with alarming number of homeless children

Joseph Mayton and Rachele Kliger  
The Media Line

[Cairo] Dina and Salma were eight and six-years-old when they were kicked out of their home because there was no money to pay the rent.

"Our mom used to make money by bringing men home, and then, when they left, she would just hit us with sticks and branches," Dina told The Media Line. "Then, one day she never came back. We don't know what happened to her."

Dina, now 13, and Salma, 11, are two of Egypt's street children, whose numbers are estimated anywhere between 90,000 and 1 million.

The Egyptian government admits that the number of street children is on the rise, and in 2003 adopted a new national strategy for the protection and rehabilitation of street children, which tasked the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) with coordinating the efforts of NGOs and relevant governmental organizations.

The NCCM led the drafting of key amendments to Egypt's Child Law to alter the recognition of street children as victims and at-risk rather than being viewed, as is the common perception at

the moment, as deviants or criminals. But the national strategy has yet to become operational in the form of an action plan.

Egyptian Minister of State for Family and Population Moshira Khattab said last month that the number of births in Egypt was increasing, and attributed the phenomenon to illegal marriages, involving underage girls, which in turn fueled the existence of street children and child labor, adding to a national population growing by 1.5 million every year. The minister said fighting school dropouts was one of the most effective ways to eliminate street children and other problems such as underage marriage.

But some argue that the government is barking up the wrong tree and needs to address the core problem - poverty.

"If we look at the increasing number of street children in Egypt, it doesn't work," Manal Tibe, director of the Egyptian Center for Housing Rights told The Media Line. "[The government] strategy is working on the current street children who already exist on the street but it doesn't prevent the potential possibility of other street children. We don't prevent or eliminate the roots of this phenomenon like eliminating poverty or correct-

ing the education system in Egypt."

"If you don't eliminate poverty, you will always have street children," she said. "No number of governmental agencies and NGOs will be able to look out for this number of children."

"Early marriage is not the problem either," Manal argued. "Poverty is the problem. We don't have early marriage in Egypt because the age has risen. Many don't marry until their 30s because of the economic circumstances."

"If you talk about one million street children in Egypt, who will marry and have children, they will send them to the streets with completely different norms and values to the society," Tibe explained. "It will cause a conflict in society itself, because the rehabilitation institution does not develop alternatives for these children to become respected people in the community. There is no way but crime."

Egypt's Child Law was amended in 2008 to protect children from being stigmatized as criminals by holding parents legally responsible for their children's behavior. While it may seem like an obvious move, Save the Children in Egypt said that in the past, thousands of such children were arrested, by virtue of be-

ing on the street alone, and were sent to detention centers without appropriate protection.

But while new measures are slowly being introduced, understanding how to tackle the problem remains a tricky and complex issue.

"Causes are multiple and interrelated," Abdel-Rahman Ghandour a UNICEF spokesman for the MENA region told The Media Line. "They include poverty, rural migration, bad housing, school dropout, violence against children and others. Children living in the street are affected by a combination of mutually reinforcing protection risks such as child labor, trafficking, conflict with the law and abuse."

A government survey in 2009 suggested that 42 percent of street children in Egypt are school dropouts, and 30 percent had never attended school at all. Many are ignorant about health, hygiene, and nutrition and deprived of services. As children living on the fringe subsist on an inadequate diet, they are often malnourished and most of them are illiterate.

"The phenomenon is, by its nature, extremely difficult to measure," he explained, "as classical information gath-

ering exercises such as households surveys, are not designed to capture their situation. Moreover, being in the street is a status offence for children in several countries in the region."

According to UNICEF, a street child is "any child that lives, works, and sleeps in the streets." Some of them, after begging or vending on the streets, will return home at the end of the day and contribute their earnings to the family income. But others will live and work on the street and are destitute without help from their families.

When Dina and Salma were first evicted from their house, they initially planned to beg and earn a few pounds daily, enough for a meal and a couple of sandwiches a day. They moved to downtown Cairo when they were 11 and 8, but after seeing other street children raped and beaten they moved to a different area.

"We had a few hundred pounds we had saved, but didn't know what to do to make money," they said. "Then a nice man told us that we could buy bread from the government and sell it to people at a higher price. So that's what we did."

They set up shop in Zamalek and made what they called a home for themselves

along the banks of the Nile. They had a tarp that was buttressed by two logs and even had a little pit for a fire to boil water and cook small foodstuffs.

"We were alright, but then the police came and found us and started to demand we pay them," Dina said pointing to the other side of the river where they stayed. "We had about LE 3,000 saved up, but had to give them 500 or they would have hurt us. This is when we decided to leave."

Today, Dina and Salma have a garden to call home. It is a rundown, abandoned houseboat, and they have a little shelter with wooden walls taken from the house.

**Nobody bothers them, they say.**

"Sometimes I hear people shout at us to take a shower, but we haven't been in a bathroom since we were with our mom. It is okay, we have the river," Salma says pointing to the murky water filled with floating garbage.

"Here, we have been able to save up a lot of money because there are more people buying our bread," Dina says. "I hope that when I turn 16 I can get us a small flat somewhere cheap and Salma can go to school while I get a job."

### The forgotten famine

## The most under-reported nation on earth may be starving

Benjamin Joffe-Walt  
The Media Line

When one thinks of secret, reclusive nations, North Korea comes to mind. When repressive regimes are being discussed around the coffee table, Burma, Saudi Arabia and Zimbabwe often get discussed. But analysts and human rights advocates say the tiny, forgotten East African nation of Eritrea is equally deserving of both titles.

One of the most difficult to access nations on earth, reporting on Eritrea is like trying to see through a wall. Tourists are rarely allowed in, political or civil society organizations are non-existent within the country and calling an Eritrean to speak about the situation is likely to endanger their lives. But Eritrean activists, both inside the country and in exile, claim Eritrea is in the midst of a unnoticed, severe humanitarian crisis.

"The humanitarian situation in the country is alarming," Mussie Hadgu, an Eritrean human rights activist, told The

Media Line. "The majority of the Eritrean households have been suffering from hunger and do not have the means to cope with the effects of drought and other economic and social problems."

"There are some families that stay without eating for one to two or more days," Hadgu said. "Some families eat once per day and yet the one meal per day constitutes a small portion of the meal that is consumed in normal situations."

"When I say meal I am not making reference to the meal that is provided in normal situation," Hadgu continued. "Some families divide what is supposed to be one meal in normal times into three 2-3 meals, giving only small pieces of 'Kicha' to the children at various intervals throughout the day."

"The drought has a great negative impact on the animals due to the shortage of pasture," Hadgu said. "The absence of animals has caused the population to suffer from malnutrition. The most affected groups are children, lactating and pregnant women, and the big number of severely malnourished children referred to the health facilities for therapeutic feeding is a clear indicator of the seri-

ousness of the humanitarian situation." Hadgu said begging and forced migration is common throughout the country.

"The reduction in the quality and quantity of food consumed is one of the coping strategies adopted by the affected households," Hadgu said. "But when the only meager resources are being exhausted and the people are in a situation where there are no means for accessing food by any means, at this point they resort to begging activities."

"Begging is done in two ways," Hadgu continued. "Migrating to areas which have harvested some crops during the last season: Whole families and even entire villages migrated during the last harvest time to neighboring areas or even to far areas extending as far as about 350 kilometres. Migration is done mostly on foot, begging on their way from village to village until they reach the last destination where to settle temporarily."

"The second is migrating to towns," Hadgu explained. "Whole families migrate to the towns and they camp and engage in begging activities in, and around, the churches' and mosques'

premises. The flux of begging families into the urban centers has added to the ever increasing numbers of beggars in the towns due to rising poverty level in the towns."

Tesfamariam Tekeste, a senior Eritrean diplomat, argued that international food aid was not necessary and had many negative consequences on the recipient society.

Eritrea has already told the food distribution agencies that Eritrea doesn't need food aid," he told The Media Line. "Food aid in a normal situation cripples a society and the mentality of people. People stop praying for rain and start praying for rain in the donor countries."

"Food aid had become an industry in Eritrea," Tekeste said. "It leads to lots of corruption, theft and bureaucracy and creates dependency when people need to learn to work."

"We have the land, we have the water, we have the manpower," he continued. "What we need is farming equipment, fertilizer, seed and other technology."

"Food aid should be in a disaster situation for elderly people who really need it, like what happened in Haiti or Chile, then we will ask for food aid," Tekeste

concluded. "For now the international community should be encouraging us. We are making our living ourselves."

But various human rights groups have accused the government of expropriating crops from households that were able to harvest some crops, imposing restrictions on the crop trade, forcing certain farmers to resettle, criminalizing begging, preventing nutrition surveys and refusing to allow international aid agencies to work freely in the country.

"The cause of the famine is mainly the wrong and destructive policies of the government," Elsa Chyrum, Director of the Eritrean Human Rights Concern, a London-based Eritrean human rights organization, told The Media Line. "One of the government policies that have caused poverty and famine are the tying up of the productive segment of the population in the endless national service with no payment."

Eritrean men are forced into indefinite military service. Human rights activists say many of these soldiers have been killed in Eritrea's various wars, killed trying to escape the country, or are in prison for refusing to serve or various political reasons. Among those

who are not killed and allowed to return home, a large number have HIV or have suffered serious trauma, be it from torture or prolonged military service.

A compounding factor in the famine has been overpopulation and deforestation, particularly in the highly-populated mountainous highlands of the country.

"The increase of population has resulted in a decrease in land holdings, lack of or little grazing lands, diminishing the complementary benefit that was obtained from animal production," Chyrum said. "The animals provide the energy needed for the ploughing the land and serve as pack animals. They also provide milk, meat and other products that are useful to the households and serve as security and insurance during economic difficulties. In the past during droughts, the vegetation and availability of pasture or some trees on which animals could graze, had enabled some of the animals to survive and provide food to the households even at hard times enabling the households to maintain their resilience from the effect of the drought. Nowadays this is no more the case."

### Somalis fraught under a Taliban-Style rule

## Somalis are being bogged down by rampant violence and debilitating religious edicts

Abdinisir Mohamed Guled  
The Media Line

[Mogadishu, Somalia] In a street in north Mogadishu, three young kids squat near a decomposing human body as dogs run to and fro.

When Al-Shabab insurgents erupted on the Somali scene three years ago, most people welcomed them, hoping their Islam would restore peace and bring better tidings to this east African nation that has been torn by conflict since 1991.

But the ascension of Al-Shabab, followers of strict Saudi Arabian-inspired Wahhabi interpretation of Islam, have forcibly imposed their intolerant religious laws across the large swaths of the country they control.

Already worn down by unstable government, continuous violence, famine, inflation and even piracy, the Somalis, most of whom practice a moderate Sufi form of Islam, are facing religious repression reminiscent of the Taliban rule in Afghanistan. The Al-Shabab, although not officially in power, widely use executions, floggings and threats to force their Islam on the population. It has banned all forms of entertainment, forced women to wear heavy veils and even dictated men's hair styles. The violence in the streets has had a particularly harsh impact on children.

Pediatricians say young children in

Mogadishu are experiencing stress because they are witnessing horrific images like dogs ravaging corpses in the streets or are constantly subject to loud explosions.

"Most of the children we treat are not sick with disease but are suffering from stress,"

Pediatrician Mohamad Ahmed told The Media Line. "Their parents tell us the kids have frequent nightmares because of the terrible images they see," he says, as two women with young children wait patiently for his treatment.

About half the population of Mogadishu has fled their homes. The city itself is torn between the failing Transitional Federal Government and rival warlords. Al-Shabab is the dominant group in its quest to topple the Western-backed government and impose strict Islamic law nationwide but faces competition from Sufi groups who seek a more moderate form of Islam.

Daily, Al-Shabab launches attacks on security forces, civilians, aid workers and peacekeepers. Sports activities, cinemas and weddings featuring jazz - once a main source of amusement for the impoverished country - have all been banned on the pretense they were un-Islamic. But it is also an effort to lure the subsequently disgruntled, bored and unemployed youth into their ranks.

"I'm sure their behavior cannot be

commendable in the eyes of the Somalis," Abdinur Naleye, a Somali university lecturer in Mogadishu told The Media Line. "How can they please the Somalis while they are massacring them and forcing on them something they don't want?"

Women became the main target of the drive to implement harsh laws, by barring them from working and ordering them to wear 'Kaki' type veils and skirts covering the entire body. They risked being flogged if they defy these orders.

Rebels have also ordered men and women to travel on separate buses, a ruling that did not sit well with most Somalis. Later, they decreed that men and women were allowed to travel in one cart, but prohibited them from sharing a bench.

"What Al-Shabab is doing is awful," Abshiro Hussein, 60, tells The Media Line at a bus station in Mogadishu. "We have been living here for years, but never experienced anything like their unacceptable rules," she added, citing executions and ad-hoc court rulings.

Hussein says that she was beaten for wearing a soft textile usually worn by elderly Somali women.

Sheikh Nor Barud 'Gurhan,' chairman of Somalia's religious leaders, said many of Al-Shabab's verdicts are illegal and even those that are lawful can, by both Islamic and international law, only

be implemented by a government.

"According to the Islam, no group can carry out the sentences that they are implementing," Gurhan, told The Media Line via phone from Nairobi, Kenya. "Only governments can mete out sentences. What they are doing is out of ignorance of the Islamic religion."

Somali religious leaders who asked not to be named said the rebels have established ad-hoc courts in the territories under their control, where self-proclaimed judges sentence whomever they suspect as their enemy to death, amputations or death by stoning.

Somalis had often sought solace in jazz music at weddings and youngsters frequented cinemas as a favorite past time. Both these activities have been criminalized in the areas under the militants' control and many Somalis feel they are being mentally suffocated.

"I feel like I'm under arrest," Abduqadir Osman, 18, tells The Media Line as he sits bored at his house. "We have no cinemas, no football or any entertainment."

Al-Shabab enforcers twice beat Osman because of his hairstyle which did not conform to a modest religious style. The rebels have ordered men to shave moustaches but not their beards. Those who violate these rulings will become a target of their justice system.

Sheikh Ibrahim, a senior Al-Shabab

official, told reporters that men should also "cut the pants to the knee," in reference to a trendy style worn by Somali men.

Recently, Al-Shabab ordered a ban on English and science teachers in some schools in areas under their control.

"They're destroying our culture and its origins," Abdinacim Abdi, a Somali student based in Mogadishu told The Media Line. He also levied criticism at the weak TFG. "The so-called government also does nothing, except collect money from around the world."

Teachers say recruit-hungry insurgent units have decimated their classrooms as they entice youth to join their "jihad" holy war.

"We have very severe problems now. We see our students being lured into war," a principal at a Mogadishu school, who asked not to be named, told The Media Line. "We can't even ask them to leave the kids alone and allow them to be just pupils, because they will accuse us of being enemies of Islam, and may kill you."

During the time of the ousted warlords, Somalis were vocal about their politics in tea shops, but now, anyone who criticizes the militants will be described as an apostate and killed.

"Freedom has already gone," Abdiaziz Africa, a journalist at government run Radio Mogadishu says.

"The Islamists have knives to kill all the innocents. They consider all people who are not like them to be infidels and non-Muslim, and authorize to shed their blood for no reason," Africa says, displaying text messages with death threats on his mobile phone.

Dozens of journalists have fled the country after receiving threats, mainly from Al-Shabab militants. Before the rebels seized control, local radio stations used to air balanced reports, giving a voice to all sides, but rampant killing have brought about a compulsory bias.

The main obstacle to advancing the rebels' strict imposition of Shari'a is a group called Ahlu Sunna Waljamaca, a moderate Sufi group that started fighting the strict Wahhabi Shari'a. The group managed to force A-Shabab out of the Galgaduud region, making it peaceful and stable.

"We're committed to fighting those who are lying against the Islamic religion," Sheikh Abdullahi Sheikh Abu-Yusuf, spokesman of Ahlu Sunna Waljamaca told The Media Line.

Human-rights groups accuse the warring sides of violating rights of innocent people.

"No side cares about human life," Ali Yasin Gedi, vice chairman of the Mogadishu-based Elman rights group told The Media Line. "We call for them to respect the innocent."

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## QATAR AIRWAYS CELEBRATES DAILY FLIGHTS FROM SANA'A

Last Wednesday Qatar Airways held a gala dinner in Sheraton hotel for their Corporate & Travel agents to celebrate the increase in their frequency from 4 to 7 times a week which will provide an excellent connectivity to the entire network.

Qatar Airways currently operates a modern fleet of 81 aircraft to 86 diverse business & leisure cities across Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, South Asia and North America.

In February, the airline launched daily flights to India's IT capital city Bengaluru, formerly known as Bangalore; 30 March to Copenhagen; Ankara comes online on April 5; Tokyo services begin on April 26, complementing the airline's existing flights to the Japanese city of Osaka; and the Mediterranean port city of Barcelona will be added on June 7.

Beginning June 24, Qatar Airways will serve the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo and the Argentine capital Buenos Aires with daily scheduled flights direct from Doha.

Qatar Airways will operate a fleet of 120 aircraft by 2013, by which time its global network will rise to 120 destinations.

Qatar Airways ranked Five Star for service and excellence by Skytrax, the independent aviation industry monitoring agency also voted Qatar Airways' cabin crew Best in the Middle East for the seventh year running in 2009 and Best Airline in the Middle East for the fourth consecutive year. Qatar Airways' Economy Class has been voted Best in the World in the annual Skytrax passenger survey in which more than 16 million travelers were polled.





Worldwide IOM has over 400 offices and 5,600 staff focused on assisting migrants, governments and other stakeholders to address migration issues. IOM opened its mission in Sana'a in April 2007 and currently operates 02 field offices in the country.

DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR - TBD\*\*

Vacancy Notice: 01-04-10
Classification: Grade 7 (UN Salary Scale for GS Staff in Yemen)
Duration: 06 Months with possibility of extension

Working under the overall supervision of the Chief of Mission and the direct supervision of the Field Coordinator of the Yemen Stabilization Initiative (YSI), the incumbent will be responsible for the following duties:

- 1. Advise the programme management on programmatic strategy including where to focus programme resources, how to develop operational relationships with government entities and operational challenges.
2. Develop, coordinate and implement methodologies for engaging government entities and local communities in consultative processes for project identification and implementation.
3. Identify potential grantees for the design and development of grants.
4. Responsible for the identification and implementation of grants that appropriately correspond to the overall strategic goals of the programme.
5. Using the YSI Activity Database, write-up and recommend projects from those identified through consultative processes with the inputs of the ADA at the Community level.
6. Develop, implement and share with other YSI programme staff methodologies for small grant project implementation that incorporate a consultative approach between the government and communities.
7. Responsible for overall grant implementation process in the area of responsibility, including the supervision of the Assistant Development Advisor.
8. Provide technical assistance to grantees as required. The DA is responsible for evaluating grants throughout implementation and once the grant activities are complete.
9. Provide YSI programme management with ongoing assessment and anticipation of political events, including potential impacts and outcomes of YSI community grants.
10. Develop, implement and share with other YSI programme staff monitoring and evaluation processes.

Desirable Qualifications and skills:

- University degree in Social Sciences; Community Development; Law; International Relations; Public Administration; or an equivalent combination of training and experience
Minimum seven (7) years of professional experience in the field of governance and development.
Minimum three (3) years specific experience in the field of development with project design, implementation and management.
Thorough knowledge and understanding of government structures and current development planning in Yemen. Experience in community participation and consensus-building projects.
Demonstrated capacity to understand and analyze the national, regional, and local political context.
Excellent communication, written and verbal Arabic and English language skills essential.
IOM functional competencies: effective communicator with a wide range of actors and partners, successful negotiator, cross cultural facilitator and active learner.
Excellent computer literacy. Ability to multi-task, work under pressure and in a team.

Women with the above qualifications are encouraged to apply

Method of Application Please submit your Curriculum Vitae & Letter of Application (Stating the Position applied for on the left hand corner of the envelope) including daytime telephone and email address to the attention of:

Human Resources Department, International Organization for Migration, Saeedy Area, Street No. 18, Villa No. 3, P.O. Box 16336, Sana'a.

OR Email: hrc@iom.int (Indicating clearly the Position applied for on the Subject Line) Website: www.iom.int

Please note that only the short listed candidates will be contacted. Closing Date: Wednesday, 14th April 2010

\*\*To be determined: The duty station will be based on candidate experience and profile, and in accordance with the geographic priorities of the programme.



Worldwide IOM has over 400 offices and 5,600 staff focused on assisting migrants, governments and other stakeholders to address migration issues. IOM opened its mission in Sana'a in April 2007 and currently operates 02 field offices in the country.

ASSISTANT DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR - TBD\*\*

Vacancy Notice: 02-04-10
Classification: Grade 5 (UN Salary Scale for GS Staff in Yemen)
Duration: 06 Months with possibility of extension

Working under the overall supervision of the Chief of Mission and the direct supervision of the Development Advisor of the Yemen Stabilization Initiative (YSI), the incumbent will be responsible for the following duties:

- 1. In close consultation with the DA, responsible to ensure a regular process of Government and Community consultations towards the identification and prioritization of grant opportunities and to ensure improved, transparent dialogue throughout and beyond the grant activity cycle.
2. Assist the DAs in the design and evaluation of the grants. During the grant development process, the ADA will develop grant budgets and will take over grant implementation oversight once the grant is awarded.
3. Work with communities as well as with the District level government structures to mobilize local resources (community contributions and GoY resources) to identify synergies and implement grant activities.
4. Responsible for close coordination with the project engineer, and the maintenance of all YSI grant management policies, procedures and practices.
5. Work with all GoY program counterparts in the designated area of responsibility, particularly line ministries for relevant sectors, to develop individual work plans for each grant.
6. Work with IOM's procurement unit and project engineers to define and analyze bills of quantity (BoQs) for grant projects, and to procure in-kind contributions.
7. Work with IOM's grant management and finance units to ensure the integrity of budgeting, and to facilitate the payment of program expenses to subcontractors and sub-grantees.
8. Responsible for monitoring and reporting on project implementation in the designated area.
9. Responsible for understanding and conforming to appropriate guidelines on public tendering processes.

Desirable Qualifications and skills:

- University degree in Engineering; Community Development or a related field; or a Higher Diploma in Engineering and project design; or an equivalent combination of training and experience
Minimum five (5) years of professional experience in the field of engineering and / or development.
Minimum three (3) years specific experience in the field of development with project design, implementation and activity management in rural environments.
Experience in community participation and consensus-building projects.
Thorough knowledge and understanding of government structures and current development planning in Yemen. Personal commitment, strong interpersonal skills, efficiency, attention to detail and flexibility.
Excellent communication, written and verbal Arabic and English language skills essential.
IOM functional competencies: effective communicator with a wide range of actors and partners, successful negotiator, cross cultural facilitator and active learner.
Excellent computer literacy. Ability to multi-task, work under pressure and in a team.

Women with the above qualifications are encouraged to apply

Method of Application Please submit your Curriculum Vitae & Letter of Application (Stating the Position applied for on the left hand corner of the envelope) including daytime telephone and email address to the attention of:

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Hitex 2010 as grand prize!

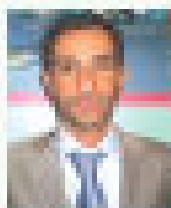
Al-Ahmar Company, the ENOC agent, honors outstanding customers in Yemen

Al-Ahmar Company, a supplier and distributor of Enbridge National Petro Company Ltd (ENOC), held a special event at the Mervagpick Hotel in Sana'a last Wednesday March 24, 2010 to honor its prominent agents from a number of governorates. These agents proved to be highly proficient in handling the company's lubricants and petrochemical sales. The lubricants produced by Al-Ahmar follow ENOC quality standards for extreme weather conditions.

Al-Ahmar Company is the sole agent of the Enbridge National Petro Company in Yemen. The company has made achievements in sales of ENOC Lubricants earning the confidence of the parent company in Dubai and opening new horizons for cooperation.

Continues to work with high performance

With the start of the year, Al-Ahmar Group Executive Director said at the beginning of the year, "As we gather today to celebrate our previous achievements, we consider that a modest success in comparison with the goals we set to accomplish. We will still be achieving the goals, there is much more work to be done and every more achievement to be completed."



"From our beginning as a distributor for ENOC Lubricants in Yemen we sought continuous performance. Our goal from the start has been to provide the highest quality products through reliable service and excellent customer support. We are proud to be recognized as a leading distributor of ENOC Lubricants in Yemen."

Al-Ahmar Company is a pioneer in establishing the first modern in Yemen for handling an oil of optimum sales of specifications and standards, and in terms of design and the type of services provided. It also took into account the standards of environmental safety.

We considered that the Al-Ahmar Company is proud that its service was not only a model for all other distributors. We are also proud that we are one of the first companies to have contributed to raising the level, quality and the degree of lubricants in the Yemeni market, through the introduction of the ENOC Lubricants brand of the ENOC which used to be considered and handled by others. "We are also the first to supply the 'Fully Synthetic Motor Oil' despite the difficulties posed by the product's complex industrial structure which made for Yemen consumers a high purchasing price."

ENOC made a deal with the Yemeni Petroleum Marketing Organization (YPMO) for supplying the services and standards of lubricants and oil to Yemeni markets in order to meet the Yemeni technological and development requirements, as in the case in other countries.

Al-Ahmar gained not only, due to ENOC's excellent support, they managed to overcome the difficulties and challenges that faced the company. He added that ENOC becomes a sponsor for quality and trust in the field of lubricants in Yemen, as it is in other parts of the world.

All the staff of the company also expressed their appreciation for the excellent support regarding their role for its being an Enbridge.

And company from Dubai, having the global experience. He also thanked the agents, praising the quality of their work and the excellent achievements as well as future work, that it will lead for their confidence and alignment.

Ministry of Trade and Economic Affairs

Minister of Trade, General Manager of ENOC International Company in Yemen, Mohamed al-Sayid, emphasized the importance of the company's agents handling the lubricants' services in Yemen.

"It is a pleasure to be with you in this important celebration, as it is an important milestone for the agents. I would like to be the first to present special thanks and gratitude for the company's management, ENOC Lubricants agent-distributor in Yemen."

I also offer special appreciation to Sheikh Khalid bin Abdulrahman al-Ahmar, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Sheikh Osama Abu Lulama, Sales Director for Executive Director of ENOC International Company (Dubai), for his presence and participation extending the accomplishments of these agents," said al-Sayid.

"Lubricants form the backbone of the company's work and play a vital role in its success. We are proud to be a part of this important milestone in 2010, as well as our future activities," he added.

The company stated it is a fully Dubai government-owned company. It was one of the 30 companies working in several specialized fields such as the oil and gas exploration, petrochemicals, chemical and other fields.

ENOC Company has taken a clear business policy from the start, promoting the highest level of service to its customers. The company's commitment to excellence is a clear sign of its performance. The company's high performance, services and quality in the production of these products through an understanding that has proved successful in developing these markets. ENOC's vision is to be the first in the field of petrochemical services. ENOC made great achievements over the past years in terms of revenues of a number of products that have not been introduced by any other companies.

The company stated the high quality standards and the verification of these standards that ensure the quality and lubricants. ENOC employs selected standards in their oil industry and the best of its

achievements is the establishment of one of the biggest and best oil refineries in the Middle East. The plant company managed to spend 200 million dollars to build the refinery in the country, which serves as the main base for all the countries.

Today, with the passing of time, it is important for ENOC to expand its role in the market and moving to better quality products for future generations. This period will also be full of achievements in terms of getting maximum production, environmental protection, the introduction of products and services developed as well as the introduction of a large number of ENOC products. Through the participation of the customer, environmental protection, the contribution to a better living environment, increasing production and reducing oil and gas costs will be among our objectives.

Investment and management

The honored agents expressed gratitude to Al-Ahmar Group, ENOC in Yemen, ensuring that they have given them incentives for sales growth and the production of high quality lubricants. They expressed confidence in the company and their willingness to work with it for more achievements in ENOC's oil sales.

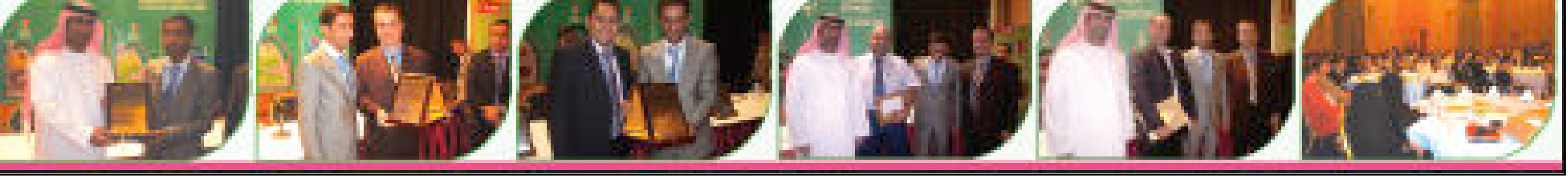
Meeting employees and agents

All the staff of the company and Al-Ahmar Company representatives and agents of ENOC Lubricants Company Yemen celebrated the launching of their company's agents. Plans of Sana'a and other branches and its communication systems for seven days in the Mervagpick Hotel. They are:

Amr Ahmad Hammad al-Omeri, Amr Ahmad Alsharhawi al-Bani, Omar Maki Saif Al-Khazn, Saleh Ali Othman al-Jabri, Adel and Pateh Saleh al-Qasbi al-Qasbi, Saleh al-Sayid al-Sayid, al-Sayid al-Sayid al-Sayid al-Sayid, al-Sayid al-Sayid al-Sayid, al-Sayid al-Sayid al-Sayid.

The first place in the award ceremony, was the grand prize, a reward worth 20,000 dollars.

Thanks to Al-Ahmar company for lubricants supply and distribution were also honored. Sheikh Osama Abu Lulama presented awards of gratitude and appreciation to the staff of Al-Ahmar Group to Saleh al-Sayid, the ENOC Executive Director, Mohamed al-Sayid, ENOC the Executive Director and Mohamed al-Sayid al-Sayid, ENOC Marketing Director, for their dedication efforts.



## Bouldoukian, Lebanese banker, to the Yemen Times: Yemeni banks are some of the best performing banks

**M**eguerditch Bouldoukian is a former vice-governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon. He has been working in the banking sector for the last 51 years. Although he is 73 years old, he still works for the Banque Libano-Francaise in Lebanon because he likes his profession so much.

Bouldoukian managed the Lebanese Central Bank from 1985 until 1990, when the days in Lebanon were very difficult for the economy, politics, currency, and population. He has written two books, one on the management of correspondent banking, published in 2007 by the Union of Arab Banks, and the second about the banking system in Lebanon. He has shared his expertise through teaching banking at several universities since 1969.

He has been visiting Yemen regularly for the last seven years for business deals for his correspondent bank, and knows all the state and private bankers in Yemen. Through the Banque Libano-Francaise he represents, he has extended credit lines to Yemeni bankers to finance trade. On his twentieth visit to Yemen since 2004, Bouldoukian spoke to Ali Saeed about banking in Yemen.



Meguerditch Bouldoukian

**As an Arab banker, how do you think that the banking sector can specifically boost Yemen's economy?**

In all countries, it is the banking system which feeds, in finance, all the various economic sectors, and bankers, as we know, are after making a profit. Of course, banking systems all around the world have different developments. If the country's economy is developed, the banking system also is developed.

But in fact the economy is developed because the banking system is developed and because the banking system provides finance to big, medium and small-size companies and to retail companies and the new tendency is to micro-finance small borrowers, where banks would not take the risk of these borrowers, because it is costly.

Hence in all countries, it depends on the resources of the banks, short and long term deposits according to how big the finance of the economy is.

In various forms and sectors, the risk factor is minimal or moderate in lending - because in lending activities, there is always a risk in all countries.

Yemeni banks must assist in financing the economy, because there is no other source of finance for the various sectors of the economy, except international funding sources from development banks such as the World Bank and the GCC funds that fund developmental project, especially highways, electricity, plants, sewage and roads. These are the kinds of financing which is part of the state finance. These [funds] come from international and Arab funds that were mainly created to finance development projects and not to finance the private sector.

The private sector in the country requires finance and thus private banks exist to address this function.

Yemen has many state-owned and private banks: The National Bank of Yemen, the Yemeni Bank for Construction and Development, CAC Bank, which is going like a rocket, the Al-Tadhamon International Islamic Bank, the Islamic Bank of Yemen, Saba Islamic Bank, Yemen Commercial Bank, the Yemen and Kuwait Bank for Trade and Investment, Yemen Gulf Bank and the International

Bank of Yemen, very well managed by our friend there, Shamil Bank - and all of them are financing the economy.

**How do you assess the performance of Yemeni banks in financing?**

Frankly, I represent a foreign bank in Yemen. I have been ready to finance the foreign trade sectors of these banks. Because, when they import goods from China, Singapore, Argentina, Europe, from Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries, these banks need trade finance facilities.

I have been in this market since 2004. I'm one of the pioneers who came to Yemen as a foreign banker, to provide the local banks with trade finance facilities. Some of these facilities are in the form of letters of credit. They last up to 180 days and sometimes even 270 days when required - so at certain price.

**"Yemeni workers' remittances from abroad also have dropped, not because Yemenis do not like to work, but because of the recession in countries where they work."**

Today, my initiative, started in 2004, has born fruit, because today there are more than 20 foreign banks running after Yemeni banks to finance their trade finance operations. There are German banks, French banks, American banks, Lebanese banks and banks from the GCC. They are now providing the Yemeni banks with trade finance facilities and they are competing with each other and everybody is giving the best price. The competition is tough between foreign banks in financing the Yemeni banks and it is a very positive sign for the banking system in Yemen.

**How can this competition benefit Yemen?**

Less cost of financing, longer term financing and full resources.

Everybody is trying to please the Ye-

meni banks, to provide financing. Even the suppliers for many commodities to Yemeni importers, who in the past used to ask for letters of credit, now do not want letters of credit. They tell them to send it on a collection basis. This is a very good sign for the traditional Yemeni importers from their suppliers, and also a good sign for the banks in Yemen, where the foreign banks are providing finance as much as they want, at low prices and longer term.

This is a very good sign. People do not know this, but they should know, because it gives a new psychological feeling to Yemenis, to see how people think positively about Yemen.

**What are the challenges to the banking sector in Yemen?**

As a specialist in banking, knowing very well all the banking systems of the Arab countries because I have been visiting all these countries for the last ten years - from Algeria to Libya, to Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Oman, Egypt, GCC, and Sudan, I can say that the banks in Yemen, compared to other systems of banks, are some of the best performing banks.

It is not necessary to be classified number one or number two bank in the Arab world. We cannot make this classification for Yemeni banks. We can only do that for one, the National Bank of Yemen, perhaps because the size of Yemen's economy is not the size of the economy in Saudi Arabia. Today if you classified the 1,000 Arab banks, in oil producing countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, or Algeria, or one bank in Libya, they would come in first. So we cannot evaluate or make the comparison on this basis.

There are challenges to all banking systems in the world. Even the banks in the United States have challenges. After the credit crisis, even the biggest banks in the world went into bankruptcy.

**To what extent did the world financial crisis affect Yemeni banks?**

In my opinion, it did not affect them that much, but it affected the Yemeni economy. Yemen used to receive a flow of funds from overseas. Yemeni workers' remittances from abroad also have

dropped, not because Yemenis do not like to work, but because of the recession in countries where they work.

In 2006, there was a large meeting in London, with all the countries [that used to make contributions to the Yemeni government], and Yemen and President Ali Abdullah Saleh were there. During that year, he made a few extensive trips. He went to Tokyo, Paris, Beijing and Washington.

This meeting was organized in London. I do not know how much these countries have made promises and fulfilled them. It seems that they have not done much. Even the new meeting of the Friends of Yemen, I do not know how much funding they will provide. Again, at the Riyadh conference in the previous month, they promised, but they are not fulfilling these promises.

The world financial crisis affected most countries, but the banking system in Yemen, in my opinion, was not affected.

**Why?**

Because the banking system in Yemen is not interlinked with the international banking system. Most Arab banks are in this situation. The oil crisis, together with the credit crunch, has affected the economy because the oil price went down from USD 140 to 40 per barrel. Now the price is better; it is around USD 80 and the gas plant has started producing and this will help the economy.

For the next 30 or 40 years, Yemen has liquid natural gas, which is produced by global companies such as Total and other Korean companies. This will bring new income to the country, but it takes time, because now there is a time lag where there is a slow flow of revenue from the sector.

**"Every individual has to work. I'm 73 and I'm still working and my work is my best friend."**

The world financial crisis affected Yemen's economy rather than the banks in Yemen, as the government did not receive the promised funds from the [above] meetings. This means the flow of foreign currency to Yemen has become slow. This is what has happened, nothing else. Otherwise the economy is excellent. It is growing. Since 2004, I have been coming to Yemen and I have seen a lot of development activities. I see more and more buildings, shops and highways, and this is very important, especially in Sana'a.

In the recent years, the Yemeni Riyal's value has dropped. What do you think are the reasons behind this and what should be done to stabilize it?

The Yemeni Riyal used to come down, for a long time, annually by about 1 or 1.5 percent. From 2004 until 2008, the devaluation of the Yemeni Riyal was around 1.5 percent.

When I first came to Yemen, the Yemeni Riyal was around 190 and it is a policy of any country not to devalue, but because the demand and population increases in the country, demand of foreign products increases and you are paying from your currency, not dollars, and no various sources bring in foreign exchange.

When the foreign exchange is available in the country, the currency might appreciate, but when the demand is higher than the supply, the currency goes down.

**Can the tourism sector maintain the Yemeni Riyal?**

Now, it can maintain it. Exports also should be developed, and industries have to be developed.

For industry to be developed, you need capital corporations, which have stocks and shares in a market which still does not exist, because you need to have a stock exchange when you have stocks to be sold in the market.

The currency devaluation is normal because of the world financial crisis, not because people are performing well in Yemen or that companies are not working well.

**A few days ago, there was a conference about Yemeni Islamic banks in Sana'a, and they announced that they will introduce the concept of Islamic sukuk (an Islamic version of the bond, without interest) to Yemen. What can the sukuk add to Yemen's economy?**

There are four Islamic banks in Yemen, Al-Tadhamon International Islamic Bank, Saba Islamic Bank, Islamic Bank of Yemen and Shamil Islamic Bank. Out of these four, three are doing excellently; the Al-Tadhamon, Saba and Shamil banks.

They have asked many times if our bank in Lebanon can sell them Islamic sukuk. I told them that we do not have that developed in Lebanon yet, but there are many countries in the Gulf that can sell sukuk.

The advantage of Islamic sukuk is that the dollar funds of the four Yemeni Islamic banks are outside Yemen. So they have dollars, but they are outside.

I know that the Central Bank of Yemen has a plan. In this plan it is organizing new departments to develop Islamic sukuk, so that Yemeni banks can invest in these sukuk which will be created by the Central Bank of Yemen.

**Comparing the roles of conventional banks in financing to the Islamic banks, which one is better?**

As long as it is finance, there is no question of them being better. Both of them are ok. The question is which one is cheaper? Which one is more profitable? They are all based on finance. But in the case of Islamic banking, Islamic banks follow the sharing of the profit. This is the main difference between the two kinds of banks and there are no other differences.

**How it is possible for Yemen to have a stock exchange market, and how it would benefit Yemen?**

I do not know much about the stock exchange in Yemen, but there are few banking corporations that could be listed in one, if this stock exchange is organized.

By organizing, I mean there are new laws for the stock exchange market. Then, in this new law, you specify what the entry conditions are for companies to be listed in this stock exchange. And in organizing the stock exchange itself, as in every aspect of human life, you need a human element.

We would like to have an aviation in-

dustry, for instance, to produce. So we need engineers and the technology. For this reason, the stock exchange is an excellent thing because people will invest in the stocks but do we have the stock? Do we have the economy to generate industrial corporations? But you only have trading corporations and all of them are family businesses. Even the banks are family-owned. Another important thing is that the Yemeni population is still a cash society in which people do not deposit their money in banks but keep their money at home, because of a lack of banking awareness.

**"Banks should help themselves, through giving training to their personnel in order to improve their skills, as the human element is very important in running banks"**

**Some Yemeni economists are saying that, after a few years, the Yemeni government will not be able to pay the salaries of its employees. As a banker, do you think this is true?**

I do not know about this statement, but in my opinion this cannot happen.

**Why?**

Why should it happen?

**They are saying that the oil is depleting.**

Yes, alright, but gas is replacing oil. Then the GCC countries [have] agreed that Yemen [would] become the seventh member of the council in 2014.

It is not easy. It takes time and cannot happen overnight. But there is nothing better than working. Every individual has to work. I'm 73 and I'm still working and my work is my best friend.

**As an expert, what do you recommend the Central Bank of Yemen and Yemeni bankers do to improve their performance?**

The banking sector should have a strong capital base. In Iraq, there was a banking law which started with IR 50 billion, and then they raised it to IR 100 billion. Today, it has risen to IR 250 billion. If you want to establish a bank in Iraq, you need USD 250 billion to start it.

If we need strong banks, we should have a strong capital base. The capital base is similar to a pyramid. The base of a pyramid should be always large and the top is a triangle. That means many shareholders for one bank. Capital bases of banks should not be like pillars, but like pyramids so as to face the potential risks.

Banks should help themselves, through giving training to their personnel in order to improve their skills, as the human element is very important in running banks. Banking today is affected by technology, so Yemeni educational institutions should provide Yemeni banks with computer engineers and workers who are computer literate.

The Central Bank of Yemen should guide banks on how to manage depositor's funds safely and soundly.

## No time for a trade war

By: Joseph E. Stiglitz

**T**he battle with the United States over China's exchange rate continues. When the Great Recession began, many worried that protectionism would rear its ugly head. True, G-20 leaders promised that they had learned the lessons of the Great Depression. But 17 of the G-20's members introduced protectionist measures just months after the first summit in November 2008. The "Buy America" provision in the United States' stimulus bill got the most attention. Still, protectionism was contained, partly due to the World Trade Organization.

Continuing economic weakness in the advanced economies risks a new round of protectionism. In America, for example, more than one in six workers who would like a full-time job can't find one.

These were among the risks associated with America's insufficient stimulus, which was designed to placate members

of Congress as much as it was to revive the economy. With soaring deficits, a second stimulus appears unlikely, and, with monetary policy at its limits and inflation hawks being barely kept at bay, there is little hope of help from that department, either. So protectionism is taking pride of place.

The US Treasury has been charged by Congress to assess whether China is a "currency manipulator." Although President Obama has now delayed for some months when Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner must issue his report, the very concept of "currency manipulation" itself is flawed: all governments take actions that directly or indirectly affect the exchange rate. Reckless budget deficits can lead to a weak currency; so can low interest rates. Until the recent crisis in Greece, the US benefited from a weak dollar/euro exchange rate. Should Europeans have accused the US of "manipulating" the exchange rate to expand exports at its expense?

Although US politicians focus on the bilateral trade deficit with China - which

is persistently large - what matters is the multilateral balance. When demands for China to adjust its exchange rate began during George W. Bush's administration, its multilateral trade surplus was small. More recently, however, China has been running a large multilateral surplus as well.

Saudi Arabia also has a bilateral and multilateral surplus: Americans want its oil, and Saudis want fewer US products. Even in absolute value, Saudi Arabia's multilateral merchandise surplus of USD 212 billion in 2008 dwarfs China's USD 175 billion surplus; as a percentage of GDP, Saudi Arabia's current-account surplus, at 11.5 percent of GDP, is more than twice that of China. Saudi Arabia's surplus would be far higher were it not for US armaments exports.

In a global economy with deficient aggregate demand, current-account surpluses are a problem. But China's current-account surplus is actually less than the combined figure for Japan and Germany; as a percentage of GDP, it is 5 percent, compared to Germany's

5.2 percent.

Many factors other than exchange rates affect a country's trade balance. A key determinant is national savings. America's multilateral trade deficit will not be significantly narrowed until America saves significantly more; while the Great Recession induced higher household savings (which were near zero), this has been more than offset by the increased government deficits.

Adjustment in the exchange rate is likely simply to shift to where America buys its textiles and apparel - from Bangladesh or Sri Lanka, rather than China. Meanwhile, an increase in the exchange rate is likely to contribute to inequality in China, as its poor farmers face increasing competition from America's highly subsidized farms. This is the real trade distortion in the global economy - one in which millions of poor people in developing countries are hurt as America helps some of the world's richest farmers.

During the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis, the renminbi's stability played

an important role in stabilizing the region. So, too, the renminbi's stability has helped the region maintain strong growth, from which the world as a whole benefits.

Some argue that China needs to adjust its exchange rate to prevent inflation or bubbles. Inflation remains contained, but, more to the point, China's government has an arsenal of other weapons (from taxes on capital inflows and capital-gains taxes to a variety of monetary instruments) at its disposal.

But exchange rates do affect the pattern of growth, and it is in China's own interest to restructure and move away from high dependence on export-led growth. China recognizes that its currency needs to appreciate over the long run, and politicizing the speed at which it does so has been counterproductive. (Since it began revaluing its exchange rate in July 2005, the adjustment has been half or more of what most experts think is required.) Moreover, starting a bilateral confrontation is unwise.

Since China's multilateral surplus is

the economic issue and many countries are concerned about it, the US should seek a multilateral, rules-based solution. Imposing unilateral duties after unilaterally labeling China a "currency manipulator" would undermine the multilateral system, with little payoff. China might respond by imposing duties on those American products effectively directly or indirectly subsidized by America's massive bailouts of its banks and car companies.

No one wins from a trade war. So America should be wary of igniting one in the midst of an uncertain global recovery - as popular as it might be with politicians whose constituents are justly concerned about high unemployment, and as easy as it is to look for blame elsewhere. Unfortunately, this global crisis was made in America, and America must look inward, not only to revive its economy, but also to prevent a recurrence.

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## YEMEN LNG COMPANY 2010 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

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To further support Yemen in building its human resources, Yemen LNG Company is pleased to announce the availability of 10 undergraduate scholarships and 10 postgraduate (master degree) scholarships to France for Yemeni youth and professionals who intend to continue their education. This is a fair opportunity where scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis.

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Candidates must meet the following conditions:

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2. Yemeni national residing in Yemen and aged between 17 and 21 years.
3. Secondary school certificate from the Yemeni Ministry of Education.
4. A grade average of 85% or higher - Science section.
5. Candidates applying for Majors in English must have a working knowledge of French (completed level 6 at the French Cultural Center)

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The below should be included in the application for the scholarship program:

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3. Must attach a copy of the TOEFL/IELTS exam and certificates of French Language courses (for Majors in English).
4. Submit a copy of secondary school certificate and transcript.
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Candidates must meet the following conditions:

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2. Must have earned their Bachelors (BA/BSc) degree with a minimum grade average of "good" certified by the Ministry of Higher Education.
3. At least one year work experience in Yemen.
4. A clear personal career objective.
5. If possible a reference letter from the current employer, supporting the candidate's application and why the organization supports the individual to earn this degree.
6. Must have a working knowledge of French (completed level 6 at the French Cultural Center)

##### Requirements

The below should be included in the application for the scholarship program:

1. Must complete the scholarship application form.
2. Must attach a copy of the TOEFL/IELTS exam and certificates of French Language courses.
3. Submit a copy of their CV.
4. Submit a copy of their university degree and transcript.
5. Must meet the university/institution's admission requirements.
6. Pass the medical examination.
7. Must commit to return to work in Yemen after completion of the program.

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- ▶ Yemen LNG Head Office, Hadda Street, Sana'a, Or
- ▶ By mail to: Yemen LNG Scholarship Program, P. O. Box 15347, Sana'a, Yemen

## The holy prostitute

By: Salwa Yehia Aleryani

This is not an opinion but, rather a tragic fact. She is a very beautiful, innocent, fascinating, pure and charming lady. A woman can be described as an innocent virgin, a fertile land, a clean personality, a blessed creativity, a scented breeze of heaven, a magical smile, a spell of endless love, a gift of loyalty, a flying witch spreading throughout precious dreams, a stream of dear lives and a long queue of martyrs. Yet at the same time, she can be viewed as a prostitute! This occurs when she is surrounded by wolfish males instead of loving and protective ones.

Seeing her long thick eye lashes, all admire her unique beauty. Within the entire population no-one would disagree about how gorgeous she is. Is she then a victim? She definitely is! She is burdened by her men, they are a sin! What is the difference between her and any other respected, educated woman?

There is a huge gap between her and the other women. Her men are wolves who desire to snatch and snap. Other women are pampered by men. She is, to her followers, a merely vanishing

desire whilst the rest of the women are loved for their souls and valuable existence. Her men adore her shining locks of hair, her pink cheeks, her mouth, her eyes and beautiful chin. They never see the "human" inside.

They make efforts to win her. They want to touch the tip of her naked toes. As soon as they get what they want, they leave without even waving or saying goodbye. They never remember her. What hurts the most is the fact that no one has ever asked her who she was or what her name was. Every time a man visits her green chest he leaves her paler and weaker. No-one stays. They deposit, run away and no-one pays! Shame on them! They call themselves men. They never show appreciation, apologize or thank her. Each man, on entering, sips a little of her youth and drink her tears. They block their ears because they hate hearing screams of fear. They thief and run away with her belongings.

So, these are your men; selfish and dead.

She isn't strong enough to fight for her wealth, youth and beauty. In every male face she searches for true love. She heard of other women whom their males sacrifice...but for her this is an unknown work. Life is a number of

rounds in a boxing ring but she hasn't the skills to defend herself. Can't these men of hers understand how much she needs supporting? Why can't they see that she wants them to give and not take? She loses, they gain. As they leave with pleasure, she writhes with pain. Why doesn't anyone love her?

I knocked at her door, I heard her sniffing and her breathing was continuous sighs. Then I heard her say, "No-body is here! Go away. I'm exhausted!" Her response broke my heart and my sympathy poured towards her. I said, "Allow me to enter. I won't harm you. I just want to speak with you." She opened the door just enough for me to squeeze in. She was behind it. I longed to see her, face to face, and examine her beauty.

I was terrified when I saw her and I mumbled: "Oh, my God!" She bit her lip, feeling ashamed. She reminded me of those gorgeous ageing movie stars and how depressed they feel. She isn't old though, but I know she has been consumed badly. I sat down in a dark corner. She glued her back to the wall with her nails were scratching it. I came closer and said, "I won't touch you. I will never hurt you. I feel sorry for you." She slid down the wall and sat on the floor.

I asked her, "Those men are thieves and since when were thieves kind those they rob? Why didn't you take precautions? Why did you let go? Why didn't you resist that filthy gang?" Again she sniffed. I heard her reply very weakly, "I had and still have no weapons. I have no guards, no father, no brothers, not even sons. I am only a single, harmless woman, how can I face claws and canines?" Her answer silenced me.

Actually she is right. It is men who build, cultivate and become soldiers and defenders. It is real men, who she unfortunately needs because she has no one but wolves tracking her! It is real men who can make a desert become a garden, make obstacles disappear and implement plans. She is guilty because her men have made her into a prostitute. They are thieves, wolves and rascals.

I feel her injuries because I, myself, cannot support her. I have no hand to hold her and nothing what so ever to help her out. So, I turned around intending to leave. She shouted, "Everyone leaves me without even asking me my name!" I smiled and replied, "I know your name, my dear. You are Yemen! A piece of heaven but your men are roosters and have turned you into a hen!"

## Sexual awareness among kids

By: Abdulkreem Al-Aawage  
For Yemen Times

Though sex education is necessary, there is however a specific age for this and exposure to these things at an early age is harmful. Culture, traditions, practices, beliefs and occupations of a society, usually govern determination of the appropriate age to initiate sex education for children and this age varies from society to society.

Not only does this age vary from country to country, but even within a country it is observed that children coming from certain communities, backgrounds are more aware than others.

Take the example of Yemen. In Yemen, we find that children coming from rural areas know a lot more about sex, than the urban children. To the extent, that even tiny six year olds are aware about what sex is.

So why are children from our rural areas more aware? The answer is really

simple. These kids either find out something about it from the talks, swearing or derogatory gestures of youth or elders in the community or learn about it by observing cattle.

As many families in rural areas are occupied in animal husbandry, the children are exposed to breeding at a very young age. Also, in rural areas, it is usually the job of the kids to take the cattle for grazing and the children learn about the act, merely by observing the cattle in the grazing grounds or on streets.

Though this knowledge is a casual thing in our rural communities, it has certain negative impacts as well and children can start imitating the elders and grow up with some defects in their characters.

Children are our future. Therefore, the first step towards building a better society is to protect our children from catching bad habits. And therefore, it becomes the responsibility of all communities to avoid exposing children to these things at an inappropriate age.

## Unemployment is black future

By: Mubeen Esam  
Mibo\_time@yahoo.com

Unemployment is the future and the fate that every Yemeni graduate is afraid of. Countries all over the world suffer from unemployment, but the rate of unemployment in Yemen, is higher. It's really a regrettable scene to see the youth sitting idle at home, with no jobs.

Unemployment in Yemen is as a result of many factors, including the fact that most graduates prefer government jobs within their cities and refuse private jobs in outside cities. Also, most of the graduates are not well-qualified to match the market demands. In addition, the high rate of foreign labor employed in institutes, companies, malls, restaurants, hospitals and others, hinders finding solutions for the unemployment of the local labor. Actually, there are a lot of high-qualified Yemenis who are at par with the foreigners, professionally. In my opinion, mediation and bribery is

what deprives, our deserving graduates of a fair competition and equal opportunities. Add to this the fact, that many government officials, who are past the age of retirement, simply refuse to retire and are permitted by the ministries to continue in their jobs, and there certainly is very little chance left, for the young people to find work.

Nonetheless, the mismatch between the basket of skills of our graduates and the skills demanded by the market is the main cause of unemployment in Yemen. Also, most Yemeni students are lazy. They are well aware that their academic qualifications are not enough for securing a job, but they take little efforts to improve their skills and cover their lethargy by saying, "it's too expensive."

And I really see no harm in seeking jobs in private companies, in outside cities. It's much better than sitting idle, waiting for a government job, in your own city, to come along. Another drawback of our graduates, that most of them are limiting themselves to

seek jobs which match their academic specializations. Though this is very much understandable, today's time demands paramount flexibility! An ability to mould one's set of skills to match the jobs available in the market, especially considering that the job opportunities available are very limited.

Though it is true that job seekers must adapt themselves to the available opportunities, it is equally necessary for the educational institutions to update themselves. The outdated syllabuses, the unqualified doctors and lecturers in colleges and the traditional theoretical knowhow, taught in most Yemeni colleges, which are of little value to the market, must be replaced. The government and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research must modernize the curricula, re-qualify their teaching-staff, put in place modern plans and strategies and equip colleges with updated laboratories and libraries and ensure that each and every student graduating is equipped with the most 'in demand skills' and the latest

knowledge.

Many colleges offer fields which are no longer required by the market and many students join them. But these students, unfortunately, fail to get jobs upon graduation. I ask all the students of the secondary schools to be very careful and choose a line which is a potential to find jobs.

Unemployment is serious and crippling. It can lead to the crime, terrorism, extremism, violence, drugs and also suicide. I, therefore, appeal all who are in charge, to ensure that colleges are compatible with market demands and encourage vocational and technical education.

Our government must focus on foreign and Arab investments to employ Yemeni labor. It must open doors and offer new fields of specialization which are more required in the current market. And the college students must master the life skills including English language skills, computer skills, preparing a resume, accountancy and commercial correspondence.

## Friendship

By: Hanna Al-Hodaimi

True friendship is difficult to describe. It is more than just words. Friendship is our behavior towards others and their behavior towards us. It can emerge between two females, two males, or between a female and a male. The first two types of friendship are viewed as normal and are widely accepted in our society. What about the third type of friendship?

The way friendship is expressed differs greatly from one society to another. If we make a comparison between our society's attitude towards friendship of the opposite sex and the attitude of many other Arab and Western societies, we find that their societies are more open minded.

Friendships that emerge between males and females are not only considered as something normal, but as something positive as well! If males and females have the opportunity to discuss and think about issues concerning the place they live, they will come to a conclusion that is more emotionally and rationally balanced.

This is not the case in our society. In our society a friendship between a male and female is considered something inappropriate and shameful. This makes it very difficult for any kind of normal interaction between males and females to take place. Is it not the time for us to enrich our lives and our society with sympathy, honesty and mutual understanding between both sexes? Is it not the time for us to have a more open minded approach to friendship?

## The song of an orphan

By: Safiya mohammed Aljabry  
safialjabry@yahoo.com

I look at the ones, who came to cheer me up,  
Do they truly care about me?! I wonder to myself.....

I wait to see the look in their eyes,  
Their eyes which hold more than words or actions can say.....

And I see genuine twinkles of love in them...They honestly do care!  
I feel joy inside my heart...makes me forget all bad moments in my life...

Then they say goodbye... I want them to stay but I understand they have to go...  
I embrace the amazing feeling in my heart; I promise I'll never ever forget it.....

Just when I had lost hope in being somebody important...  
Just when I thought the road to my successful future was longer than ever.....  
They came to paint a smile on my face...and fill my heart with love....

It was just a few minutes, but they came..... It's all that matters....  
If they came then they LOVE ME!  
They CARE about me! I'm WORTH-WHILE!

My future seems nearer now..... I can see myself outside these walls of the place I call home.... The orphanage, where I have uncountable brothers.... Now I have dreams and hopes..... If they care about me, I'll carry their legacy when I grow up.... I'll make other orphans as happy as they have made me, I'll make them feel worthwhile.....  
Thank you for caring.... Thank you for remembering me and Thanks to Allah the Almighty for everything.....  
Thank you 3yoon shabah members.... God bless you.... Remember a few hours of your time to put smiles on orphans faces is all it takes for them to treasure that moment as long as they live.... Continue inspiring...REMEMBER they may always forget what you SAID but they will never ever forget how you made them FEEL.

## Through The Mind's Eye

By: Maged Thabet Alkholidy  
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## Yemen's space channel – What's new for youth?

With the widespread of satellite dishes, when the Yemen Space Channel no longer interests the majority of Yemenis, it is however, regularly watched by the elderly people.

I asked the parents of a friend of mine, about what interests them in the Yemeni Space Channel. The immediate reply was that, most of the programs are repeated and are easy to comprehend by the elderly.

Though, I agree that some of the fast programs shown on many popular channels today, may seem rather incomprehensible to the elderly, I also feel that, if a channel wants to be popular, it has to cater to the needs of all the target audiences. So the question is what about the youth and the children? It would be a punishment for them the watch the programs of the Yemeni Space Channel!

Unfortunately, the Yemeni Space channel has no special programs talking about the issues faced by the youth, nothing to captivate the youth. The only program directed towards the youth is "The Youth and Sport World", which shows news, that too news which has already been broadcasted. It also shows some romantic serials, which are considered as youth programs, only by the elderly people.

And as a result of such old fashioned and shortsighted programs, the Yemeni space channel has little to offer to our youth, in this modern age of technology.

Today, in the age of internet and globalization, the youth needs to be updated and keep up with the fast pace of life. Therefore, it demands something new everyday and the Yemeni Space Channel is falling far too behind. The reason is a lack of innovation. And the fusion music that is sometimes shown under the name of modernization is in reality quite unattractive.

Ideally, a family entertainment channel, carrying a good value, should have a variety of programs such as programs related to culture, education, science, as well as entertainment. It should have good programs for children, serials talking about the social problems, which can be enjoyed by the elderly as well as the youth, news, sports and so on.

The Yemeni Space Channel does not have any programs for the youth during the day, and it is alright as during the day, the youth are seldom free. The prime time for youth programs can be considered as night time, when children and the elderly are asleep. Unfortunately, the channel does not have good programs for the youth during at night as well.

I don't think that programs for the youth are too costly. Though importing programs can be costly, there can always be good, locally produced programs. Cultural competitions, educational programs in different fields, especially in the fields of computer, internet, medicine, might be very helpful in widening the horizons of the youth.

In fact, such programs already exist. However, they are either waiting for the consideration and approval of the decision-makers in the Channel or are stuck in the Information Ministry itself. All that needs to be done is some serious thinking and a will to find a solution to this problem.

The television is a very powerful medium, and with some effort, our national space channel has great potential to contribute to the development of the country's youth, help build their faith in the homeland and build awareness among them regarding their social rights and responsibilities.

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

## One plus one equals three

By: Suleiman Raisse Bauzer  
Al-aml-institute@hotmail.com

It was roughly seven o'clock on the morning, while everything is quite and peaceful and while I was driving my white pick-up car in close proximity to the small village, I saw a child hitchhiking to any vehicle to pick him up to his school and does the same to come back to his small village, therefore it was my opportunity to take him to his school.

I stopped the car close to him; automatically he knows that I want him to get in.

Then he was in rush...for awhile, I started talking to him. "You study huh?"

I said, he nodded his head means yes! Then I got confused whether to go on with my curious questions or not, nevertheless my feelings and admiration to him made me go on. "So you said you are in the second level?" I asked. "No", he replied "I am in the first grade". "Oh. That is great," I cried, about ten minutes were over talking together about his family and the village, when I asked him the last question, of course after allowing to. In which subject do you want me to ask? "In math" he said confidently.

"One plus one is...?" I asked, Three!!! He replied innocently.

However, he paused for moment "NOOO two" ....he cried, after that he put in his right hand in his bag to

see his math's book and in order to make sure of his answer or to ensure me that he is right, or to show off his done homework which he is happily did. furthermore he told me the last answer is three! "THREE!!!" I said.

"Of course three", he said with a stress accent, showing me his math's book, "wow" I cried in surprise and I stopped the car nearby because the boy astonished me with his exercise book, which had been corrected wrongly by his math teacher with a red check plus very good, silently I resumed my commuting toward the city.

Again I want to convince him when I felt the responsibility and my conscience to correct him. As soon as we are near his school and his sight brightly see the school in his eyes as if he is waiting for something, we arrived in peace and before he got out, I hold his left wrist, and I let him count to show his thumb for one and his little finger as another one and I told him to count, he said "Two it is easily", finally he got out of the car, going to his school, "Please now erase it and tell your teacher to re-correct it" I cried, He paused and faced me, saying, you want to be better than my teacher!! , as he vanished waving by his right hand for thanks, or it could mean No I will not, leaving me in a confuse moment without knowing who is wrong, the innocent boy, me or whether his teacher, who dishonestly corrected his exercise carelessly.

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٧٣٤٠٥٩٦٥٦ - خليل العتواني - درجة البكالوريوس في هندسة الاتصالات - جامعة دمشق - ممتاز في اللغة الإنجليزية والإنترنت والكمبيوتر. للتواصل: ٧١٤٣١١٢٢٨

٧٣٣٨٠٣١٩٤ - بكالوريوس هندسة كمبيوتر - فلسطيني الجنسية - يجيد اللغة الإنجليزية وبرامج الكمبيوتر - قدرة ممتازة على التعامل مع الآخرين - مديرسابق لمعهد لغات - يرغب في العمل الإداري في الشركات أو المصانع أو المعاهد أو المدارس أو السفارات وفي أي مكان للتواصل: ٧٣٣٨٠٣١٩٤

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٧١٢٢٦٢٦٢٢ - علي النظام - بكالوريوس لغة إنجليزية - خبرة إدارة تابع للرقابة الساحلية في إيطاليا - خبرة ثلاث سنوات في مجال التدريس - يجيد اللغة الإنجليزية كتابة ونطقاً. يبحث عم عمل في الفترة المسائية . للتواصل: ٧٧٠٢١٢١٩٤

٧٧٧٨٣٥٩٤٩ - أنور أحمد - دبلوم سكرتارية - خبرة ثمان سنوات في صيانة الحاسوب - خبرة في تعليم أساسيات الكمبيوتر وتعليم الصيانة (هاردوير وسوف وير). للتواصل: ٧٣٤٥٤٦٦٨١

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## The ghothaimi lock

### An ill-named artisan lock defies the modern one

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori  
For the Yemen Times

People have been using the expression "ghothaimi lock" for years to describe someone stupid who does not understand what people tell him. But the lock it refers to is all the opposite. It is the clever

invention of an intelligent mind.

Ali Sabra, 58, who has been making ghothaimi locks for decades, defied electronic locks to be safer than the ones he makes.

"I make the ghothaimi lock and its keys from iron," he said. "My grandparents taught me the secrets of this profession. I defy electronics to be safer than

this lock."

Proudly, Sabra explained that his profession is of historical value because it is an art inherited from his great-grandfathers.

He however expressed his great sorrow at the absence of support for Yemen's old crafts that are, he said, threatened with extinction.

Made out of iron and wood, the ghothaimi lock has been made in Yemen for years. There were no other types of locks used in the past, and several families are famous for having manufactured the lock in Sana'a, Dhamar, and Raida.

The Mahboob family was the original source of making the lock for more than a hundred years.



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Lutf Al-Shami, a local of the old city of Sana'a, said that the lock is much sturdier than any other types of modern locks.

#### Making a strong lock

To make a lock, first the different parts of the locks are made ready. Each lock is unique and cannot be opened by any key other than the one designed for it.

These locks are sometimes made from acacia wood, traditionally also used for making doors due to its toughness. Sometimes, the soft and bright white ghathar wood, which is resistant and lasts long, is also used.

#### The competition of magnetic keys

Muhsen Al-Hafi said that he is serious about his locks being better than the electronic locks used in today's hotels for example.

"Magnetic keys become invalid quickly, especially if they are near a mobile phone," he said. "Their code becomes invalid as they are affected with the mobile waves."

The business of making traditional

locks is affected badly by these advances in electronics. Despite the ghothaimi lock being easy to use and safe, the lock is gradually being abandoned because of the competition of cheaper imported locks.

As a result of this, many locksmiths have sold their workshops to carpenters. Some of them have travelled abroad and forgotten about their original profession.

#### A special lock

Sabra said that the ghothaimi lock is much more expensive than locks imported from abroad. Only tourists and wealthy people buy them nowadays, he said. Some Yemeni expatriates buy it just as a souvenir.

He added that the lock is usually made on request for a buyer who specifies how he or she likes the lock to be.

The price of the lock varies, said Sabra, but the locks he makes for mosques in Sana'a cost up to USD 1,300.

In the end, he called on the authorities to save this old craft from becoming extinct.

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