

## Inside:



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European artists present Yemen to the world



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## Poverty engulfs one third of Yemenis: A personal story

The International Food Policy Research Institute has just issued a report stating that one third of Yemenis go hungry. It attributed this to many factors, including rapid population growth and conflict. The Yemen Times met a family in Hodeida that literally lives in the street. They are an example of the seven million hungry Yemenis. Here is its story.

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

HODEIDAH, July 24 — Three children ranging from two to seven years old were sitting outside the shabby shack they call home, eating what looked like bread mixed with dirt. Their clothes were torn, their hair was messy and their skin was broken out in warts and other skin diseases.

They were oblivious to the terrible smell coming from the place where they lived. To them hygiene and even health care are foreign concepts.

Just as they do every day, they were waiting for their mother Jamala and their older sister to bring in more food to sustain their fragile bodies.

*Continued and story about one third of Yemenis go hungry on page 2*



Aziz is only two years old. The only life she remembers is in the street, since her father was sent to prison one year ago. She often cries. She is only two, but she knows that this is not a life worth living.

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Jamala and her four children have lived for over six months in this raggedly constructed shack that they call home.

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# Interview with Girus T. Haimanot, exiled Ethiopian journalist

Interviewed by: Khaled Al-Hilaly

**S**on of a Tagrate father and an Oromo mother, Girus T. Haimanot, 38, was a reporter and an editor-in-chief of an independent newspaper in Ethiopia before having to flee his country. His wife died in Ethiopia whilst he has been in exile in Yemen. Of 96 journalists who fled Ethiopia since 2005, he is the last one waiting to be resettled.

**Tell me about your life back in Ethiopia?**

I spent 12 years in journalism working as a reporter and then editor-in-chief for an independent newspaper in Ethiopia. I have worked as a reporter for Asqual newspaper and as an editor-in-chief for Satenaw newspaper, both were independent and both are closed now.

**When did you start to be threatened?**

In 2000, I published a story about the ruling party at that time, saying that it was splintering. That was the first time I ended up in front of the court. I was detained for 3 days and had to pay a fine of about 20,000 birr [1,500 USD]. I continued reporting and the second problem occurred in 2001 when I published a story about a university demonstration.

**When did you leave Ethiopia and why?**

There was an attempt to kidnap me from the street only two days before my court appearance. People who were around prevented it from happening. Then I was told by one of the security

personnel there that if I tried to attend the court hearing I would be detained again. The harassment continued from 2000 until 2005 when I decided to leave Ethiopia for Yemen.

**Tell me about the journey from Somali to Yemen?**

We were on board three boats that sailed from Somali. One of these boats sank on the way. One of the boats was towing another that had stopped in the middle of the sea with about 80 passengers on board. When it started to sink the crew cut the rope and left it behind. Even the passengers on the remaining two boats would not have made it to shore without the help of the Yemeni coast guard. The boats were about one hour from shore when the Yemeni coast guard arrived. Some passengers wanted to jump overboard to swim to the shore, but they stopped at gun point. Then we were taken to shore.

**Why did you choose to study journalism?**

Since I was a child I wanted to be a journalist. I liked writing and reading. Now, I am writing a book about a refugee's journey crossing the Gulf of Aden.

**What do think about the international media coverage of Ethiopia?**

The international media tries to report the reality in Ethiopia, but the reporters for foreign media working there don't have the freedom to report about everything. If they report a not-so-pleasant story, they can be deported from the country. At the moment, for example, the Voice of America



**Ethiopian journalist Girus T. Haimanot, fled his country in 2005 to Yemen**

broadcasts in Amharic have been suspended by the government. The German Deutsche Welle [international broadcaster] has experienced some interference too. The government has paid about four million Ethiopian birr (about 300,000 USD) to stop the independent Ethiopian channel ESAT.

**How long do you think you will need to live outside your country to protect yourself?**

Only God knows. I hope the UNHCR will stop dealing with me like the Ethiopian government and forget about the past. The government accused all 96 journalists who left Ethiopia after 2005 of betraying their country. Most have been resettled. There are three still in Yemen, the

other two will soon leave Yemen to be resettled in a third country and only I will remain.

**What is the hardest part of being in exile?**

The hardest part was staying in detention for seven and a half months, I don't count that as part of my life. I was detained in Ataq [in Shabwa] immediately after I arrived in Yemen and then sent to passport authority detention in Sana'a. At that time the Ethiopian embassy sent for me asking for my identification documents as a condition for helping me be released. When I refused, they asked the prosecutor to send me to Ethiopia. But he left the decision up to the UNHCR to decide whether I stayed in Yemen or was returned to Ethiopia. I sent more than 50 letters to the UNHCR from detention and after seven months I was given refugee status and released. Once I criticized the UNHCR for listing some people as Oromo instead of listing them as Ethiopian and I think they are still angry at me.

**In what way do you continue working from your exile here in Yemen?**

I work as shopkeeper. My UN refugee card was seized from me along with my wallet by a gunman in Shumaila, in Sana'a, and I faced a hard time from the UNHCR to replace it. I was asked to go to the Kharaz camp, and there I found out that only Somalis and Oromo can live there. I am from the Tegray tribe in Ethiopia. People from other ethnicities find it impossible to live there. Here in Sana'a I have a few friends. I think the UNHCR

in Sana'a is like the government in Ethiopia, because they always blame me because I returned from the Kharaz camp. I don't know about my resettlement status. I sent emails and letters and there is no reply, and I cannot enter the building.

After publishing two issues of a

newspaper in Amharic and talking about the situation of the Ethiopian community in Yemen, I received a threat to stop.

My new wife is supporting me in writing my book, and I am lucky she understands my work. She is writing a novel too.



**Interview by Girus using his pen name Yeamilak Sira with Oromo People Mechona Tulema association leader Direba Demisa in 2003**

## Stories from Real Life Arranged marriage

### He married her just to take care of his sick mother

**A**mer Said is 40, married, and a government employee. In the recent past, Amer was spending a care-free bachelor's life among his friends, chewing qat and traveling. He also organized his time between his duties at work and his responsibility in caring for his ill mother.

He was not thinking of marriage and being responsible for a wife because he considered marriage a tie and restriction on his freedom. He had eight brothers, all of whom were married and had children. He saw the problems of his brothers and the heavy responsibility they were carrying on their shoulders and insisted on his decision not to marry.

When he started thinking of marriage just in order to have someone to take care of his ill mother, he was very worried that he might marry a woman who would not know her duties towards him and his sick mother.

He hesitated many times and was always dreaming of the wife he had in mind: she should be beautiful, thin, and tall. Years passed and Amer continued to hesitate while his mother became sicker and sicker. His brothers' wives, his sisters and nieces were thinking only of Amer's marriage so that his wife could help them to take care of his sick mother.

They were always offering him the most beautiful girls from good families but he kept refusing for the same reasons. Some time later, a relative told him to go to engage a girl without thinking about it or consenting, and the engagement happened within one

week, followed by the wedding during the second.

Amer was not thinking that the marriage would happen quickly like this and in this hurried way. Just two days after the marriage, Amer started criticizing his relative for choosing that bride. He did not find her either elegant or clean and was surprised that she was very short.

He talked loudly and negatively about her in front of the neighbors: "I wanted a beautiful, tall girl. I never feel content with the woman you gave me."

His eldest sister came and asked him to be quiet, telling him: "What you are saying is shameful Amer. She is your wife, your only wife, and the most important thing is that she will take care of our mother." She tried to convince him to be happy with her: "Try to be content with her, the people around here are laughing at us."

Now, Amer is helpless. He loves his wife only because she takes care of his mother. He does not love her and does not feel the connection or romance that occurs among loving couples.

### He has not been satisfied with his wife since the very beginning of their marriage

**N**aser Ali, 36, is married to two wives. He has four daughters and a son, and he is a government employee. Since his youth, even as early as his studies in college, he has dreamt of getting married to the girl he chose.

He was always choosing girls to

marry, but his family always refused his choices and insisted on finding the bride that they wanted for their son.

Some time later, Naser's mother set out to engage a girl named Nada to her son. She was one of his relatives. The engagement, which lasted for two years, had been without Naser's consent. Afterwards, Naser and Nada were married.

A short time after the marriage, problems began between husband and wife. Naser was treating his wife as if he were not satisfied with her. Most of the time he treated her as if he was married to a stranger rather than part of a loving couple in which each person understands the other's thoughts and feelings.

He often treated her violently and tried to create problems between them so that Nada would go to her family's house and ask for a divorce. But Nada was patient and ignored the problem for the sake of her children.

This situation lasted for years, until Naser got to know another woman. He admired her more than Nada and their relationship lasted for four years. He was always announcing his decision to marry another woman to his family and wife.

His relatives thought that he was not serious and that it was only talk because he had been announcing it for four years without taking any action, during his relationship with the new woman. Then, when Naser finally decided to marry the woman, named Ghada, he was honest with his wife and told her.

His wife considered Naser's words to be nonsense. But when he decided to engage Ghada and took his brothers with him to Ghada's house, her family realized that he was serious and tried to stop him from marrying again.

But he insisted and announced his decision to everyone without fear

because he was happy with his choice to marry Ghada. He accepted her marriage conditions, both positive and negative.

When he was marrying Ghada, Naser felt very happy, as if he was marrying for the first time, despite the fact that he already had four children from his first wife Nada.

"Ghada was the woman that I fell in love with and that my heart chose. I want to complete my life with her because I chose her myself, and we understand each other. But I will not leave my wife Nada and her children," said Naser.

A short time later, the marriage was completed. Naser was able to equip two houses, one for Nada and another for Ghada. He was able to meet their needs, and successfully organized his time between his work, his children, and Nada and Ghada.

### He avoids her because he never loved her

**F**aisal Mohammad, 25, works as singer in weddings and other concerts. As he is still in the beginning of his married life, he does not have children. He learned singing with his cousins during his studies. When he grew up, he became a famous singer and people used to invite him to sing at their wedding parties.

He began thinking of marriage when he became acquainted with a girl with whom he fell deeply in love, but his mother and sisters decided to choose a bride for him instead. After searching for the bride, his eldest sister, Fatima, informed him that she had found a beautiful, polite girl from a good family for him.

Fatima worked hard to convince her

brother that she was the right choice, and Faisal agreed, provided that she was beautiful and polite, and he held his sister responsible for the choice. After the engagement, Faisal's mother and sisters went to the bride's house for the engagement party.

When his mother saw the bride, Halah, she asked her daughter doubtfully, "Is this the bride?" "Yes, it is her," answered Fatima. The mother was surprised and told her daughter, "What is this? Your brother will be angry and will blame us for cheating him when he sees that she is very young as he does not want that."

The mother blamed her daughter and said that she would be responsible for her choice and that she would have to suffer the consequences of the reaction of her brother. "He will be content, God willing," responded Fatima.

When Fatima and her mother returned home to the house along with the rest of the family, they talked about the bride. Faisal heard them talking and suddenly interrupted them. "What is this? I trusted in you to choose a bride for me. I am going to the wedding to sing and to choose any girl as a bride," said Faisal angrily.

Then Faisal decided to see the bride before doing anything, and he called her family and asked them if he could see his bride, and they agreed. On Eid day, he went with his sister Fatima's daughters to see her. When he saw her, he was shocked and felt very sad and returned home, silently refusing to answer his mother and sisters' questions on his opinion of the bride.

He entered his room and closed the door on himself, refusing to say a word to his mother and sisters. He was very sad. On the second day he blamed his mother for not allowing him to marry the girl that he had chosen and loved. Then he decided to revoke the

engagement, and in return he would leave the gifts and the gold that he had given to the bride with her.

He called the bride's family and told them that he no longer wanted to be married to her, but the bride's father strongly refused and threatened that he would make him pay a large fine.

He told Faisal, "My daughter is your fate for all your life."

Faisal was surprised at the reaction of her family and insisted that he did not want to marry her because he would never feel content with her. He tried to travel and created pretexts that he had too much work for marriage. But his family refused to let him avoid the marriage and swore that she would call down evil on him if he did so.

As Faisal became helpless and unable to do anything, the marriage took place. Faisal suffered from this marriage that was imposed on him by force. Later on, Faisal tried to forget the past and tried to love his wife and take care of her, but he could never do so.

He does not want to have children with her and always spends his time in concerts and singing. Then he sleeps, avoiding his wife. His wife Hala has also herself become a victim of arranged marriage.

She always suffers and complains. She continually tries to attract his attention and does everything to make him love her. But unfortunately, all these efforts are useless.

Two years have passed and Faisal remains as he is. When his mother asks him about his neglect of his wife he answers: "Marry her yourself, I do not love her. I do not want her and I do not even want to see her. I do not have any feelings toward her and, God willing, I will marry the girl I chose and loved."

His mother always feels great regret for the situation that she helped to create for her son and his innocent wife.



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# European artists present Yemen to the world

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

**E**ight famous artists from France, Spain and the UK departed Yemen on Thursday after creating 67 paintings of Yemen. The



The Deputy Director of International Relations in the Ministry of Tourism, Abdo Lotf, speaks to the Yemen Times about the gallery.

paintings depict Yemeni architecture, historical places and tourist sites from different parts of Yemen.

The eight artists are Philippe Bichon, Stephanie Ledoux, Charlotte Jaunez, Aurelie Pedrajas, Philip Braham, Charles Foster-Hall, Eduardo Laborde and David Gonzales. They toured many sites in Yemen and painted the places that attracted their attention. The paintings were exhibited in Bab Al-Yemen gallery.

The paintings include views of the old city of Sana'a, the historical city of Tarim, the beautiful Al-Hajarah village in Haraz, Bura' mountain, traditional markets or 'souks' and Yemeni people - men, women and children in their traditional clothing.

They took the paintings back with them to their home countries to be exhibited in famous galleries and be part of exhibitions to be held in Europe. This way many people will be able to see these paintings and enjoy the beauty and uniqueness of Yemen.

The artists were amazed by what they saw in Yemen. "Old Sana'a City is the most amazing city in the world," remarked Philippe Bichon, an artist from France.

"I already had an idea about Yemen.

I was dreaming to come to Yemen and see it and paint. The most attractive thing for me was the old buildings, the architecture, the souks and the dress of the people."

Some of the artists found that the three weeks they spent in Yemen was not nearly enough to enjoy its beauty and visit all its attractions. They have decided to visit Yemen again.

"I simply adore your country. An extraordinary experience, I had. It will remain engraved in the depths of my heart for all my life," said Charlotte Jaunez, a female artist from France. "It's very strange to be back in France, I'm already missing your fantastic country. I definitely need to come again and stay longer."

She said she admired many things in Yemen: "The astonishing beauty of this country, the generosity and hospitality, the kindness, the benevolence and the dignity of the Yemeni people."

She also revealed that Yemen is really different from the picture depicted in the media. She hoped that the paintings they have made of Yemen will contribute to showing a good image of the country.

"I really hope that this artistic project is going to contribute to change the

unfair image given by the media about Yemen, that the people do not deserve at all. This country has an enormous potential, mixing modernity and tradition, through tourism, education, culture and art. I hope that in the future all those activities are going to develop and make a lot of foreigners return."

Deputy Director of International Relations at the Ministry of Tourism, Abdo Lotf, said that the visit of these eight European artists come as part of the fifth Sana'a Summer Festival 2010. It aims to promote tourism in Yemen to the markets in Europe and the wider world.

During their three weeks in Yemen, the artists have been acquainted with tourist sites and places of historical interest in different governorates, says Lotf. They then painted several pieces on the places they visited, which were later shown at Bab Al-Yemen gallery between July 15-22, 2010.

Every artist exhibited their paintings and gave visitors a background to each painting. After the exhibition in Yemen, the paintings were transported back to Europe to be exhibited in several galleries in the artist's home countries.

"These artists are famous in Europe



From top to bottom, Aurelie Pedrajas, Stephanie Ledoux, Philippe Bichon, Charlotte Jaunez and David Gonzalez.

and their paintings will affect so many people who will be encouraged to visit Yemen," said Abdo Lotf.

Sadek Alsaar, the Cultural and Tourist Consultant for Yemen's Embassy in Paris organized the visit of the European artists. He said they were keen to choose the most famous artists in

Europe to come to Yemen and paint historical and tourist sites to present Yemen to their countries.

"The aim is that Yemen will be promoted in their countries via the paintings that will be exhibited in Paris, London, Madrid and other great cities," said Alsaar.



Stephanie with her painting for a girl from Haraz.



A painting for Al-Hajarah Village in Haraz by Philippe Bichon



## VACANT POSITIONS

Creative Associates/Yemen is recruiting for the following positions for the Community Livelihoods Project (CLP) based in Sana'a, Yemen. Please note that housing will not be provided. If interested please send cover letter, resume and salary history to: [recruitment@crea-clp.com](mailto:recruitment@crea-clp.com).

### Director of Community Mobilization and Livelihoods

Director of Community Mobilization and Livelihoods will oversee the Community Mobilization Unit responsible for working with community groups and local government leaders to design and implement community and livelihoods development projects throughout Yemen. S/he will ensure that targets are met and will report on results and impact of these projects. The position requires a university degree (an advanced university degree is preferred) and 10 years of program design and management experience.

### Community Mobilization and Training Coordinator

Community Mobilization and Training Coordinator will manage and train a cadre of Community Mobilizers responsible for working with community groups, local councils and youth. S/he will also be responsible for preparing reports and collecting and presenting data from the Community Mobilizers based in various governorates. The position requires a university degree, 5 years of experience in working with civil society and/or local government in Yemen, including two or more years of training and capacity building experience.

### Education Specialist

The Education Specialist will be responsible for development of education program component and will oversee Education Officers based in various governorates. S/he will also ensure achievement of targets and quality control. This position requires a university degree in education and 10 years of experience in education and development sector.

### Finance Officer

The Finance Officer will oversee all financial and administrative activities for this project. The Officer will develop and implement financial procedures, manage procurement and execute subcontracts and consulting agreements. Candidates should have degree in accounting with 5 years experience.

### Gender Specialist

The Gender Specialist will ensure that every program activity appropriately and adequately addresses the needs of both men and women and promotes their equitable participation. Candidates should have a university degree and 5 years experience in civil society or government focusing on specific issues facing women in Yemen.

### Grants Manager

Grants Manager will support the Sr. Grants Manager in the design, development, and implementation of community identified grants. Manager will provide policy guidance and interpretation for program staff as well as sub-grantees. Manager will also analyze and evaluate grant applications, proposals and awards to ensure adherence to grants policies. Candidates should have B.A. degree with 3-5 years experience.

### Health Specialist

The Health Specialist will be responsible for development of community health program component and will oversee Health Officers based in various governorates. S/he will also ensure achievement of targets in health program component and overall program goals. This position requires a university degree in medicine or public health and 10 years of experience in education and development sector.

### Human Resources Manager

The Human Resources (HR) Manager will be responsible for all field-based HR issues, including personnel processes and documentation, benefits and hiring. The HR Manager will also work with other managers on recruitment management. Candidates should have an advanced degree in HR with 3-5 years management experience, and at least 2 years experience in HR.

### IT Specialist

The IT/Database Specialist provides first level troubleshooting and technical support to users regarding computer hardware, software, network maintenance, internet connectivity, and administration. He will be in charge of developing and implementing database software and/or

protocols for the collection and reporting of data. Candidates should have B.A. degree with 3-5 years experience.

### Media Specialist

The Media Specialist will work with Community Mobilizers to determine community's media needs, identify appropriate media outlets for communities and, where needed, bring media to the community. S/he will also work closely with Communications and Outreach Specialist to design and implement program's outreach strategy. Candidates should have a university degree with 5 years experience in media development and communications.

### Monitoring and Evaluation Manager

Monitoring and Evaluation Manager will ensure program data is properly collected and informs on performance monitoring indicators. S/he will analyze the data and present information based on this analysis in quarterly and annual reports. This position requires a university degree (advanced university degree is preferred) and minimum 5 years of experience in development program performance monitoring and evaluation.

### Senior Tender and Procurement Specialist

The Senior Tender and Procurement Specialist will oversee acquisition of goods and services for grant implementation. The Procurement Specialist will manage and lead the identification and procurement for each specific grant and facilitate purchase for project competition. The Procurement Specialist will also ensure proper documentation is collected and vetted. Candidates should have an advanced degree with 5-7 years experience.

### Senior Engineer

The Senior Engineer will assess community infrastructure needs and provide technical assistance to the program team in design and implementation of all small infrastructure and community infrastructure development projects. This position requires a university degree in engineering or architecture and 8-10 years of experience.





## Saudi hires thousands of new teachers after sacking of extremists

By: Adam Gonn  
The Media Line

The Saudi Arabian government plans to hire 23,221 new teachers before the start of the new academic year in September, local media is reporting.

The move comes just days after some 2,000 high school teachers were fired or transferred to administrative positions for teaching described by the Saudi Interior Ministry as extremist and potentially encouraging of terrorism.

"Everyone knows about these teachers," Eman Al Nafjan, a former teacher, told The Media Line. "It used to be very common that teachers were extremists. But this has drastically decreased. Thanks to the education ministry program, word got out that it's not okay to teach hatred anymore and they fired many teachers."

Dr. Mustafa Alani, senior advisor and director of terrorism studies at the Gulf Research Center in Dubai, said that Saudi King Abdullah has been at

the forefront of the reforms.

"The Saudi king has taken the lead in reforming the new generation, opening their minds and changing the staff and curriculum," he told The Media Line. "The whole education system is now a part of the counter terrorism campaign."

Other Saudi counter-terrorism efforts include a revamp of the judicial system. All courts and public notaries have been instructed to notify the Ministry of Justice of any suspicions they have on either money laundering or financing of terror during real estate deals.

Saudi Arabia also ranked top in the Arab world among countries that have implemented 40 recommendations of The Financial Action Task Force, an inter-governmental body whose purpose is the development and promotion of policies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

"He [the king] is facing resistance from the old generation," Alani said. "So to supervise the educational strategy, he put his son-in-law in

charge as a major sign, because the previous minister was unable to do the work."

Saudi Arabia has been fighting a home-grown terrorist threat which began in 2003.

Groups belonging to or inspired by Al-Qa'ida are trying to undermine the monarchy in Saudi Arabia, which has faced criticism because of its alliance with the West and especially with the United States.

Saudi Arabia has arrested and tried thousands of terror suspects and is trying to weed out extremist elements planning terror attacks, recruiting operatives or spreading extremist ideology through the internet.

In August 2009 a suicide bomber almost managed to kill Prince Muhammad Bin Naif, an assistant to the Interior Minister for Security Affairs spearheading the fight against terrorism in the country.

The bomber belonged to Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, the new name adopted by the Al-Qa'ida branches in Saudi Arabia and Yemen after they merged in January 2009.

## Life by the numbers

By: Esther Dyson

Last week, I learned that I don't have cancer. My doctor called and said, "I have some good news!" Fortunately, we were in the middle of a fire drill in my office at the time, so no one noticed as I blinked back tears of relief.

I had found the lump almost two weeks earlier, while at a conference in South Africa. I returned home early to have a biopsy, but the pathology lab was achingly slow; days passed with no word. Clearly they were working hard to figure out exactly how bad my condition was. In fact, they were working hard not to miss anything before they concluded that my tumor was rare but benign.

I had been preparing for the diagnosis for more than a week...and to some extent for years, as I turned my investing focus from "all things Internet" to all things health-related. It turns out that understanding and promoting health is a great application of information technology.

Health increasingly involves numbers. Many of those numbers aren't just medical probabilities; they concern daily life choices that you can make before you get sick (or are threatened, as I was).

As a director of 23andMe, a consumer genetics start-up, and a participant in the Personal Genome Project research study ([http://www.personalgenomes.org/public/3.html#Data\\_Sets](http://www.personalgenomes.org/public/3.html#Data_Sets)), I have been studying how genes affect one's chances of getting various diseases, and how much impact behavior can have on those chances. For most people and for most conditions, the genetic chances of becoming ill are well below 20%. Moreover, regardless of your genotype, you can raise or lower those chances through diet, exercise, avoidance of stress, and engagement with friends.

Yet there is some emerging thinking – and statistics – about how the toxins we encounter in the modern world affect our immune system, which in turn affects our bodies' ability to combat cancerous cells. Everyone has cancer cells every day, but usually the body deals with them, using strength gained from eating right, exercise, and social engagement. When the body gets overloaded or weakened, cancer has an extra chance of winning, especially if you have a genetic vulnerability to a particular cancer.

Before finding out that I would get a free pass – this time, at least – I had already started considering my

options. I have no particular risk for breast cancer – no family history, and no known genetic markers. But that is true for many of the one-in-eight women who get breast cancer over their lifetimes in the United States. Given that I'm almost 60, it's probably not life-threatening (or not that much more so than being 60 itself!). Even without cancer, I have perhaps 30 years left, 40 if I'm lucky.

If I were a young mother, I would trade almost anything for the chance to see my kids grow up, but, as an older person, I'm more concerned

in odds, given that there may be better treatments available by the time the cancer recurs, and that costs of treatment – in time, pain, and side-effects such as heart disease and cognitive impairment ("chemo brain"), as well as money – are high.

Was I willing to take on three years of aggressive treatment and potential long-term side-effects for a 10-point increase in my chances of being alive and cancer-free for five years, especially since no one really knows what the chances of recurrence in 10 or 20 years are? Meanwhile, five years from now there may be new drugs that are more effective and less toxic, mitigating the downside of a later recurrence.

These numbers may be perplexing, but they are useful to understand. Almost everyone is faced at some point with decisions about treatments and side-effects, for themselves and for loved ones.

Indeed, you are probably facing such choices right now – if you pay attention to them. A large number of painful, dangerous conditions are more likely if you are overweight, under-exercised, a big drinker, lonely, or stressed. Even if you're not and get such a disease anyway, you will be better able to cope and undergo treatment if your health is good.

It may be that the main value of services such as 23andMe (at least until researchers use its data and others to learn a lot more about genetics) is not the specific genetic details, but the way that it makes us focus on the numbers. Whether we are choosing what to eat or how much to exercise, or trying to assess our chances of a specific condition, the numbers make it feel real and immediate.

For example, a vague warning against diabetes is a lot easier to ignore than the fact that your risk of diabetes is 22% (as mine is, slightly above normal), but that you can lower it substantially (as I have) by eating right, exercising, and so forth.

Yet many people are afraid of knowing these numbers; they don't realize that they are a guide, and something that they can change, rather than an immutable destiny. Just as a student can improve his grades by studying or an athlete can improve his performance by practicing, so you can change many of the numbers that define your health prospects.

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with quality of life than length. Of course, if the cancer was aggressive, I would take more treatment now just to stay alive. If it was slow-growing, I'd remove the tumor and engage in what is called "watchful waiting."

Perhaps the most important thing to understand is statistics – whether for cancer or health in general. In my case, they could have gone something like this: assume you have a 70% chance of survival (defined as no recurrence for five years) if you simply have the tumor removed. Radiation and chemotherapy treatments can reduce recurrence by a further 30%. That sounds like a lot, until you realize that it means your "survival" chances go up only nine points, from 70% to 79%, because it is the 30% recurrence rate that drops 30%, to 21%.

That is not such a great increase

## Power to the people

By: Carlos Slim and Kandeh K. Yumkella

If you are reading this article, you most likely have electricity and heat at home and never think of that fact as at all remarkable. But over 2 billion people – one in three people on our planet – have no access to modern energy to light and heat the dwellings in which they live.

The obstacles to energy access are not technical. We know how to build power systems, design modern cooking stoves, and meet energy demand efficiently. What is missing is a global commitment to move energy access up the political and development agendas.

Half of the world's population uses solid fuel, such as wood, charcoal, or dung, for cooking. According to the World Health Organization, 1.6 million women and children die each year as a result of indoor smoke inhalation, more than from malaria. Add the pollutant emissions from such stoves, together with the deforestation that results from using firewood, and you have several pressing global challenges that can be tackled at once by closing the energy gap.

Efforts to close this gap have so far been insufficient in scale and scope, but a plan of action now exists, developed in recent months by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Advisory Group on Energy and Climate Change (AGECC). The Group brings together top UN officials and business executives, including from Edison International, Statoil, Suntech Holdings, and Vattenfall.

Through this innovative public-private partnership, we analyzed global energy access and recommended in our resulting report that the international community commit to universal access to modern energy services by 2030. The report also called for a 40% reduction in global energy intensity by 2030, which,



if implemented, would reduce global energy intensity at approximately double the historical rate.

AGECC is now working on how best to deliver on the plan. This was the focus of the Group's last meeting, held on July 15 in Mexico City. It was hosted by the Carlos Slim Foundation, which works in support of implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in such areas as health, deforestation, and closing the digital divide.

Mexico will be the location for key UN climate talks later this year, and AGECC is interacting with the country's energy ministry to ensure a coordinated and effective approach.

The financial implications of ensuring universal energy access are large, but not overwhelming when weighed against the enormous benefits. The International Energy Agency estimates that, over the next two decades, ensuring universal access to electricity would require around 10% of total annual investment in the energy sector, which can be mobilized by the private sector. Universal energy access is a new market opportunity, but one that needs the right support to thrive.

Many clean technologies are already

available, so we are not talking about investing billions in research. It is a question of transferring the technologies and adapting them to local conditions and needs.

But increasing energy access is not only about supplying better, more efficient cooking stoves or light bulbs. To promote economic development and growth, energy services must also work in the interest of creating wealth and jobs by providing power for businesses and improving healthcare, education, and transportation.

In September, world leaders will meet at the UN to assess progress on the MDGs. While there is no goal on energy, it is central to meeting the other MDGs, especially those concerning poverty and hunger, universal education, and environmental sustainability.

Governments alone will not be able to deal with all of these challenges. We need a firm commitment from all sides: private businesses, academia, civil society, and international organizations and NGOs.

The deadline for delivering universal energy access is 2030. Will you join us?

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## Hezbollah in a corner

By: Paul Salem

The future of Hezbollah, Lebanon's powerful Shia political and paramilitary organization, has never looked more uncertain. Indeed, given rising tension with Israel and possible indictments of its operatives by the international tribunal investigating the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafic al-Hariri, Hezbollah appears to be hemmed in on all sides.

The most immediate question concerns the possibility of another Israel-Hezbollah war, fears of which have mounted throughout this year, fueled by reports of new missile transfers to Hezbollah and intermittent threats from Israel. Those who foresee war argue that Israel is unwilling to tolerate a heavily armed Iranian proxy on its border while tensions with Iran over the nuclear issue remain unresolved.

Although war is unlikely in the coming months, if sanctions on Iran don't bear fruit by early 2011, Israel might feel the need to act. If it launched military strikes on Iran's nuclear installations, Hezbollah would likely join the fray and Israel would have to engage Hezbollah at the same time. Alternatively, Israel might launch a pre-emptive war against Hezbollah in order to rob Iran of a nearby retaliatory capacity.

Hezbollah is preparing intensively for such scenarios, building defenses, digging tunnels, and assembling a powerful missile arsenal. But, although Hezbollah's preparations are likely to ensure its survival, it would be hard-pressed to justify to the Lebanese public a strategy that led to two ruinous wars in the span of five years.

In the end game of such a war, Syria might be asked by the Arab countries and the international community to take greater responsibility in Lebanon, in order to contain Hezbollah and its military profile.

Moreover, if peace prevents a slide into war, Hezbollah has another

problem. Although a real breakthrough in the Arab-Israeli peace process appears unlikely, United States envoy George Mitchell is still talking of Arab-Israeli peace as a distinct possibility in 2011. Sources within the US administration hint that President Barack Obama might announce the outlines of an Arab-Israeli settlement sometime later this year.

An accord between Syria and Israel is a key element of all proposed scenarios

push Lebanon into a peace treaty with Israel and lean on Hezbollah heavily to adjust to the new realities.

Given its popularity among Lebanese Shia, Hezbollah could continue as an influential political party, but it would have to abandon its role as a major proxy force for Iran's Revolutionary Guards. Nevertheless, Hezbollah faces severe political trouble, too. Although no official announcement has been made, there are reports that Daniel Bellemare, the prosecutor for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, might conclude his investigation and issue indictments in the fall.

In a speech on July 16, Hezbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah acknowledged rumors that the Tribunal might indict members of his party, but charged that the Tribunal was part of an Israeli plot to undermine the Islamic resistance in Lebanon and has no credibility. He argued that the indictments would probably be based on cell-phone records, and that Israeli agents had penetrated the Lebanese cell-phone network. Indeed, the Lebanese authorities recently arrested a high-level official at one of the country's two cell-phone companies, alleging that he was an Israeli agent.

In describing the tribunal as part of an Israeli plot, Nasrallah warned the government and other parties in Lebanon against cooperating with it, or accepting its verdicts. He reminded his audience of the street fighting in Beirut in May 2008, and made clear that Hezbollah would not shy away from another fight if necessary.

While Hezbollah has tried to convince other Lebanese that its presence helps maintain the country's security and stability, regional and international developments suggest that it faces mounting challenges. And, although the future does not look bright for Hezbollah, it is not likely to relinquish its power without a fight.

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# Turkish involvement in Afghanistan

## Wielding “Soft Power” for a good image

Although the AKP was critical of NATO’s Afghanistan mission, Turkey remained part of it even after the party came to power in 2002. Turkey’s main aim now is to introduce security to the country and assist with redevelopment. Cem Sey has the details



More than just a military campaign: in addition to combating al-Qaeda, Ankara is mainly interested in reconstructing the civilian infrastructure

Ankara has been involved in the NATO operation in Afghanistan from the beginning. The decision was taken by the centre-left government under Bülent Ecevit following the 11 September 2001 attacks in New York and Washington. A year later, the pro-Islam AKP came to power. Yet despite its much more critical stance on the NATO mission, it too continued Turkey’s involvement in Afghanistan. Turkey even assumed leadership of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) twice during this period.

From 2002, however, Ankara was keen to ensure that its own troops were not caught up in military action. The reason was not, as might be supposed, the potential loss to the Turkish army – there had been hardly any attacks on Turkish soldiers – instead Turkey sought to establish its involvement in Afghanistan in a historical context and to emphasise the countries’ shared history.

This shared history began shortly after World War I. At that time, the Afghans came to the Turks’ assistance. When the entente – the military alliance between the UK, France and Russia – sought to

divide the areas of the Ottoman Empire settled by Turks into spheres of interest, King Amanullah Khan, the founder of modern-day Afghanistan, protested. He expressed solidarity with the emerging Turkish resistance in Anatolia under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk out of which the Turkish republic was born. It was a gesture that has not been forgotten to this day

Over the following decades, Turkish doctors, officers, professors and teachers were sent to work in Afghanistan. Turkey helped found Kabul University, the Afghan military academy and the conservatoire.

### Development aid workers instead of soldiers

Today 800 Turkish soldiers are stationed in the capital Kabul and in Wardak province. However, politicians from the ruling AKP party believe that the time for military action is over. “We would like NATO to establish security there and withdraw stage by stage,” says Suat Kiniklioglu, a member of the Turkish

parliament’s foreign policy committee and foreign affairs spokesperson for the AKP. “But our special relationship with Afghanistan may mean that we will develop a different approach, whatever the West does in the future.”

When Turkish politicians and experts talk of “a different approach”, the magic words “soft power” usually follow in close succession. What they mean is that Turkey wishes, for instance, to build more schools and hospitals. The Afghans are to be better educated and cared for. It is hoped that private Turkish firms will invest in Afghan infrastructure.

This direct aid would benefit the Afghan population directly and boost sympathy for Turkey amongst Afghans, says Kamer Kasim, professor of politics and member of the Turkish think tank USAK. “The schools founded by Turkey, the activities of Turkish firms ... this can all clearly be understood as ‘soft power’. When these parties contribute to education and health there, it strengthens Turkey’s good image in

Afghanistan.”

### Tangible success

Every day, around 900 Afghans make use of the hospitals built by Turkey. All treatments are free. Over the last eight years, around 800,000 Afghans have benefitted from medical attention in this way. And in 34 Turkish-built schools, over 50,000 Afghan children are learning to read and write. Many of them are also learning Turkish.

But it is not to end there. Turkey wants to build another 35 clinics and schools. The aim is to win over ethnic minorities, which include many Turkic peoples, and therefore also Afghanistan for a Turkey-oriented policy in Central Asia.

Turkey’s foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, emphasises that Turkey has economic as well as political interests in Afghanistan. In his book *Strategic Depth*, he places great significance on central Asia and Afghanistan. Not only does the region contain enormous natural resources, it is also very important from a Turkish perspective as a transport route for trade and fuel.

The latest infrastructure project is an example of how determined Turkey is to pursue its business interests: a railway is planned from Pakistan to Turkey via Afghanistan and Iran.

### Turkey as a political guide

According to Professor Kasim, Turkey’s political goal is the stability of Afghanistan and the overthrow of non-Afghan fighters – in other words al-Qaeda. Ankara sees itself as the mastermind



Redevelopment in Herat: every day around 900 Afghans are treated in Turkish-built hospitals

of NATO’s current strategy in Afghanistan, which was developed in Istanbul and later agreed on at the Afghanistan conference in London.

According to Foreign Minister Davutoglu, regular consultations between Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan can also be traced back to a Turkish initiative. These consultations have brought together heads of state, members of parliament, military leaders and the heads of the secret services of all three countries.

“Both Afghanistan and Pakistan trust Turkey. Neither of them question our good will,” says Suat Kiniklioglu. And that is above all because Turkey does not have a history of colonialism in Afghanistan. This is why the Turkish dialogue initiative is so highly valued.

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Translated from the German by Steph Morris

Editor: Aingeal Flanagan/Qantara.de



The NATO outpost Incirlik in southern Turkey is a reloading point for the transportation of ISAF supplies to Afghanistan

## Invitation for Bids

Date: [July 24, 2010]

Contract Identification No: GEODR-1

United Nations Environment Program Grant: GFL-2328-2721-4A90

: PMS: GF/4040-09-11

United Nations Environment Program Project Name: **Yemen Geothermal Development Project**

The Government of the Republic of Yemen has received a MSP Grant from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) towards the cost of drilling a geothermal borehole depth up to 1500 m, and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments. The Project covered under these Tender Documents is Drilling an Exploratory Geothermal Borehole in Dhamar Area Contract No. **GEODR-1**.

1. The Works consist of:-
  - a. Drilling of one geothermal Borehole up to 1500 m depth. With casing/drilling technology with cutting sampling at specific depths
  - b. Supply and install casings; and
  - c. Perform temperature, pressure profiling by kuster probe-logging at different depths

**Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible countries as defined in the Guidelines: Procurement under Yemeni and GEF standard guidelines. All submitted bidders should have the following:**

- a. the maximum allowable number of joint venture partners is 2.
- b. Experience in drilling a geothermal boreholes depth more than 1500m.
- c. The minimum required annual volume of construction works for the successful bidder in any of the last five years shall be US\$ 1.0 Million.
- d. The minimum of liquid assets and / or credit facilities net of other con-

tractual commitments of successful bidder shall be US\$ 1.0 Million.

2. The Ministry of Water and Environment invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Drilling and testing of one geothermal borehole in Al-Lisi- Isbil Area, Dhamar Governorate , prep-meeting will take place in the Project Management Unit - Geological Survey and Mineral Resources Board and Site Visit will take place on August 7 ,2010. Bidding documents (and additional copies) may be purchased at Project Management Unit - Geological Survey and Mineral Resources Board

Al-Zubairi St. Sana’a, Republic of Yemen  
Tel:- +967- 1- 534257 fax: +967-1- 537263

for a nonrefundable fee of 100 US Dollar or its equivalent in Yemeni currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

3. Bids shall be valid for a period of 120 days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by security total amount 30,000 US\$ Valid for 150 days after the deadline for Bid submission and shall be delivered to the above address on or before August 24,2010 at 12:00 noon, at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

All bids must be accompanied by a security in the form and amount specified in the bidding documents, and must be delivered to the above address at or before Bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders’ representatives who choose to attend.

**Geological Survey and Mineral Resources Board**  
**Project Management Unit -**  
**Al-Zubairi St., Sana’a, Republic of Yemen**  
**Tel:- +967- 1- 534257 fax: +967-1- 537263**



# المدينة الخضراء

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الحدائق في التصميم والمحافظة على الخصوصية

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في كنف  
عروس البحر

فلل سكنية بخيارات متنوعة ومساحات مختلفة

شقق سكنية بنماذج متعددة تلبى كافة الرغبات

خدمات أساسية ومرافق عامة متكاملة

إمكانية السداد بالتقسيط



طرق رئيسية معبدة

شبكة هاتف

شبكة كهرباء

شبكة مياه

أندية ثقافية ورياضية

مساحات خضراء حدائق عامة

محلات تجارية

مساجد ومراكز طبية

مدارس ورياض أطفال

لمزيد من المعلومات أو الاستفسار نسعد بتواصلكم معنا على العناوين التالية :

الامارات العربية المتحدة  
مجموعة كسب العقارية  
أبو ظبي : ٠٠٩٧١ ٢ ٦٧٧٧٧٠٥  
عجمان : ٠٠٩٧١ ٦ ٧٤٦٦٦٧٨  
العين : ٠٠٩٧١ ٣ ٧٦٦٧٧٢٤

المملكة العربية السعودية - جدة  
حي البغدادية أبراج العالم  
تلفون : ٠٠٩٦٦ ٢ ٦٤٥٠٠٩٥  
جوال : ٠٠٩٦٦ ٥٤٣٣٥٥١١١  
جوال : ٠٠٩٦٦ ٥٤٤٢١٧٠٠٠

المملكة العربية السعودية - الرياض  
شارع البلحاء العام - عمارة اسمنت اليمام  
الدور السابع - مكتب رقم ٧٠٣  
تلفون : ٠٠٩٦٦ ١ ٤٠٣٣٤٣٠  
فاكس : ٠٠٩٦٦ ١ ٤٠٦٦٥١٩  
جوال : ٠٠٩٦٦ ٥٤٠٠٥٥٠٠٣

الجمهورية اليمنية - صنعاء  
شارع ١٤ أكتوبر غرب دار الرئاسة  
تلفون : ٠٠٩٦٧ ١ ٤٢٤٣٢١/٢  
فاكس : ٠٠٩٦٧ ١ ٤٢٤٣٢٣  
جوال : ٧٧٧٣٥٥١١١ - ٧٧٧٣٥٥٠٠٠

الجمهورية اليمنية - عدن  
المدينة الخضراء السكنية  
تلفون : ٠٠٩٦٧ ٢ ٣٥٥١١١ / ٢/٣  
فاكس : ٠٠٩٦٧ ٢ ٣٥٥١١٥  
جوال : ٧٧٧٣٥٥١١٢  
عدن - خورمكسر : ٠٢ ٢٣٧٩٧١

# Cancer kills Yemeni families in Yarim



Mawa village in Yarim district, Ibb governorate

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

Abdul-Ghani Saleh Al-Abyadh, 45, and his father are two men from a single family who are still fighting cancer after another relative, Abdul-Ghani's brother, died because of a gastrointestinal tumor. His mother was the first to die in the family, because of leucemia.

Abdul-Ghani has a gastrointestinal tumor and his father has throat cancer. Abdul-Ghani's father Saleh sold most of his land to try to cure his first wife and son, both of whom have died, and then to pay for the cost of medication for himself and Abdul-ghani.

Abdul-Ghani still has four brothers and three sisters who are in good health.

The father, Saleh Al-Abyadh, was the biggest farmer in the village, holding the most plots of land among the villagers in Mawa. Now he has become poor because he had to sell most of his land. He now has only two plots of land, and Abdul-Ghani is expecting that his father will sell them to continue their treatment.

Seven years ago, after his wife died, Saleh married again. Now he has another three children, and their mother is taking care of them as well as Abdul-Ghani, who is still single. The children are in good health, but when they grow up, they will find themselves without



The cistern of dirty water. Many people doubt it has any relation to the spread of cancer in Mawa.

any land, since Saleh will have sold his land to pay for cancer treatment.

Mawa is a small village located in the east of Yarim district, 10 kilometers away from the center of the district's local authority in Ibb governorate. It is near Dhafar, the historical capital of the Himyarite kingdom from the second century BC. The whole area is a tourist destination visited by tourists from across the world.

The village is inhabited by nearly 500 people descended from six families: Bait Al-Abyadh, Bait Shaddad, Bait Al-Waqiah, Bait Qutabish, Bani Ata and Bait Al-Aradhi. Almost all of the families have cancer patients, roughly 28 cases in total.

In the Bait Al-Abyadh family alone there are 18 cases of cancer. Fourteen patients have died, and four are still alive. Two of them are still receiving treatment in Sana'a, and Abdul-Ghani and his father are in Mawa and receive their treatment every month from the cancer unit in the governorate.

The rest of the cases are distributed between Bait Shaddad, where four died, Bait Al-Waqiah, where two died,

Bait Qutabish, where two died, and two cases from Bani Ata, which also ended in death, according to Lotf Al-Abyadh, a teacher and dignitary in the village.

Farmers in the area do not grow the qat tree, which acts as a stimulant when people chew the young leaves. Farmers generally spray it with high quantities of pesticide to speed up its production. Instead, the people grow potatoes and corn, crops that only need small quantities of pesticides.

"This disease was sent down to us by God to test us," said Abdul-Ghani Saleh. "We do not grow qat, we do not use pesticides, and we live a normal life like any other people."

In Mawa, visitors are struck by the dirty water in a cistern located under the village. Visitors notice a bad smell coming from this cistern, and it seems that it is receiving water coming down from the bathrooms of the people living on the hill.

One can find women around the cistern washing clothes in the dirty water. Villagers have another well behind the village, but it does not supply enough water. But Dr. Mohammad Derhim Al-Kedesi, Radiation Oncologist at the National Oncology Center in Sana'a, excluded the dirty water as a cause of cancer.

"The dirty water does not cause cancer. Dirty water will kill you before you have cancer - you will die either from cholera or diarrhea," he affirmed. "But cancer needs a long period of time

to appear."

He said that the exposed dirty water in the cistern is more dangerous to people than cancer and that this problem must be controlled by those concerned. "Many people have died from diarrhea," he affirmed.

Al-Kedesi says there is something behind the spread of cancer in the village, but it is still undiscovered. He has not visited the village however. He says that a study must be made of the whole village to discover the mysterious cause. "A family medical survey must be done for all families in the village," he explained.

"We have to consider four basic things: sources of radiation, dangerous chemical substances, hereditary diseases and infection with many viruses," he argued. "You will surely find one of these four factors in the village. There is a reason for the high incidence of cancer in one of these factors."

He affirmed that Yemen has a high rate of cancer. "Cancer is found in the world in a ratio of between 80 and 120 persons per 100,000, and Yemen is near 120," he explained.

He put the increased level of cancer in Yemen down to the lifestyle of the people and the way that they eat their food, in addition to malnutrition. "Yemenis are used to eating burnt food and there is no variation in their meals," he said.

## No help from concerned groups

Abdul-Ghani blamed concerned parties for not doing their duty to help them. He said he and his father paid for almost all the costs of surgeries and are paying for medication. He said that even though he is a soldier in the army, he does not get support from the government.

"We sold almost all of our land to treat ourselves," he said.

The Director of the Health Office in Ibb governorate, Abdulmalek Al-Sana'ani, said that they did not realize the problem of the spread of cancer in Yarim and only learned about it after the media started concentrating on it last month.

"We did not even receive a message from the local authority in Yarim. If we had received a notification, we would have taken action," he said. But he added that Al-Thowra Hospital in Ibb and cancer treatment units provide medications to the patients.

However, the Director of Yarim

They have said that they will provide what help they can.

"We are opening the door to patients to provide them with the help that we can give," said Al-Khawlani.

Two years ago, the National Oncology Center (NOC) paid a field visit to the village to investigate the case and report on it. The head of NOC, Dr. Nadeem Mohammad Saeed, headed the team. He said that he wrote a report at the time and sent it to the Ministry of Health.

He refused, however, to give the Yemen Times a copy of this report or to reveal the results of this report, but alluded to genetics as being behind cancer in the area.

"I submitted the report to the Ministry of Health, the government body I am dealing with," said Mohammad Saeed. "I visited the area with five other people, examined the families, and submitted the report to the deputy minister of health."

But he argued that a genetic factor is the main reason of the spread of the disease, especially colon cancer. "We do not have the scientific capabilities to know if marriage between relatives helps to spread the disease," he said.

However, no concerned body heard about the findings of the report or the



The land Abdul-Ghani's father sold for the treatment against cancer for him and his family. It is used for growing potatoes. Cheers,

District, Abdoh Othman Jahlan, affirms that the village is free of any of the well-known causes of cancer. He said that a team composed of doctors, officials and engineers from the National Committee for Atomic Energy paid a field visit to the village to investigate the case.

"The team took samples of water and stones to find out if there is radiation," said Jahlan. "The team told us there is no radiation, and if there were pollution in the cistern, leeches would not be found alive in it."

Considering the water problem, Jahlan said that the government provided the people with a clean water project that will help people to stop using the dirty water in the cistern.

The National Cancer Combating Foundation (NCCF) learned about the case only last month after Al-Saeeda Television Channel televised a report about the village. Up to now they have not provided anything to patients' families.

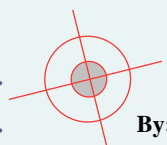
"Our duty is to sound the alarm of danger and educate people on the aftermath of this danger," said the director of the NCCF, Ali Al-Khawlani.

He said that they sent a team to the village composed of health officials, specialized doctors and an engineer from the National Committee for Atomic Energy to investigate the case.



Abdul-Ghani Al-Abyadh, colon cancer patient.

## HEALTH WATCH



By: Dr. Siva

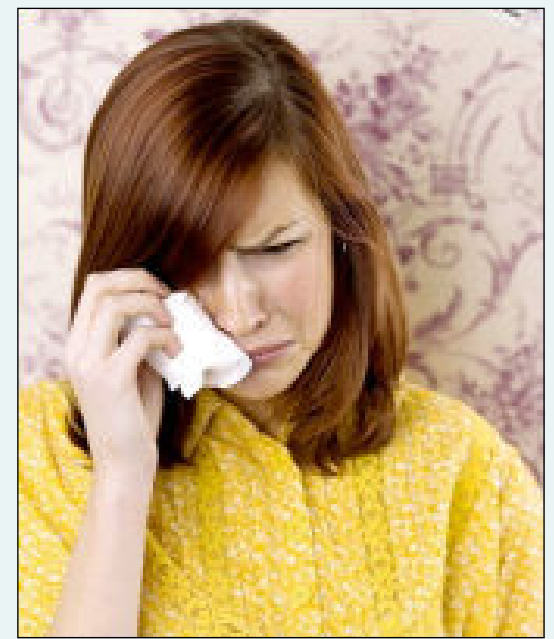


This weekly column is to disseminate health information to the readers in Yemen and outside. Dr. Siva is currently working at Aden Refinery Company Hospital. Life style diseases and cancer prevention are his special interests. Complementary medicine and naturopathy are his passions.

## Dealing with grief

Fareed is known to me for several years. He lives at Foqm, a small fishing village near Little Aden. He has a small family and is blessed with three beautiful children. Fareed and his wife Sheema came to my clinic a fortnight ago and both of them looked devastated. They then told me that their first son had got a job in Saudi and was preparing to leave. A week ago, his son drove down to Bureka to say 'ma essalama' to all his friends. Near the ARC Power Station, when he was negotiating a turn, he lost control. The car skidded and rolled over. He sustained a head injury and died on the spot, shattering the dreams of his family. When Fareed narrated the story to me, his wife cried uncontrollably and fainted.

Tahseen is our family friend. She just lost her mother due to breast cancer. Watching her cheerful and strong mother succumb to the disease has left Tahseen drained and shaken. She was depressed and crying a lot thinking of her old father who was beyond recovery. Tahseen finds herself totally drained out all the time and unable to sleep. She was always the sensible one in the family and seeing her losing her centre of gravity has left her family confused and out of order. Tahseen has to work her way through her sorrow and crawl to a place in her mind where acceptance spreads its gentle mantle and covers the wound of loss and bereavement.



Losing a son or daughter is beyond the parent's acceptance and imagination. How can we forget the very first word our child mumbled or the first step he planted on Mother Earth? The loss of a child can never be compensated by another new child born to the parents.

Losing a parent, at whatever age, is a blow that can leave us disoriented and rudderless. Who will remember our first day at school or the time we learnt our very first dance steps? Who will now love us unconditionally? When we lose a parent or a close relative, the landscape of our memories is altered irrevocably. Sooner or later, each of us will experience that dagger in the heart called grief. How can you ever pick up the pieces, heal the wounds and move on with the rest of your life without feeling like you're betraying the memory of your loved one?

As a doctor, every now and then I see people who have some major illnesses struggle with death and dying. Sometimes I see families overpowered by an avalanche of emotions when the final moment comes, even if they know death was imminent. However, I've observed that Yemenis are very resilient and philosophical. They accept death in the right spirit.

### Easing the healing process of grief

Unless we learn to cope with grief, it can overwhelm us and leave us susceptible to illnesses, both physical and emotional. Follow these tips to cope with grief:

- **Actively grieve and mourn.** One of the lessons life teaches us is the necessity of dealing with loss. Grief is your inner feelings of loss, sadness and emptiness. Mourning is the external or outward manifestation of that grief. Both grief and mourning are natural and necessary parts of the healing process after a loss.
- **If you don't face your grief,** your wounds may never go away. Acknowledge the pain and know that it's part of the healing process. Unresolved grief can surface years later as sleeplessness, breathing difficulties, headaches, palpitations, relationship issues, intestinal problems, mental health difficulties, eating disorders, smoking, qat chewing or other issues.
- **We grieve alone,** but we heal in a community. A friend, a confidant, a spiritual leader, all can help you along the journey of healing. Look to loved ones and other close contacts to share your sorrow or simply be there when you cry.
- **Don't make major decisions while grieving.** Grief clouds the ability to make sound decisions. If possible, wait four to six months before making big decisions — such as moving, taking a new job or making major financial changes. If you must make decisions right away, seek the input or guidance of a trusted loved one or other close contacts.
- **Be with people who care about you.** Spending some time alone is not always fine. Isolation can become unhealthy and interfere with the healing process. Surround yourself with people who care about you.
- **Take care of yourself.** Grief consumes a significant amount of energy. Your will to live and ability to follow normal routines may quickly erode. To combat these problems, try to get adequate sleep, eat a healthy diet and include physical activity in your daily routine. Consider a medical checkup to make sure your grief isn't adversely affecting your physical health, especially if you have any existing health conditions.
- **Time is the best healer.** Time has the ability to make that acute searing pain of loss less intense and to make your emotions less painful, though feelings of loss and emptiness may never completely go away. Accepting and embracing the new "normal" may help reconcile the loss of a near and dear one.
- **Calmness and acceptance.** The loss can never be forgotten. The dull ache in the heart or the vacuum created by the loss of the near and dear one can linger in your heart for a long time. The intensity of the pain however, will fade in the course of time. The memories of happiness and joy shared with the person you have lost will brighten your life at the most unexpected of moments.

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شاركنا الريادة

# Do not look at a beautiful girl in the morning

By: Malak Shaher

**“I**f you see a beautiful girl in the morning before any other thing, you will have bad luck. In Taiz, we believe that seeing an ape is better than seeing a beautiful lady,” Mahmoud Ali, 38, told the Yemen Times.

In Yemen, people believe in things that cannot be explained by common

sense or by science. Seeing a black cat or a black dog means the same for people all over Yemen, including Taiz. They believe that their day will not pass smoothly.

Almost all Yemenis, especially the old ones, associate bad luck with magic. If a girl is divorced many times, her mother interprets this by saying that her daughter has been affected by magic or by the evil eye.

“This is the third time that my daugh-

ter has divorced. She is beautiful and should not be divorced at her young age. Someone must have put a evil eye on her or maybe she is under a spell,” said Fatima Ali.

Almost all those who believe in superstitions are older people. The daughter, who has been divorced three times, does not believe in this and said that it was her destiny to divorce three times.

“We just did not get along with each other and that is the story. The evil eye or magic has nothing to do with me getting divorced three times,” Ruba said.

As Yemenis believe in the evil eye, they try their best to discover if they are affected by someone of not.

In Sana'a, in the north of Yemen, people hold red and white material over the head of someone suspected of having been affected by the evil eye and read verses from the Quran. They then burn the material on top of incense. He or she stays in the room where they walk around and spread the incense fumes. If the incense makes a low popping sound, it means that the person is truly affected by the evil eye.

Nevertheless, superstitions in Yemen are not just associated with bad luck.

Um Hani said that she can tell if someone is to visit her or not. Some-

times, a black flying insect called a ‘hanthor’ in Yemeni Arabic, comes from the window and flies inside the house telling her that someone will visit her. She said she feels happy if she sees the insect.

“If the house is untidy, I get up and clean it just in case somebody appears suddenly,” she explained. “The flying black insect is not the only one who makes me guess if someone is to visit me or not. Sometimes my left foot itches and that means that someone is to show up for sure.”

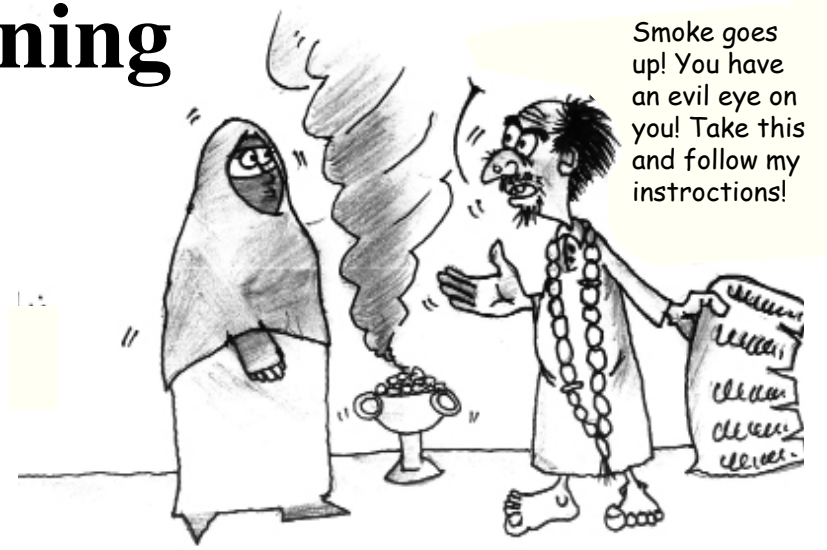
“Every time it appears, in minutes or no more than a few hours, somebody shows up,” explained Um Ali.

The position of shoes when people take them off says if someone will travel or not.

“If one shoe got above the other while taking them off, it means you will travel,” said Marwan Saleh.

In Yemen, not only can insects or the position of inanimate things predict the future, but people also believe in their bodily instincts too. They also believe that they can tell if things are happening behind their back.

It is common for example in Dhahar, in the north of Yemen, that if someone bites his tongue by accident, it means



By: Nabil Al-Qanes

somebody is talking behind his back maliciously.

Hands can foresee the future too. But the two hands do not indicate the same thing. When the right hand itches, they expect to spend money. However, when the left hand itches they expect to receive money.

Eyes are predictive too. If the upper eyelid of a Yemeni person flickers, it says that he is to see somebody dear to his heart. However, flickering in the lower eyelid indicates that he will cry.

If an eyelash falls on someone's cheek, they ask you to make a wish and

ask you to guess where the eyelash is. If you can tell, your wish may come true.

## 4U

In order not to be accused of affecting someone with the evil eye, one should say “ma sha Allah” for something he or she likes. “Ma sha Allah” means that whatever this person likes is what God wants.



By: Nabil Al-Qanes

# Book binding, a vanishing handcraft

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori  
For the Yemen Times

**F**or the book binders in the old city of Sana'a, the month of Sha'ban running up to the holy month of Ramadan is especially important. It is the beginning of a three-month peak season for the craftsmen, in a time when modern binders and computers are serious competition. Books brought to be bound are usually copies of the Quran.

Like many other Yemeni traditional handcrafts, book binding is a trade struggling for its survival. It is almost dying, according to the artisans who claim that this handcraft is the only income they have.

Hibaka, as the craft is known in Suq Al-Milh in the old city of Sana'a, is binding books to preserve them. But nowadays, the handcraft has become limited to binding the Holy Quran. Most clients bring with them at least one copy of the Holy Quran, they say.

There used to be 13 handlers next to each other, forming what was known as Suq Al-Habbakayn, north east of the Great Mosque at the western entrance to Suq Al-Milh. Today, there are only five of them according to Hisham Al-Siraji, who has been working in the trade for 11 years.

Al-Siraji thinks that the decrease in handlers is caused by the fact that those with knowledge of the trade do



Like many other Yemeni traditional handcrafts, book binding is a trade struggling for its survival

not pass it on to their sons so that one of them can take his place. People today have stopped binding their books the old way, and instead prefer to bind their books using an automatic binding machine.

The professional binder, however, said that he considered binding a book by hand to reach perfection is an art more powerful than any automatic binding.

Abdulmuhsen Al-Dailami, who has been binding books the old way for 15 years, learned the secrets of the trade from his father. He thinks that the reason behind the decrease of those specialized in the trade is caused by the negligence of the authorities towards

this handcraft. In addition, the price of leather with which they bind books has increased and people have stopped binding their books as they used to do.

Al-Dailami said that the skill is used to preserve and maintain books, commercial records, old contracts, and scripts.

“The months of Sha'ban, Ramadan, and Shawwal are our season. I do around 50 books a month, it depends,” Hashim said, who says that the kind of binding can be either regular or sophisticated.

The sophisticated type of binding is to bind the whole book with leather which should preserve it for 150 years, he said. Customers can customize their

book by ordering it to be inscribed or painted with “golden water.”

Al-Dailami added that there are a variety of binding methods, such as binding the book from one side only. This type is common for it is cheap and keeps the book preserved for 10 years.

Another method includes adding a lock on the book to close it with, or adding an ‘ashar’ or ribbon as a page marker, according to Al-Dailami.

Abdulmuhsen mentioned another type that is framing or ‘al-baraweez’ which is a beautifying touch for the book. It is done by putting a piece of cloth or hard paper under certain places of the leather, as Al-Dailami explained.

Binding books was very difficult in the old days, and it cost more money and took more time than it does nowadays, according to Al-Siraji.

“Back then, we used to bind books by gathering every 20 pages aside, then gather the whole book with a piece of cloth and sew the book back again. Then, we cover it with the leather which is the final stage, glue the leather on, hold it with steel grips, hold it with wooden grips, and put it under the sun for four to five days,” explained Abdulmuhsen.

They use a steel grip that holds the book to complete the binding with knives and scissors, and a wooden grip to hold the book while it's under the sun to dry.



Traditional book binding method includes adding a lock on the book to close it with, or adding an ‘ashar’ or ribbon as a page marker



Foad Taher, 20, inherited the craft of book binding from his father and grandfather

# Meet ‘Naqa’ Tube: Saudi Arabia’s purified YouTube

In its latest bid to protect religious virtue and cultural morals on the Internet, Saudi Arabia has introduced its own “clean” alternative to the leading video-sharing site YouTube. Naqa Tube, billed as “the pure YouTube”, censors all video material deemed harmful towards the national authorities and Saudi citizens, including music videos and footage depicting women.

By: Alexandra Sandels  
Menassat

**N**aqa Tube translates into “pure” tube and runs under the slogan, “Participate with us in a clean website.” It offers a collection of edited and “clean” clips from the original YouTube. Site visitors are presented with a wide array of footage

of discussion forums and meetings with Islamic clerics and scholars, among other religious-related topics.

According to the Saudi-based English daily Arab News, Naqa Tube blocks all videos perceived negative towards the “Kingdom’s government, scholars and citizens.”

This includes music and videos that have women in them.

Naqa Tube moderator Abu Ibraheem

says the site has received between 5,000 to 6,000 visitors since its official launching in June.

In the past months, a special squad known as the “Saudi flagger campaign” has been scanning YouTube for videos deemed offensive to the kingdom. Once a clip depicting inappropriate material is found, the task force flags the video and requests the site’s administrator to take it off the site.

The campaign proved unpopular in liberal Saudi blogging circles.

“First, what is an offending video? What are the criteria for such thing? I mean, what is offending to you can be quite harmless to me, right? So who gets to decide which videos are offending? Second, YouTube is already heavily censored by CITC [Communications &

Information Technology Commission]. Do we need another layer of censorship?” wrote Saudi blogger Saudijeans in a blogpost criticizing the Saudi flagging campaign.

As a counterpunch to the YouTube flagging campaign, Saudi Jeans sarcastically suggested the launching of “Saudi Unflagger.”

Saudi Arabia is one of the leading Internet censors in the Middle East, with an estimated hundreds of thousands of sites blocked.

The kingdom’s CITC blocks broad swaths of the Web, from sites containing porn or “immoral” content to political opposition sites and gambling forums, through the use of software.

Saudijeans expressed concern over increased web censorship through the



flagging campaign.

“I think that organizing a campaign for such purpose is a just a waste of time and effort. What is worse, it is enforcing yet another form of censor-

ship and that is the last thing we need. CITC is already doing a great job at it that I find myself occasionally amazed by how dedicated they are to this job,” he wrote.

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Email:Rajeev5y@yahoo.com
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**Youth empowered through capacity building and volunteer work**



By: Malak Shafer

Sara Mohammad Mo'ath, 24, is one of 5 trainees who came from Aden governorate and are now among the 24 trainees at the Siraj Foundation

She said that her first day as a trainee let her discover how to know who she is, what her potential was, and how to use it to benefit her society.

Last Saturday, a training course for 24 young people coming from Aden, Abyan, Sana'a and Ibb was conducted in Sana'a to help empower youth. It was organized by the Siraj Project for Youth Leadership and Development.

The Siraj Foundation arranged the training course in life skills for youth and organizations working with youth. It is to last four days and intends to build the participants' life skills, discover their potentials and assist them in doing

projects helping their society.

The Siraj Foundation funded by USAID is concerned with enabling youth and helping societies in five countries: Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Yemen. Ifcar Hatem Al-Shameri, manager of the Siraj office in Yemen, said that the program runs in cooperation with the Life Makers Foundation and Tawteen Human Development under the patronage of the Youth and Sports Ministry. It conducts training programs to empower youth and provide them with life skills.

She explained that the Siraj Foundation's projects and programs are carried out with the help of these two foundations which provide it with young people to be trained.

The 12 girls and 12 boys will group themselves into four groups and each group will come up with an idea of a project to help their society. The four projects will be funded by the Siraj

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Foundation.

Save the Children's Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) and the Shawthab Foundation funded by USAID conducted an awareness campaign in Sana'a. The 6 day campaign launched on Saturday 24 July aims to raise youth awareness on the dangers of chewing qat, smoking and taking drugs. It targets male and female youth between the ages of 14 and 24. "The campaign targets the least lucky youth such as the poor and the marginalized people, the dark skinned minority in Yemen," said Fatima Al-Ajel, communication and advocacy officer at Save the Children.

Save the Children works in partnership with the Ministry of Sport and Youth. They aim towards the protection, fulfillment and respect for all young people's rights, and for their participation in decisions that affect their lives.

This campaign is part of the summer activities organized by Save the Children and its partners in Sana'a and Ibb. It includes many events such as arranging workshops, training courses in life skills, and training the trainer (TOT) activities. The campaign's programs include distributing posters and brochures.

Marwan Al-Shabani, coordinator of the YEP project in Sana'a and Ibb emphasized the importance of such events that target vulnerable youth.

"These activities aim to empower vulnerable youth through building their capacity and raising their awareness in these issues, especially as they are the most involved people in such issues," Al-Shabani said.

"The YEP project will also fund 15 youth organizations which are YEP partners in Sana'a and Ibb. 17 small projects will be implemented by youth for three months," he added.

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