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**Inside:**



**5**  
Tahkeem: A unique Yemeni tribal custom



**10**  
Female Yemeni caricaturists' talents finally uncovered



**12**  
AIDS in Yemen: A silent bomb

**Education**  
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**Readers' Voice**  
Last edition's question:  
Could it be true the attacks on Yemen Socialist Party members are retaliation for the relative victory the opposition gained in the recent elections?  
No relation (16%) I don't know (11%)  
**Yes (54%)**  
No, it has been going on since before (19%)  
This edition's question:  
Yemen's health authorities have recently mentioned that AIDS infected persons in the country are around 12 thousands. Do you think this figure is correct?  
**Yes**  
No  
I don't know  
Go to our website at: [yementimes.com/#poll](http://yementimes.com/#poll) and have your voice heard

## Global Fund grants Yemen \$32 million to fight diseases

By: Amel Al-Ariqi

SANA'A, Dec. 3 — The Global Fund has granted Yemen \$32 million to fight AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, Minister of Health and Population Dr. Abdulkarim Rasa' announced Saturday.  
"Yemen has been awarded \$14 million to fight AIDS, \$12 million for malaria and \$6 million for tuberculosis," Rasa' stated at the opening ceremony of the fourth regional meeting of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in the Middle East.  
Held for the first time in Yemen, the Global Fund regional meeting concludes today.  
Yemen is one of the Middle Eastern nations suffering under the burden of these three diseases. Ministry of Health statistics reveal that 60 percent of Yemen's population is at risk from malaria, which is one of the nation's biggest health challenges.  
Although Yemen has made progress in its fight against the disease — for example, epidemic infection in the Tihama, located 226 km. west of



Participants at the fourth regional meeting of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in the Middle East.

Sana'a, has dropped from 46 percent to 11 percent — Yemen remains one of the most malaria-affected countries in the Middle East, with an estimated 800,000 cases annually, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).  
Regarding TB, Yemen's National Tuberculosis Institute registered 9,063 cases in 2005. Studies show that an individual with untreated, active tuberculosis can infect 10 to 15 others every year. If left untreated, the death rate for such active TB cases is more than 50 percent.

HIV/AIDS specialists working in Yemen say actual figures are higher than those provided by the Ministry of Health. According to the ministry, as of this past April, there were 1,821 individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Yemen. Of those, 417 had AIDS while the rest were HIV-positive. At least 60 percent of the total was male, 44 percent were children and 45 percent were foreigners. However, the 2005 WHO report estimates the number of HIV/AIDS patients in Yemen at 11,600.

Continued on page 2

## Government presents proposed budget for parliamentary approval

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Dec. 3 — The government presented its 2007 general budget proposal to Parliament for approval earlier this week. The proposed budget totals YR 1.375 trillion, thus exceeding 2006 budget estimates by 40.72 percent or YR 397 billion.  
The 2007 financial statement attributes such an enormous budget to the positive effect related to an expected increase in oil prices, as well as increasing tax revenues and improved national economic performance during 2007.  
Minister of Finance Saif Al-Asali read the financial statement at this past Saturday's parliamentary session, chaired by Speaker of Parliament Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Ahmar, in the presence of Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal and other cabinet ministers. The statement estimated a YR 300 million increase in foreign funding and in-kind grants from YR 19.6 billion for 2006 to YR 19.9 billion for 2007.  
Estimated 2007 budget revenues are YR 1.434 trillion, compared to YR 1.42 trillion in 2006 — a YR 392 billion increase or 37.62 percent.  
Total public spending for 2007 is estimated at YR 1.62 trillion, compared to YR 1.17 trillion in 2006, which is a 39 percent increase.  
The operating budget for wages, salaries, commodities, services, transfers and grants is re-estimated at YR 1.22 trillion, which includes YR 329 billion in oil product subsidies. If that portion is excepted, compared to what's referred to in the General Budget Law, the operating budget will decrease by that amount, YR 329 billion. The high operating budget is attributed to increased payments owed to retired employees of military and civil institutions.  
Al-Asali clarified to Parliament that capital expenditures are re-estimated at YR 301.3 billion. The road sector tops the list of expenditures, receiving approximately YR 50 billion in domestic funding and YR 13.1 billion in foreign funding.



Abdurrahman Bafadhl

Parliament studied the project in order to achieve economic goals to enhance monetary and financial stability and improve citizens' living standards.  
Many MPs commented on the financial statement's content, which caused Prime Minister Bajammal to clarify several inquiries by MPs, pointing out that the 2007 general budget comes as an implementation of parliamentary recommendations.  
Parliament approved referring the financial statement and the state's general budget for fiscal year 2007 to a special committee presided over by Deputy Speaker of Parliament Ja'afar Sa'eed Basaleh, finance committee members, heads of permanent committees and heads of parliamentary blocs.  
The state also named its representatives to discuss 2007 general budget projects with Parliament's special committee. Government representatives include the ministers of finance, local administration, planning and international cooperation, civil service and security, oil and minerals, the state for Parliament and Shoura Council affairs, the governor of the Central Bank of Yemen and the deputy ministers of finance, and planning and international cooperation.

## While Yemen's natural resources are on the verge of perishing "There has never been a better time to invest in youth"

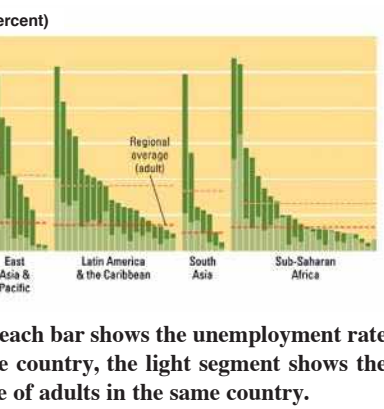
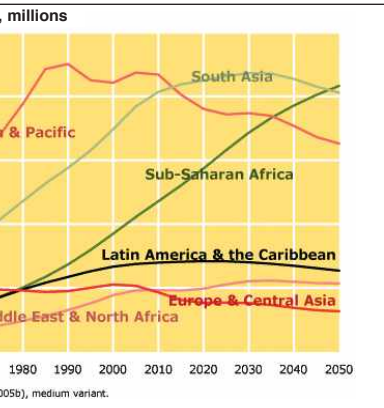
World Bank Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation discusses priorities for government action across five youth transitions that shape young people's human capital: learning, working, staying healthy, forming families, and exercising citizenship.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf & Agencies

SANA'A, Dec. 3 — There has never been a better time to invest in youth in devel-

oping countries, or so says the World Bank Development Report 2007.  
With the challenges facing developing countries as they struggle to achieve Millennium Development Goals, it seems there's a window of opportunity by investing in youth.  
More than one in four people are in search of jobs in the Middle East and North Africa region. According to the report, although unemployment rates are

highest among both youth and adults, the good news is that youth are more educated and healthier than older generations.  
The MENA region has approximately 100 million young people aged 12-24 and the number of young people in these countries will peak in the next 25 years. Nations differ — for instance, Egypt is set to experience an extended peak between 2010 and 2030, while Iraq and Yemen won't peak for another 20 years or more. Furthermore, the report says 300,000 young people under age 18 recently have been involved in armed conflict and another 500,000 have been recruited into military or paramilitary forces.  
"Such large numbers of young people living in developing countries present great opportunities, but also risks," says François Bourguignon, the World Bank's Chief Economist and Senior Vice President for Development



The full length for each bar shows the unemployment rate of youth in a single country, the light segment shows the unemployment rate of adults in the same country.

Economics.  
"The opportunities are great, as many countries will have a larger, more skilled labor force and fewer dependents. But these young people must be well-prepared in order to create and find good jobs."

Continued on page 2

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## In brief

## Aden

## Parks administration building lands

Dec. 2 — The parks administration will construct 17 parks in different districts in Aden in 2007. The areas will be provided with playing fields for children, irrigation nets, fountains, cafeterias and other public services according to Salah Al-Raei, the manager of the administration of parks and trees. Specialist companies will carry out the project cooperating with parks administration.

## Hadramout

## Buzz with honey production

Dec. 2 — The manager of the honey office in the University of Hadramout for Science and Technology said the bee farms in Hadramout produce about 1,591 tons of honey annually and they export about 295 tons. He added that Hadramout is considered as the top governorate in exportation and importation honey in Yemen according to the information on the farm statistics for 2006.

## Lahj

## Veterinarian services for animals

Dec. 3 — The veterinary's administration of farm and irrigation office held a training program for 139 trainees in Lahj. Additionally, they treated more than 30,000 sheep from different areas in Lahj and the veterinarians gave medication to animals to fight parasites. The program helped with many people who train animals to increase the awareness of animals value to the national production.

## Raimah

## Heavy rains destroy Al-Taaem district

Dec. 3 — The secretary general of the local councils, Abo-Alfath Al-Saidi, visited the damaged region which is affected by the heavy rains in Al-Taaem district in Raimah. The heavy rain destroyed many houses, citizen's possessions and arable lands. The raining also damaged the new main street which join the two Al-Taaem and Al-Jabien districts. The work of building these streets are still going on and concluding opening and paving new ways according to Al-Saidi.

## Sana'a

## Tourism investments in Yemen through media

Dec. 2 — The Ministry of Tourism and the Arab Tourism Organization signed an agreement for investment and for the improvement of Yemen's tourism sector. The two groups agreed to set up a factory to produce entertainment equipment for theme areas. They also plan to establish a center for hotel and tourism training in Yemen and to promote tourist investment in Yemen through satellite channels, tourism magazines and newspapers.

## Exhibition for aesthetics of fasting in Yemen

Dec. 2 — On Tuesday the exhibition "The Aesthetics of Fasting - Ramadan in Yemen" by the German photographer Ralf Backer opened at The German House. The professional artist took these photographs during an October visit to Yemen. The exhibition emphasized the aesthetic dimension of fasting during Ramadan. The exhibition contributes to the Yemeni and German friendship. The show continues until Dec. 9.

## Training guide for minimizing illiteracy

Dec. 3 — The chairman of Illiteracy Eradication Body, Ahmed Abdullah, held a meeting with the Director of the US Agency for International Development in Sana'a, John Rally. They reviewed the completed steps in a project to prepare a training guide for illiteracy eradication in accordance with requirements of minimizing illiteracy in Yemen. They agreed to hold a meeting with the field team, which is formed by the two sides, and to discuss with a number of experts what has been accomplished thus far. There will be a workshop in January to approve the training guide.

## Taiz

## The second period for free medical encampment

Dec. 3 — The Ministry of Health launched, at Khalifah Hospital, the second period for free medical surgery training. There were 26 specialists and consultants participating in the clinic by the medicine college of Sana'a University, Al-Thawra, Al-Kuwait and Al-Jumhuri Hospitals. The medical training aims to carry out more than 500 free surgery processes in different medical specialties. The Ministry of Health has held 12 free medical clinics through 2006 as a move to improve the health status in rural areas.

## New reforms prevent new taxes

SANA'A, Dec. 3 — A workshop involving taxes and tax reforms was inaugurated yesterday, Dec. 2. The workshop was organized by the General Union for Commerce and Industry Chambers in collaboration with Washington-based Special International Projects Center.

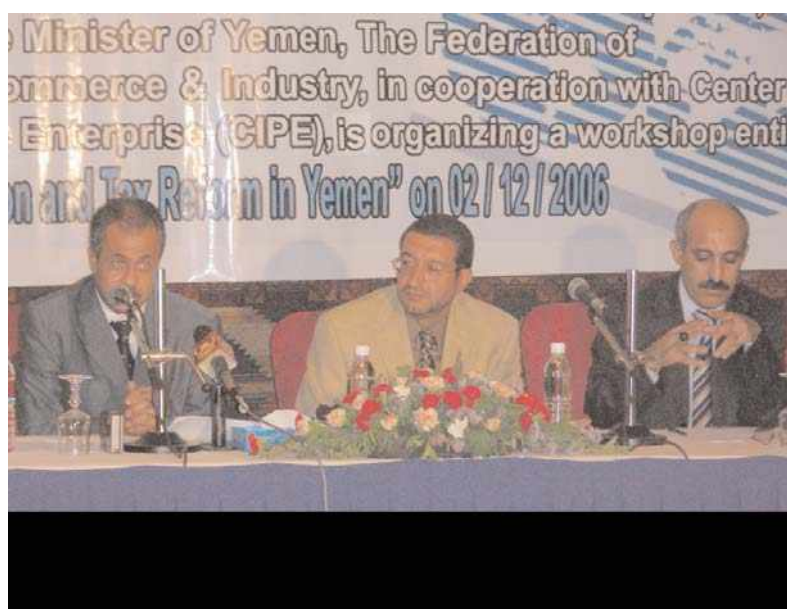
"There are no new taxes to be imposed during the coming period," said Mohammed Al-Hawri, deputy minister of Planning and International Cooperation.

He also declared the maximum tax capacity reaches 15 percent while the actual tax mounts to 10 percent and the government aims to eliminate tax and customs evasion and upgrade the performance of tax administration to minimize the shortage of financial resources.

Taxes, according to Al-Hawri, are not materialistic as they have economic and social objectives and the state tries to balance between these objectives.

The workshop discussed development mortgages and tax administration as presented by the International Finance Organization and they also discussed reforming tax laws, income and sales taxes presented by the General Union for Commerce Chambers.

For his part, Mohamed Al-



No new taxes to be imposed during the coming period," said Mohammed Al-Hawri, deputy minister of Planning and International Cooperation.

Maitami, union of commerce general manager, said the workshop will last for one week and Yemen's development partners will discuss the nature and mechanisms of tax systems in Yemen to fit with current variables and requirements in order to ensure the flow of national, regional and international investment.

He further declared the tax system

does directly influence the economic development and tax imposing increases the volume of savings which play a great role in capital's financial structure.

The governments, according to Al-Maitami, use taxes to assist with the increase of government expenditures, stressing the importance of making balance between the different functions of taxes.

## Arson behind Higher Education incident

SANA'A, Dec. 3 — Investigations show the fire on Nov. 21 at the Ministry of Higher Education was intentional and petroleum was used to set fire to the ministry's ground floor and destroy ministerial documents, said Saleh Basurrah, the higher education minister.

"Security investigations and chemical and physical examination of the fire site showed the substance used to set the fire is petroleum and that the electricity network is unimpaired, which means the fire wasn't caused by an electrical fault. There is criminal intention behind the incident," said the ministry's statement.

The fire broke out on Nov. 21, only days after the ministry formed a committee to investigate corruption cases of forgery concerning students sent abroad on scholarships.

Over 700 students are the victims of corruption as their scholarship applications were ignored and the scholarships were given to students who didn't meet the legal conditions.

Basurrah made it clear investiga-



Fire broke out at the Ministry of higher Education and destroyed many documents on Nov. 21.

PHOTO BY AL-MOTAMAR.NET

tions are ongoing to discover the arsons. He affirms the incident wouldn't affect the performance of his ministry to weed out the corruption in his department and improve the situation and problems of sending students to study abroad. He further noted his

ministry will follow up those involved in forging scholarships and strict measures will be taken.

The fire destroyed many of documents from the corruption cases, but no one was reported injured in the incident.

## Prosecution investigates 22 Al-Qaeda suspects

SANA'A, Dec. 3 — The Specialized Penal Prosecution began investigating 22 people in Yemen because of suspicion of connections to Al-Qaeda.

The 22 suspects plotted to launch terrorist operations against local and western interests in different parts of the country, according to media sources.

"The suspects constitute a dangerous terror cell, trained by Fawaz Al-Rabe'i, who was killed by security forces in his hideout north of Sana'a," said the same sources. "The suspects are expected to stand trial after the prosecution investigate them for the two suicide attacks by four Al-Qaeda members against two oil installations this past September.

"Among the terror suspects is the top aid of Al-Rabe'i, who was found

guilty of bombing the French supertanker Limburg off Al-Mukalla shore on Oct. 6, 2002."

The security authorities consider Fawaz Al-Rabe'i the main plotter of the foiled terrorist attacks on the oil installations in the governorates of Mareb and Hadramout.

According to the media sources, the security authorities accuse some of the suspects of having connections with the botched terrorist operations against local and western institutions.

This past September two suicide assaults on two oil installations were botched. The four terrorists were all killed when they used four cars loaded with explosives in their attempted attack on the two oil installations.

Later in the month the security apparatuses discovered large quanti-

ties of explosives and other arms in Sana'a.

The anti-terrorism forces killed both Fawaz Al-Rabe'i and fellow suspect Mohamed Al-Dailami in Bani Heshai, 30 km northeast of Sana'a (Al-Rabe'i was found guilty of bombing the French supertanker and killing a policeman while he was hunted by police. Al-Rabe'i had an accomplice under the name of Saleh Mujalli, one of those who escaped the political security jail this past February.

The jail escapees included Jamal Al-Badawi, who was convicted of bombing the U.S. Destroyer Cole and killing 17 American sailors aboard. Al-Badawi's sentence was reduced from lifetime to 15 years, but he was still jailed when the security authorities captured him following the jailbreak.

## International Turkish school branch inaugurated

ADEN, Dec. 3 — The new Turkish School in Aden was inaugurated Saturday, Dec. 2 by Aden's Deputy Governor Abdulkarim Shaeef together with Ahmed Al-Dhulai, assistant deputy governor of Aden, Colonel Abdullah Mahran, chief of Aden security department and Jamal Bukheet,

manager of the of Turkish schools branch in Aden.

The deputy governor toured the school and he was briefed about the school's components, including different departments and teaching means.

The school adopts an English teaching system with highly qualified teach-

ers together with literary subjects in Arabic taught by Yemeni teachers.

Further, the school organizes different activities, ranging from sports and music to literary competitions, aiming to upgrade the educational process and exchange experience to build a generation armed with knowledge.

## Doors closed due to Danish cartoons



Al-Rai Al-Aam red sealed by the press and publication persecution.

Red sealing wax covers the door to Al-Rai Al-Aam newspaper marking the forced closure by the public prosecution.

The closure is the result of the court's decision last week whereby the newspaper will not be printed for one year as punishment for republishing the Danish cartoons.

Under the same verdict the prosecution arrested Al-Rai Al-Aam's Editor in Chief Kamal Ali Al-Aalafi — he was released on bail by the Attorney General last week.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate's Council appealed to the President Saleh to close the case file of the papers that published the Danish cartoons and demanded to quickly close the claims file citing false and unjust

action against Alhuriah newspaper, the Yemen Observer and especially the independent Al-Rai Al-Aam newspaper.

"It has been a hasty, suffered and surprised decision in the same time," said Saeed Tabit, the first agent of the Press Syndicate.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate has expressed its shock at this ruling and its disapproval of the verdict against Al-Rai Al-Aam newspaper.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate described the case as defensive, while the press prosecutor and the Capital's East-West Court, which issued the verdict, considered it a political case.

"There will soon be an urgent visit to the Supreme Council of Justice in order to close the case file," said Tabit.

## Continued from page 1

## Global Fund

Dr. Fawzia Gharamah, executive manager of the National AIDS Program, confirms that Yemen has purchased \$982,000 worth of medication and modern medical equipment to enable two centers — Al-Jumhuri Hospital in Sana'a and Aden Hospital — to offer free AIDS testing. She noted that the medication will be distributed according to WHO standards for treating AIDS patients.

Created in 2003, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has committed more than \$435 million over two years via 56 grants in 18 Middle Eastern and North African countries. Nearly \$185 million of this amount has been distributed to date.

"The Global Fund's fourth regional meeting aims to define the fund's impact in Middle Eastern and North African nations," Rasa' noted, adding that the meeting isn't limited to governmental representatives, like usual. Rather, it also includes representatives of civil society organizations and private sectors that influence fund activities and the

health sector in general.

Attended by approximately 150 participants from the Middle East and North Africa, the meeting seeks to review such countries' experiences in fighting these three diseases. Rasa' remarked, "In our current era, nations are in great proximity to each other. Moreover, the world has come to resemble a small village. Therefore, disease threatens all of us and epidemics penetrate our geographical and political borders to infect and disable our citizens."

According to Global Fund's deputy executive director, while the prevalence of HIV/AIDS remains low in the Middle East, it has become a generalized epidemic in countries such as Pakistan, Somalia and Sudan. Additionally, many Middle Eastern nations are highly burdened by TB, namely Djibouti, Egypt, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

She pointed out that the Middle East also is far from being free of malaria, as morbidity and mortality rates continue to be high in Chad, Djibouti, Sudan, Somalia and Yemen.

## World Bank

The report further lists the main challenges facing youth in the MENA region as:

- Finishing secondary school, especially in areas where quality of education is low and poverty is increasing.
- Obtaining the right skills for jobs in the local private sector, finding a job and entering the labor force.
- Dealing with social norms that limit education and work for females.
- Assessing health care for pregnancy-related illnesses.
- Having better access to information (to strengthen decision-making skills).

According to another World Bank report, because of Yemen's mismanagement of natural resources, the country could consume its water and oil reserves in less than 15 years. In its report, the World Bank warned that unless fundamental reform takes place and new oil resources are found (one-third of the oil reserve already ended by 2003),

the total reserve will end by 2012.

The same report shows a huge decline in national GDP, which reached the lowest level of \$530 in 2005. Moreover, the severity of child malnutrition has placed Yemen as second worst around the world in this aspect.

In a related issue, a recent gender gap survey conducted by several researchers from Harvard University, the London Business School and the World Economic Forum, women's labor force participation is only 30 percent of the total workforce. This means there's a lot of potential to increase women's participation to its optimum potential by focusing on young women. However, one of the main challenges in Yemen is that social norms can affect whether or not young women succeed in the labor market.

The World Bank Development report urged Yemen to seize the young window of opportunity to invest in the future before the aging process closes it.

# Mass graves for typhoon victims

The bodies of hundreds of victims of typhoon Durian have been buried in mass graves in the central Philippines as rescuers said that more than 1,000 people could have been killed.

Hopes of finding any more survivors have faded as emergency workers and residents continue to dig bodies out of thick mudslides triggered by heavy rains.

Senator Richard Gordon, the National Red Cross president, said: "We have recovered a lot of dead people and the number of missing has

grown. I expect the number dead could be well over 1,000. But the real toll may never be known."

Officials said 406 dead were confirmed 398 people remain missing.

Senator Gordon said: "It is important we recover as much as we can ... but at some point we have to declare closure and declare a mass grave over the area."

Many villages have not yet reported how many residents have died. In some cases, whole families



The Red Cross has said more than 1,000 people could have died

have been buried by torrents of mud and ash which swept over villages on the slopes of the Mayon volcano after the typhoon hit.


The Red Cross said as many as 31 villages with some 14,871 residents were affected by the mudslides.

In various parts of the Bicol region,

southeast of Manila, communities have had to hold mass burials to deal with the scores of unclaimed bodies that were starting to decompose and spread disease.

President Gloria Arroyo has declared a "state of national calamity" and authorised the

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immediate release of a billion pesos [\$20m] to rehabilitate areas affected by the tragedy.

She said in a statement: "All resources of the government will continue to be mobilised without let-up as we pin hope against hope on the search of survivors."

"We need to rise up from this trial and help rebuild devastated communities and lives."

Marga Ortigas, Al Jazeera's correspondent in the Philippines said: "The government says it is doing its best but there is not enough equipment reaching the area ... the aid is just not getting here fast

enough."


Power, communications and water remain out of service across most of the region, hampering rescue and relief efforts.

Nearly 120,000 homes have been damaged and many crops destroyed.

Durian, which has weakened from just below a category five typhoon to a category one over the South China Sea, is expected to hit Vietnam's coast on Monday.

It was the fourth typhoon to hit the Philippines in three months and forecasters expect another before the end of the year.

Source: aljazeera.net



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# Urfi marriage: A dark path with a painful end

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori  
For the Yemen Times

An urfi marriage is one lacking an official contract or social knowledge wherein couples repeat the words, "We are married," and pledge a commitment before God. While the concept of urfi marriages appears to be similar to other marriage forms in many Islamic countries, they aren't recognized.

In Islam, marriage must be announced with the couple's families and within their society, an important condition validating the marriage. In recent years, some – mostly students – have set their own conditions for marriage, fashioning the idea of consensual but unofficial or urfi marriages, which are done secretly without the couple's family or society's knowledge. Although rarely exercised in Arab countries, some have begun recognizing them.

Though unusual, urfi marriages do exist, particularly among high school and university students who say they love each other but don't resort to traditional marriage due to expensive dowries. Among those more inclined to this type of unconventional marriage are tourists from neighboring countries who exploit the poor economic conditions of

young Yemeni girls. These tourists secretly marry for a short time and then leave the brides without notice.

There are different types of urfi marriage, such as temporary marriage, the so-called marriage of sacrifice and marriage for money's sake. Unfortunately, in all of these cases, the girl suffers the consequences, since Yemeni society by default blames her even if the man was in the wrong. Yemeni community strongly believes that, "A man is a man and he can do whatever he wants because mistakes won't affect his manhood."

"Consensual marriages are recognized worldwide; however, Yemen and some Arab countries don't recognize such marriages because we're backward and blind to the world's development and its liberties," said an 18-year-old girl, who entered into such a marriage, "I married a boy who used to park his car in front of our school. We started to build a relationship and later married."

**"I married a boy who used to park his car in front of our school. We started to build a relationship and later got married. I loved him. The one who loves should sacrifice for the sake of his lover," one urfi married girl states.**

"A year and half has elapsed since our marriage. I'm happy because I married him and didn't follow the wrong path like some girls do," she noted.

Regarding how the marriage took place, she says, "When we agreed to marry, my husband brought four friends to witness it. He gave me some gifts

and a small amount of money. "My family and my friends know nothing about the marriage. I'm cautious in keeping the matter secret. I told one of my classmates about the marriage and she constantly was afraid until I convinced her to marry my husband's friend, so she did," she explained.

As for the motive, she declares, "I loved him. The one who loves should make sacrifices for the sake of his lover."

When asked what she'll do if a legal husband comes asking for her hand, she comments, "In this age, there are many solutions. I've saved a small amount of money to have a virginity-restoring operation when marriage nears." The operation will reconstruct her hymen to give the appearance of virginity.

Tourist marriage is another nontraditional form wherein visitors from neighboring countries exploit Yemen's poor economic situation by tempting poor families with money in exchange for marrying their young girls. These marriages last as long as the tourist is in town, leaving catastrophe in their wake.

One 19-year-old recounted her tale, saying, "I used to see a young man with a luxurious car at the entrance to our zone. One day, he gave me a sack full of gifts and drinks.

"A few days later, he asked me to introduce him to my family, telling me he loved me from the first moment he

**"We married in secret and, over the next two months, I skipped school to go with him to the hotel where he lived because that was the only way we could meet."**



Urfi marriage can be disastrous for the girl.

laid eyes on me. He said he wanted to marry me and I approved. He asked my father for my hand, but my father rejected him because he didn't know the man," the girl added.

"He later asked me to marry him in an urfi marriage to force the issue upon my family. I rejected the whole idea at first, but he was giving me presents I hadn't dreamt of, promising to give my father a huge amount of money if we married.

"We married in secret and, over the next two months, I skipped school to go with him to the hotel where he lived because that was the only way we could meet. He later asked me to tell my father about our marriage, promising to come the next day to announce our marriage and give my father money," she continued.

She told her family, who unexpectedly surrendered to the reality. Thinking a happy end would come, her father became angry when the husband didn't come as promised.

"We went to the hotel to ask about him and they told us he had returned to his country. We tried to contact him; however, all of the contacts and addresses were false," she recounted, "I was

subject to beatings and insults from all of my family members. In vain, I tried to commit suicide many times but they would rush me to the hospital each time I made an attempt.

"I'm alienated from my family, my neighbors and my classmates. I live in great depression wishing he'd come back to correct his mistakes," she concluded.

In an attempt to learn the role school plays in this respect, the headmistress of Omar bin Abdulaziz School comments, "urfi marriage is a dangerous phenomenon that's increasing in Yemen. What's more dangerous is its spread among female students. We've heard of such cases, but we don't have any evidence.

"There may be girls who are married consensually and this is a personal affair. Our responsibility lies within the school, but outside, the responsibility falls upon the family. They must know where their daughter goes and with whom. They must keep in contact with school administration to know everything about their daughters," she noted.

"Some families don't know anything about their children and they don't watch them. Thus, a female student can seize upon such leniency. It's impossible

for us to follow students outside of school. However, when we detect cases of urfi marriage, we contact the girl's family. We used to report small incidents to students' parents, particularly those whose conduct was inappropriate," she adds.

Lack of religious awareness and absence of parental care are among the most prevalent causes of urfi marriage.

Teacher Abdulhabeeb says, "Lack of parental direction and absence of religious edification will make some students tend toward urfi marriages. We hadn't heard about such a phenomenon before. It came to us via degenerate television serials and movies. Parents should direct their sons to watch those channels that serve religion and morals, asking them to remain aloof from bad friends."

He adds, "If such a case happened

with my children, it would be a catastrophe."

Influential bad friends are another reason for this increasing phenomenon. Social specialist Thiya Fatal notices that some poor girls are influenced by bad friends who try to attract their attention to the gifts their boyfriends give them. They convince the girls that it's ok to have a boyfriend and that he'll give gifts or whatever they want if they marry him secretly, to which many girls will agree.

Engineer Mohammed Al-Janad believes the spread of urfi marriages affects national morality and harms Islamic society. Additionally, they violate sharia law, as well being deceitful to fathers and daughters. He further declares that economic situations, increasing dowries and upward rates of poverty are among the many reasons leading to this phenomenon.

When asking religious scholars about the attitude of sharia law regarding these marriages, most avoid issuing a fatwa, saying the matter remains in sharia's womb.

For his part, scholar Salim Al-Shatri declares that any marriage without a marriage contract, two witnesses and the consent of the girl's parents is considered adultery. In an 'urfi marriage, a woman can't get a legal divorce because the government doesn't recognize the legality of such marriage in the first place.

urfi marriages are conducted by a Muslim cleric in the presence of two witnesses; however, they aren't officially registered nor are they financially binding upon the man. Couples married in this way often meet in secret and avoid the expense of renting an apartment.

urfi marriage can be disastrous for the wife. If the husband leaves her without granting her a divorce, she has no legal right to seek a divorce because urfi marriages are considered illegal. Urfi marriages in which a couple signs documents declaring themselves married are invalid. The couple must inform their families of the marriage." Al-Shatri added.

**"Any marriage without a marriage contract, two witnesses and the consent of the girl's parents is considered adultery."**



Urfi marriage: First comes love and then comes the pain.

## Tahkeem: A unique Yemeni tribal custom

Though Yemen shares many tribal customs with the other Arabic countries, it has many customs and habits that cannot be found anywhere else. Some of these customs are positive and productive, but many others are harmful and against the religion of Islam.

By: Almgid Dahesh  
dahesh95@yahoo.com  
For the Yemen Times

One of the most prominent and positive customs is Tahkeem, a system of arbitration, which empowers or authorizes the offended people to judge in the issue of quarrel in accordance with the tribal customs.

"Tahkeem contributes to a big extent in preventing crimes because when you authorize your adversary to take a decision in regards to the issue of difference, you restrain him from taking revenge and committing bigger crimes," said Mohammed Zubair, a 60 year-old sheikh in Kholan tribe.

By using Tahkeem you authorizing your opponent and you admit that you offended him and you are ready to propitiate and bear the results of your offensive, noted Zubair.

But being authorized doesn't mean the aggrieved party can take any decision he likes. In the tribal customs, there is a system similar to appeals in the courts. For example, if the decision taken by the authorized party is oppressive and not in accordance with the tribal customs, the second party can resort, together with his opponent, to sheikhs to make a fair and impartial decision, noted Ali Naser, a 40 year-old tribesman.

This system is the case when the perpetrator admits guilt directly to his opponent. But if the perpetrator doesn't confess his guilt and still goes on in

his aggressiveness, the second party can ask the relatives of the perpetrator to ask their relative to cease. If the relatives cannot restrain the perpetrator then the aggrieved party can ask a sheikh to solve the problem.

"The aggrieved party has to do that in order to avoid ascending problems and not to be blamed if he defends himself by a more-serious way in case his adversary doesn't give up his aggressiveness," said Naser.

"When the issue reaches the sheikh, he asks the two opponents to bring what's known in the tribal customs as Adal which is determined by the sheikh," said Ahmed Yahya a 57 year-old sheikh in Kholan tribe.

Adal is the amount of money, some pieces of weapons, cars or anything valuable that is submitted to the sheikh as a guaranty to achieve the decision of the sheikh regarding the issue of the opponents and to secure the fees of the sheikh, noted Ahmed Yahya. The sheikh holds the Adal and it may reach millions from the two opponents, said Ahmed Yahya. At the same time, if any one of the opponents offends his enemy at the attendance of the sheikh, he will be fined money established by the sheikh. "So that, we can restrain any increasing for the crime and we can solve the quarrel easily," said Ahmed Yahya.

In spite of the positive role of Tahkeem in the tribal to restrain crimes, Tahkeem has many harmful and negative consequences. One of the problems is that sometimes if the two opponents don't agree on which

sheikh to use then each persons brings his on sheikh and each one of the sheikhs brings around ten companions with him. Consequently, each one of the opponents must feed and bring qat for the two sheikhs and their companions and the opponents should entertain his relatives as well, noted Mohammed Ali a 40 year-old tribesman who has an issue of quarrel with some of his villagers. Also, while hearing witnesses and lodging complaints from opponents, if any of the opponents insults his adversary or offends anyone of the attendants in the attendance of the sheikh, the insulter will be fined and this money isn't in accordance to a specific tribal rule, but is subjected to the mood of the sheikh.

Another outcome of Tahkeem is that in case both the opponents choose one sheikh they rarely write an agreement stipulating they agree totally on the decision of the sheikh in advance and they have no right to appeal with any other sheikh. But sometimes the sheikh takes the decision in favor of one of the opponents against the other and this often leads to more problems.

"We made that agreement with our adversary for the sheikh as a result of our trust in the sheikh, but unfortunately we were taken in by him. His decision was oppressive for us. According to the tribal customs, we can do nothing but to accept his decision, but we refused his decision and now we have problems with both the sheikh and our problems," said Ali Al-Shebami, a 30 year-old tribesman of Kawkaban.

The fees of the sheikh is another shortcoming of Tahkeem. The sheikhs are always free to ask for the amount of money they like as a fee which means there is no specific rule in the tribal norms to determine the amount of the fees of the sheikhs. Hassan Mojali, a 38 year-old tribesman of Khlan, said, "Our opponents and us each paid YR 500,000 for the sheikhs as fees. We don't have the right to refuse that, but only to negotiate."



Tribe congregation like this is usually held for the Tahkeem.

YT photo archives.

In the event of wars waged between tribes or even families, many delegations from neighboring tribes come as mediators to stop the conflict and these mediations often succeed by reaching solutions. Sometimes the mediators stay in the area for many days and slaughter bulls until the two parties of the war respond. Mohammed Nagi a tribesman in Bani Matar said, "This is a mutual custom among tribes is because when it is religious obligation."

"If the neighboring tribes don't mediate to stop the war, none of the other neighboring tribes will mediate to save these tribes from any future ordeal. But this doesn't happen."

What's remarkable is that many people prefer to resort to the tribal customs in solving their problems than to go to the court to avoid the complicated and boring procedures of the courts. "When the sheikhs takeover solving

any problem it takes a few weeks to solve the problems, but when we go to the court, we need some months and sometimes years to reach solutions for our problems," said Ali.

"Sometimes some people mediate to solve the problem and we reconcile even before we go to the sheikhs," said Nagi.

In the other hands, some of the tribal customs contradict with the Islamic morals whereas we find, in the tribal customs, that if the sheikh is killed, his blood money must be paid four times, but if he isn't sheikh, his blood money should be paid once only.

"Not only that, if the Sheikah is killed during a reconciliation period, his blood money must be paid forty four times," noted Nagi.

Also, the tribal customs contradict with the morals of Islam in regards to the woman's rights. For example, if a man kills a woman, he isn't supposed

to be killed for her because he is a man and she is a woman.

This is one of the most prominent contradictions between the tribal customs and the rules of Islam," said Ahmed Yahya.

Revenge is another prominent tribal phenomenon that contradicts with the Islamic morals.

"Tribesmen often take to revenge because of many reasons," explained Saleh Hussain. "First, the disability of the security forces to punish criminals. Second, the corruption in the state. Third, the weakness of the religious restraint. Finally the discriminations among the layers of people."

Another reason of spreading revenge is that when someone is killed, his relatives don't kill the killer themselves, but someone who is more important in his tribe or among his relatives than the killer himself, added Hussain.

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if they are technically and financially equipped and prepared for such projects, to fill out the **Qualification Application Form**, which can be obtained from the **General Department for Supervising Industrial Zones** at the **Ministry of Industry and Trade** or from any of the Ministry's offices based in Aden, Taiz, Hadramout or Al-Hudeidah. Application forms can also be downloaded from the Ministry's official website at [www.moitye.org.ye](http://www.moitye.org.ye). Deadline for submitting the form plus any relevant documents is 27/12/2006. And submitted to general Department for Supervising Industrial, Zones at the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

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## Words of Wisdom



The fall-out from technology advances, notably globalization, is clearly ahead of us. We need to grapple with this and the sooner we assess the issues and decide on what we need to do, the better prepared we will be. A main component of globalization is liberalization.

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



## OUR OPINION

## The deception of numbers

Yemen came last among 117 countries around the world with regards to equality between men and women, while Sweden tops the list. The Global Gender Gap Report 2006, which covers 90 percent of the world's population, was compiled by researchers from Harvard University, the London Business School and the World Economic Forum. The report took four aspects in consideration: economic participation and opportunity, education attainment, political empowerment and health and survival. We even came lower than Saudi Arabia despite three decades of political participation of women and relative contribution to the public sphere.

The ranking shows that Yemeni women receive only 47 percent of men's rights in those four categories. The problem with numbers is that calculating an average is quite deceptive. What puts us way at the bottom is education and economy.

In fact, the report comes as an overall surprise with Spain ranking 13th, three steps above Canada, while Tanzania is just one place below America, which ranked 22nd.

If analyzing the factors individually, we find that Sweden comes first in political equality and is the only country where there are equal number of men and women in politics. Only 10 countries around the world have equal education opportunities and only the U.K. and France of the G8 countries are among those ten. There are 35 countries providing equal health care to men and women, including Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Brazil. And the most surprise of all is Tanzania as the only country with equal economic participation of men and women.

The Gender Gap Index is only one of many other indicators showing the severity of discrimination against women in Yemen. There are still many places in Yemen where females do all the cooking and the work and they are left to eat the remains of food left over by the men of the family. In many places in Yemen, women do not have a say about their future, whether it is education and work, or even marriage or the number of children. This challenge is why the women's movement in Yemen, including government and NGOs are working hard to improve women's conditions and defend their rights. One of the main strategic demands of this movement is the quota system whereby 30 percent of the elected and non-elected decision making positions in the state are reserved for women.

Placing last in the gender gap report is a blow to the face of all Yemenis, women and men. Somehow it feels unfair with all the efforts and progress, but that is the issue with averages; the achievements get swept away due to the disadvantages. If the quota system gets approved and implemented even if partially I am sure that in upcoming reports Yemen will take a giant leap and be placed in a better position - which Yemen truly deserves.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf  
Editor-in-Chief

## Letters to the Editor

**Praise to the Yemen Times**  
Yemen Times, Yemen's first and most widely-read English-language newspaper, has reached its 1000th issue. I found it a chance to express my strong impressions towards this loved-by-all newspaper. I am a regular reader of Yemen Times since 1999, the year in which the whole Yemen mourned the departure of its distinguished founder, late Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, may Allah have mercy upon him.

From the very beginning I started reading Yemen Times, I found it my main partner in my knowledge-seeking process. And I from it I learned a lot and by it I enriched and improved my English and through it I hope to achieve my educational and cul-

tural ambitions. By virtue of it I widened and developed my English vocabulary and knowledge in many areas, politics, culture, community, science, health, business, sports and education to the extent that I kept holding it with me everywhere. I was sometimes and still am called "Yemen Times" by some of my friends and acquaintances. I confirm that I have to be proud of myself for being a Yemen Times reader. Three years have passed since my university graduation and what I learned and benefited from the newspaper was ten times more than that of the university.

Concerning its coverage, Yemen Times has become the most important source of news

and information in many areas both for Yemenis and foreigners inside and outside Yemen. It has become Yemen's gate to the world and vice versa. What characterizes the newspaper is that it is informative, professional, critical, impartial and exclusive in providing its readers with everything with neutrality and transparency. Yemen Times has set the best example of free and independent media at a time when we lack protection of press freedom and expression. What also characterizes Yemen Times is its fearless, unbiased, brave, critical and liberal staff. The words in this short article will never be enough to convey all that about Yemen Times. Finally, I congratulate all the Yemen Times staff on this occasion and

## Independence anniversary, a call to end corruption

By: Ashraf Al-Rifi

Last Thursday was the 39th anniversary of the Independence Day and the evacuation of the last British soldier from southern Yemen territories on Nov. 30, 1967.

This anniversary coincides with frustrations and bitter disappointments caused by the chaos of a rule which has destroyed every great deed by the honorable of the country who have sacrificed their blood for the 39 years that have elapsed since the heroic battles that kicked the remnants of British colonization out of the country and both the revolutions of September and October triumphant. Four decades have passed during which the goals of the Yemeni revolution and directions of building the state of order and law were assassinated.

Between November 1967 and November 2006 there is a distance of deep sorrow where values and principles retreated, tendencies of reform assassinated and the homeland got strangled with a large pincers because of legacies of corruption and battles for the protection of power at the expense of the project of the state and rights of the people. The regrettable thing is that the national occa-

sion and days of the revolution have become uncountable by usual celebrating of the life of the citizen who is fatigued of deteriorating living conditions.

In the past the citizen's battles were against colonization and regimes usurping power and many of them sacrificed their lives and properties until the revolution was achieved and the colonialist went out. Today the citizens are preoccupied in fighting poverty and confronting the ills of the regime represented by illiteracy, diseases and hunger. There is nothing new compared to the situation in 1967 and the situation at present except the change in causes of the source of the bad situation. In the past we were accusing the Imamate regime and colonization for backwardness, disease and poverty and at present we confront the ruling regime with the same accusations for which the revolution broke out.

This occasion should not pass while denying its heroes with silence against corruption and chaos prevalent in the country. Those heroes had offered all that is expensive for the establishment of a national just state supporting the people and leading the country to a bright future. It is unfair to let this occasion pass without refusing all the policies of submission through which the colonial-

ist has returned through the windows of security cooperation and agreements of fighting terror. It is also illogical to celebrate toppling the state of the high commissioner while the American ambassador to Sana'a has become a high commissioner giving orders and moving in various parts of the country without any restraint or condition. What independence do we celebrate today while the ruling system has handed over destinies of the country and the people to the White House and the Yemeni citizen has become a terrorist in the eyes of America, to be beaten and killed under American supervision and implementation, as what happened with Abu Ali Al-Harthi and others?

If the occasion of independence is a natural extension of the September and October revolutions then the achievement of the Yemeni revolution goals is an urgent necessity in support for the revolution that deviated from its course since 1978 despite attempts by the Joint Meeting Parties to save the homeland and take it out of its choking impasse through the initiative of the comprehensive political and national reform

Ashraf Al-Rifi columnist and writer at Al-Wahdawi newspaper.  
Source: Al-Wahdawi newspaper.

## Al-Saleh project

By: Abdulrahman Bajash

Al-Saleh project began with youth programs and can change from a small stream into a great river if intentions are sincere and a will is available that the project is to be free from defects such as mediation, temperament and selection with criteria of personal, family and zonal relations. If the project finishes its study and will be operative in providing more than 27,000 job opportunities for youth by the year 2007 and has been supplied with more than 60,000 offices in the capital secretariat it is the successful step all demanded to support and provide modern administration turning it into a great river.

Once wrote asking about the personal project of each youth and had said then that the job in government institutions became a refuge for the disabled. Government employees have become rusty to an extent they are just waiting for the end of the month to receive their salary. I queried then why each young person does not think of his personal project. And in order not to do them injustice there must be someone to teach them.

I am interested here to mention some details of the project launched by the agricultural lending bank. The executive manager of the project said the project is not merely concerned with paying non-interest loans and collecting them; it will also follow-up the beneficiaries and market their products and services. He mentions that 90 percent of the tasks and time of al-Saleh project will be devoted to the beneficiaries, follow-up and marketing for them, each one according to the nature and type of his project and products and services the project offers. The project administration will also find for the beneficiaries internal and external markets to display and sell their products.

I have learned the project will realize ambitions of many youths to

become distinguished and successful businesspersons. At the present time the project targets graduates from faculties of trade, information and marketing and later specifically from the beginning of January it will target other specialties. In addition there will be implementation of projects of productive families selected from poor families that will include 60,000 persons by the year 2009 while the professionals projects will contribute to provide more than 35,000 job opportunities all over the country. If there is the will and scientific administration the project's results will be great.

Abdulrahman Bajash is a Yemeni journalist and manager editor of Al-Thawra newspaper.  
Source: Al-Thawra newspaper

SILVER LINING  
Western media undergoing technology challenges

During the last two weeks I was on a study trip to the Netherlands, U.K. and Denmark along with some media professors from Sana'a and Aden universities. We went to the University Zwolle and Lincoln University as well as the Danish School of Journalism along with visits to media institutions.



By: Mohammed Al-Qadhi

I have noticed the print media industry in these Western countries is in jeopardy; there is a growing debate over the question of newspapers losing their readership due to the internet and mobile technology. Big newspapers like The Sun in Britain are going through massive changes in the design, the content and even the size where broadsheet newspapers are turning into either tabloid or compact. Some of these media houses have even merged to be able to face the economic challenges due to readership loss.

The problems these newspapers are facing are due to youngsters not reading newspapers. This fact is not restricted to one country, but maybe all over Europe and the U.S. I have listened to the arguments of some media industry people that these young people complain about not finding interesting things to attract them to reading newspapers. The youngsters, who are the focal point of all media attention, complain that traditional journalism and reporting does not fit into their aspirations guided by the tremendous development of technology and they prefer to go to the internet where they can find whatever they want. Elderly people often only read newspapers.

In an attempt to sustain, some of the newspapers have started distributing free copies in order to attract the readers while others have shifted to the web where they can provide readers with what they want from news and entertainment while they try to attract readers to their hard copies with their analysis and background reports. On the web, these newspapers are even presenting video journalism. They try to encourage interactive and participatory journalism. The audiences are becoming the journalists themselves as they are involved in more discussions and debates and are encouraged to find solutions to their own problems. They can even send their stories and reports to these sites to be published. The readers are no longer only receptive of the news that comes from newsrooms; they are becoming the makers of the news. The motto is becoming "write for yourself." This shift is fascinating and could forecast enormous changes in the concept of media.

Some of the radio stations we noticed in Holland are aware of the great impact of the internet and other technologies, though they believe the affect on them is not as great as on print media. However, they are trying to provide the audience with what they want. The journalists do not spend their time in their offices, but in the streets where most of their stories are derived.

In the massive competition between different media houses, news is something that travels very fast and the audience can get news very easily from different sources. But what is behind the news and the affect or consequences it has on people is becoming the main job of good journalists these days. This change has brought in new journalism trends: the interactive, the participatory, the citizen and the civic. The civic journalism model involves using the public already started in the U.S. some years ago.

But the most interesting thing is the strong link between the media industry and journalism education schools. Both perceive themselves complementary to each other. The media schools or colleges work in close cooperation with the media industry to adjust the curriculum and methods of teaching to cope up with changes in technology. Media people are even involved in formulating the admission tests for students of journalism in some of the colleges.

But the most fascinating thing is the experience of the Danish School of Journalism where students spend a year and a half of their four year academic education in media institutions; they get employment contracts after finishing their first three semesters in the school. During their placement in the media houses, the students get their training and gain their concrete experience with the journalism work. Their work is being assessed by some senior journalists and is reported to the school. After that they go back to the school with rich experience and choose areas of specializations. They graduate as experienced journalists who are well equipped with knowledge, the technology and experience in reporting.

This teaching is a new attitude to the role of teaching and education to have learning by doing or practicing. Teaching journalism is a dynamic process where students mostly learn by themselves through workshops, discussions and coaching and the role of the teacher is to facilitate. Both the teacher and the student are making themselves up to the challenges of technology as we have found in the Danish School of Journalism where the feedback and comments of the teacher on student's assignments are carried out through a special internet page. The overall goal of education is to provide students with the skills and knowledge of their societies, bringing them in contact with the citizens and giving them the responsibility to inform the public. It is not to expose them to theoretical education, which is old-fashioned and does not match them with their people and their main issues as in our colleges.

It is really fascinating to see the reaction of both the Western journalism schools and media industry to the challenges of technology, though we cannot speculate the future of such a fight between the two sides. But the main question that appalls me is how we, in the Arab states and Yemen in particular, can face such challenges and most significantly jump over the technological and digital gap between us and the world.

Mohammed Al-Qadhi (mhalqadhi@hotmail.com) is a Yemeni journalist and columnist.

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Tel: +967 (1) 268-661

Fax: +967 (1) 268-276

P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a, Yemen

E-mail: editor@yementimes.com

Advertisement: ads@yementimes.com

Letters: letters@yementimes.com

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief  
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf

Head of News Dept.  
Mohamed bin Sallam

Head of Design Dept.  
Ramzy Alawi Al-Saqqaf

## Editorial Staff

Al-Ajel, Fatima  
Al-Ariqi, Amel  
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Dana Patterson

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Al-Saqqaf, Raidan  
Khidhr, Mohammed  
Shadad, Nisreen

## Offices

Aden Bureau:  
Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed  
Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596  
Fax: +967 (2) 347056  
Email: ytaden@y.net.ye

Taiz Bureau:  
Imad Ahmed Abdullah  
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156,  
Telefax: +967 (4) 217157  
P.O.Box: 5086, Taiz  
Email: yttaiz@y.net.ye

Hadramout Correspondent:  
Saeed Al-Batati  
Mobile (+967) 77383733  
Email: albatati88@yahoo.com  
Fax: +967 (05) 360303

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# Yemen Press Review

By: Mohammed Khidhr



Al-Sahwa weekly, 30 Nov.2006.

## Main headlines

- At the first anniversary of the announcement of the JMP's project for the comprehensive national and political reform, the JMP expanded conviction of the elector on the necessity of linking his vote to his living
- The finance minister admits the government spent the additional appropriation before being approved by parliament
- Islah headquarters in Lahj stormed and the YSP headquarters in Aden demolished
- MP Mithhah al-Ahmar denies his bodyguard clash with security
- Clashes returned in Saada, the governor stays in Sana'a
- Yassin calls on the government to deal in transparency with the opposition
- Yemeni solidarity week with the Palestinian people
- Yemen journalists protest to verdict against Rai AIA'am newspaper

Writer Zaid al-Shami wrote in his article say that corruption is destroying every beautiful thing in our life, it destroys souls, sows hatred, cracks the structure, brings life movement to standstill and stops development as well as shaking the general order. Corruption also squanders public property and makes the society lose justice.

Corruption begins small and when it finds a suitable environment it grows and flushes and becomes stronger and then changes into usual behavior all the society recognizes it.

The problem becomes more aggravated when corruption becomes

a phenomenon associated with denial of its existence and an attempt to give it an attire of patriotism and an accomplishment. Not acknowledging the disease makes it eat deep into the body till it destroys what is remaining of its health.

But when corruption is connected with the homeland and the people and their performance the fall will be resounding and the catastrophe unbearable. Corruption in our country deprives us of sympathizing of brethren and friends who have been talking about it openly and in hint sometimes. A foreign expert has once said that corruption in has once said that corruption in Yemen has become an establishment and a system.

At present and after long waiting we hear confession of corruption existence and a public announcement and return to right is much better than insisting on the wrong and this is the beginning of the road leading to treat this phenomenon.

The government has presented a draft law on fighting corruption and it is hoped that with it there is possibility of putting an end to corruption and wiping out its impact.

It is realized that corruption will not be eliminated by just passing laws and it must be removed from hearts, considering it a bad conduct. This comes through educating the young ones and enlighten the adults until all forms of corruption become a hated and despised act nonetheless education and enlightenment alone are not sufficient and there must be some strictness with the corrupt and retrieve what they have taken and hold them accountable for their acts to be an example for others.

After the law on fighting corruption is passed and the national committee entrusted with implementing it is formed as the law stipulates we will have to have a will and general orientation to pursue reforming what had been damaged.



Al-Wahdawi weekly organ of the Nasserite Unionist Organization (NUO), 28 Nov. 2006.

## Main headlines

- The United Nations demands Yemen to disclose 94 cases of coercive disappearance
- A Yemeni mediation to revive the Baath party in Iraq
- War in Amran and death in Saada
- More than 20 soldiers killed or wounded in Saada
- Al-Atwani The escape of the ruling party from governors election is consolidation of centralization and personal loyalty
- Dr opens fire on an employee at University
- Fighting renewed in Amran villages
- In response to Bajammal statements, The JMP calls the government to deal in transparency with opposition
- Legal organization calls for closing down 26 September newspaper and develop judiciary
- In reading the donor conference, politicians call for bridging the gap between authority and opposition first
- Authority returns from London conference to chase the press

Writer Ahmed Saeed says there is nothing for the all citizens but to celebrate the anniversary of the southern part of the homeland independence as the event has great meanings and indications.

It may be the duty of the government to accommodate the hopes they were attached to this event made by the national movement 39 years before and was daring enough to change and destroy the British control and then expel its presence out of the

homeland so that to form the first of stages for achieving the unity that constituted the first initiative on the road of the Arab unity.

What the independence also carried was the control o the situation in the homeland which was shaky through facing fragmentation and adoption of struggle for reunification of the homeland which was constituted a reality in the last decade of the past century.

The unity has returned the right to its position and the land to its normal condition and the society to its fateful unity with which all artificial boundaries disappear and all barriers and partitioning policies are removed. Those policies remained launching cultural theories consolidating the partitioning of the homeland and working for differentiating between the national unity and the Yemeni unity, as id this is other than that.

It was meant the national unity the one part and the Yemeni unity the parts as if we are two people not one although the name of Yemen was not dropped on part of the people in any of the two parts.

It is true that hopes faced many negative reflections that harmed the citizen, his interest and his living, beginning from expansion of the area of poverty and abuse of power and to the unbalanced plans in building and developing of the homeland. Those have caused refreshment of some negative phenomena that regretfully still looking at the homeland unity as occupation.

What peoples should be aware of is that there is a trend popping its head and accepts to shorten the way and shows willingness to form governments with the existence of foreign aggression and occupation and amidst torrent of blood caused by the aggression and occupation. Examples in front of us are in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine. It is urgent to deter those practices in the manner creating

conviction among the citizens especially among those who still think the unity as occupation. The Yemeni is not like as some visualize it as invasion but it is an inevitable situation and of destiny for one country. What worries are those practices that lead to deterioration in relations and vitalize the ideas and convictions detriment to the homeland.



Al-Nidaa weekly, 29 Nov. 2006.

## Main headlines

- Bin Shamlan: I was annoyed by the president's talk as if it is a call for a new invasion
- Saudia and Al-Houtis on table of talks between the two sons of Saleh and Gaddafi
- MP Bishr: Tenders of Public Works ministry concluded without pre-announcement
- Conflict on identity of the other side, three killed in confrontation of security with an armed group
- YJS: Conviction against Al-Rai Al A'am harms credibility of Yemen regarding its international commitments

Writer Jamila Ali Rajaa queries in her article if time has come to have a shadow government in Yemen similar to that in Britain that has recently hosted the donor conference especially that the symposium of the forum has clarified the need for it through:

First the government sits at the table of dialogue with the opposition without the first party to have details on stand of opposition parties regarding the donor conference except for those in the media and maybe just the main headlines, neither the second party knowing details of the donor confer-

ence except for that which it considered as exaggerated.

Second: what has necessitated it is the attendance of the minister of palm-ing and international cooperation who is a full technocrat talking at a specific conference and specific aim but some details rather than interruptions of the symposium revealed some not specialized and some not specified things and attempt to submit the crisis of the opposition with the authority, that escalated during and after the elections of last September.

Regardless of the naming (shadow government) and whether its implications would shadow the goal, the existence of an entity of this type will achieve for Yemen the following:

- founding and training specialized opposition that opposes out of knowledge of the thing,
- founding a genuine partnership in the developmental issues regardless of the partisan difference for the realization of benefit for the society,
- making the government very active to reach the best decisions for their implementation,
- provision and transparency of accurate information without exaggeration,
- rendering the media address to be more realistic.

It is in favor of the forum of political development and its sponsors that it has adopted the dialogue between the government, the opposition and the civil society and thus translating the dialogue that is sponsored by Yemen, Italy and Turkey in the frame of the greater Middle East initiative and also the speed of adopting this important and vital subject.

It is also appreciated that the minister of planning and international cooperation and his delegation to respond and attend and his realistic presentation and response to interruptions and it is also appreciated of the opposition leaders their hard work in presentation and rationality of that presentation.

## ADEN REFINERY COMPANY CALL FOR INTEREST

Aden Refinery Company (ARC) calls for expression of interest regarding an Integrated Security System for Aden Refinery, which include:

- 1. Perimeter Detection Subsystem:** will be designed in order to provide early detection and location of any attempted intrusion, attempts on the all ARC's perimeter line (including fence escalating, fence cutting and digging under fence), and will assure small lengths of the detection zones.
- 2. Closed Circuit Television (Video surveillance) Subsystem:** mobile video cameras for fence area surveillance.
- 3. Access Control Subsystem:** implementation of access filters for the main three gates of the company. the access filters will include turnstiles, automatic barriers, proximity card readers for auto and pedestrians, Video cameras and workstations (PC).
- 4. Monitoring Centre:** from the Monitoring Center all detection and surveillance equipments will be interfaced and controlled. The Monitoring centre will includes server, monitors, matrix, multiplexers, keyboard controllers and recording equipments.

### System general requirements:

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- a. The origin of the equipments can be USA Europe or Japan, only.
- b. Proper protection class for the equipments (explosion proof for certain equipments).
- c. Modular structure, availability for future upgrades (including integration of the Oil Harbor in the secured area).

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- a. User interface in Arabic/Yemenite language.
- b. Software personalization according with Aden Refiner's requirements; implementation of all the operational features requested by Aden Refinery
- c. Consultancy for the elaboration of the specific Emergency Procedures for Aden refinery; implementation of the Emergency Procedures in the monitoring software;
- d. Step by step assistance in case of events (alarms, etc)
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- f. Modular structure, availability for future upgrades (including integration of the oil Harbor in the secured area)

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- The experiences based on a subcontractor position are not accepted.
- Turnover in the last three years: at least 1,000,000 USD/year, for each year;
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- The company must to perform an objective risk analysis for Aden Refinery; the structure of the proposed security system must to be presented in relation with the significant decreasing of the estimated risk rate as a result of the system implementation.

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Attn: Mr. Mohamed Yeslam-Refinery Manager

ADEN REFINERY COMPANY

PO.Box 3003, Little Aden (110)

Republic of Yemen

Fax no:- 967-2-376600, + 967 - 2 - 376601

Each Letter of Interest must be accompanied with proper documents which prove that the interested company complies with the requested pre-qualification conditions. Failure to prove the compliancy / with the pre-qualification conditions will result in the rejection of the related Letter of Interest.

**Deadline for receipt of all Letters of Interest: 10<sup>th</sup> if December, 2006, 14:00 Aden time** Any Letter of Interest received after this deadline will not be considered.

**The tender book price is 50,000 Y.R./250USD, but it will be available only for the pre-qualified companies, starting with 5th of December, but no later than 13th of December, 2006.**

A clarification meeting /site visit is planned for 16th of December, 2006. The attendance to the clarification meeting / **site visit is not mandatory.**

Deadline for receipt of all offers (technical offers and financial offers): 20<sup>th</sup> of December, 2006, 11:00 A.M., Aden time. Any offer received after this deadline will not be considered.

# Female Yemeni caricaturists' talents finally uncovered

By: Nisreen Shadad  
hurteagle8@hotmail.com

In order to have Yemeni women well versed in the art of caricature, Women Journalists Without Chains arranged a first training course in Nov. 26-30 on the basics of drawing caricatures.

The five-day course involved umpteen activities to qualify women caricaturists with the necessary skills and give them the ability to proceed in accordance with contemporary developments and changes in Yemeni society.

In addition to being the course designer, caricaturist and plastic artist Hameed Al-Maswari served as trainer, along with fellow plastic artist Amani Al-Baba. The 16 trainees produced approximately 90 caricatures, exhibiting them on the final day of the course. They reflected social issues such as price increases, family violence and freedom of journalism and, without exception, all touched on Palestinian issues.

Guest of honor, Palestinian caricaturist Omayma Juha, couldn't lead several theoretical and practical lectures as she planned because she was unable to leave her homeland, she spoke with trainees via mobile phone. "I had hoped to see your faces, but I encountered many difficulties in trying to come to Yemen. However, I'm proud to be with you in spirit and have my drawings presented in my second home in Yemen," she said.

As trainee Samira Abu Al-Fatah explained, Juha served as an example for trainees to stand up for what they believe. "We waited for her until the last day, the day of the exhibition, but due to the colonialism [in Palestine], she couldn't attend the course. However, that will never break her spirit, nor ours. I can see her now, standing firm, so I drew her as a candle burning to illuminate our way. The key she used to draw in all of her caricatures is the key of hope to return to Palestine. I used her symbol – the key – to depict the candle's shadow in order to identify her and reflect the issue for which she's struggling."

Al-Maswari prepared the course materials, which sought to give trainees an awareness of caricature art. "The materials I prepared and taught were based on the basics of caricature and its schools – the American and English schools – as well as line quality, since a particular type of line can add a very dynamic



The viewers are favorably impressed by the trainees' cartoons.

YT PHOTOS

look to a drawing. I also focused on composition, one of the most important features of caricature. Boring composition kills the drawing's life and energy. Having an aim also is one of the points I stressed. It must be simple so that anyone can grasp the idea."

Al-Baba added, "The aim we're all working for is to qualify a group of women caricaturists and join them with the journalism field."

Despite being vastly important to illustrate daily problems and pitiful conditions, very few caricatures appear in Yemeni newspapers. Tawakol Karman, the director of Women Journalists Without Chains, explained, "There are more than 20 newspapers, but few of them are interested in caricatures. Fewer than five caricaturists work in this field – all men – and each is working for at least two newspapers."

"Whenever a woman appears on this field, she doesn't continue because she lacks the tools and the necessary skills to comprehend the genre, which is developing very fast and has expanded to include political, social, economic and even personal satire. Once working, most women caricaturists end up drawing for children's magazines rather than a newspaper," she added.

Regarding obstacles women journalists face, training course co-coordinator Nabeela Sa'eed stated, "The real obstacle is financial. Besides, the idea of a woman caricaturist is something new in our society. Many people don't accept it, but we're working to enhance the role of women in this

field."

Coming from various governorates, including Sana'a, Taiz and Hodeidah, trainees attended the course in the belief that they can do something and make a difference in their society.

Al-Fatah, a mother of two from Hodeidah, stated, "My husband stands beside me, but he sometimes tries to stop me. My mother is the one who pushes me the most not to despair and to struggle until my dream comes true." Though her sis-



The drawings of Omya Juha illustrated Palestinian issues.

ter, housewife Zahra Abu Al-Fatah, wasn't very interested, she attended the course to support her sister.

Abdullah Al-Khawlani, a doctor at the National Institute for Management Science, remarked, "Because I was living outside Yemen for 10 years, I only recently learned that my daughter is an artist. I'm so glad to have such a daughter who's trying to reflect our social, economic and political problems. As a father, I thank (Women Journalists Without Chains) because they're working to uncover talent and make it flourish. However, I vehemently criticize those in charge of media and culture for ignoring such talented individuals. It's a picture of the government ignoring its citizens."

However, Al-Maswari noted that producing a caricaturist in such a brief time period requires more effort. "I was fed up in the beginning because trainees lacked ideas to draw about; however, they quickly took a turn for the better. I expect that they'll excel in this field and at least three will be famous in a very short time," he predicted.

Exhibit attendees like Mohammed Abdu, a Sana'a University student in the Faculty of Art's archaeology department, were impressed with the caricatures. "Though I'm not an artist, I see the trainees' creativity. They take the brunt of the problems we face and the pains of Yemenis and consequently, reflect on them." Sana'a University commerce student Lubna Hussein appreciated the works because they discussed social and political issues.

Attendee Jamal Isa, representative of the Hamas office, felt at home because all of the trainees illustrated Palestine's daily pain. "I can see the interest in Palestinian issues. Yemeni pens have illustrated fairly their feelings about the sorrows and pains our nation is suffering under colonialism. Such strong feelings reflect the zeal in their hearts to intervene and support Palestine."

He continued "The absence of Palestinian caricaturist Omayma Juha is only a symbol of what we suffer under the siege. She waited more than a week, carrying dozens of her pictures, but in vain. I hope this exhibition creates a new burst of serious and modest art directed at Islamic world issues."

"The exhibit also reflects that we aren't the only ones who suffer and think of Palestinian issues. We have a family here in Yemen that also experiences our sustained pain. Art is an effective language that can provide numerous ways to communicate with others. It is going beyond barriers and limits to reach people's hearts and minds," he concluded.

## Literary Corner

### Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah)(v)

**Subject Book:** Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah) [1224 – 1316 AH (1809 – 1898 AD)]  
**Author:** Muhsin Bin Ahmed Al-Harazi et al  
**Checked and Edited by:** Abdullah Mohammed Al-Hibshi  
**Language:** Arabic  
**Publisher:** Ministry of Information and Culture  
**Year Published:** 1400 AH/1980 AD  
**No. of Pages:** 661

Continuing with a year by year summary of the Annals we proceed as follows:

1254 (1838 – 1839 AD): The usual tribal difficulties and efforts by the Imam Al-Nasir Abdullah Ahsen Al-Mahdi to consolidate his rule and bring law and order to the outlying areas of Sana'a. He set out on an expedition against Hamdan tribe (north to northwest of Sana'a). He was able to overcome them with the help of the tribes of Arhab, Hamdan and Bani Al-Harith. In the meantime the Ottoman Turks, under Ibrahim Pasha (brother of Mohammed Ali Pasha (the Ottoman vassal ruler of Egypt) have consolidated their hold on the Tehama and wanted to get rid of their former vassals in the area the children of Turabah after killing their leader Ahsan Bin Yahya Turabah and his children were imprisoned and eventually killed.

1255 AH (1839 – 1840 AD). The northern tribes of Yam (near the Saudi border today), Gshn, Al-Ujman and Al-Fatimah decided to overcome the drought they were encountering by running raids against the Turks in Tehama. They "took over all of Tehama, except for the ports", says the author. When Ibrahim Pasha gave them money, they then left towards Haraz (in the area of Manakha), which was under the Imam's rule. When they took over Manakha, the Imam's Deputy in Tehama fled and the raiders pursued him and took everything in his possession, then they went to loot the livestock of the Haima Tribe (midway between Hodeida and Sana'a). The author notes that the people of Haraz welcomed these raiders because of the oppression of the Imam's Deputy and there they fortified their positions and controlled the area until the Turks repulsed them later. When the Imam went out pretending to go to Dhamar on an expedition, there the tribe of Hamdan gathered. When they realized that he just went out on a relaxation journey to Wadi Dhahr, they started looting and shot the Imam with three bullets. The Imam tried to leave to Sana'a but was forced to return to the Palace of the Rock. The author states that after being wounded, the Imam's life was saved by a ring which had gem that helped to stop bleeding! However, the tribesmen then attacked his servants and entourage and killed their leaders. Then they attacked the Imam, after realizing

he did not have any weapons with him, since "his servants have taken the Imam's weapon to fight the tribesmen when he was wounded and could not use them anymore. They killed the Imam Al-Nasir. When news reached Sana'a the Imam's political prisoners, Mohammed Ibn Al-Mutawakkil and Ali Bin Al-Mahdi were released, with the former becoming the new Imam, when he announced his call for the Imamate on the 13th of Rabi'a Awwal 1256 AH (14th of April 1840 AD), and he was given the oath of allegiance by the prominent dignitaries and scholars of the time. He took on the nickname Al-Mutawakkil, after his father. Just one month after the new Imam took the reigns of authority, the tribe of Arhab raided the tribe of Hamdan, supposedly to avenge the death of the Imam Al-Nasir, but the author states, in reality they were just looking for booty. They looted all of Hamdan and 120 heads from the heads of Hamdan were taken to Sana'a and then a settlement was reached. The "evil of Al-Faqih Sae'ed arose in the South of Yemen", and he started to distort beliefs and traditions and to embezzle from the people. So in the month of Rajab the Imam set out for Dhamar after having controlled the roads from the highway robbers". After a few days in Dhamar he set out for Yarim, before the Faqih Sae'ed's forces get to him, for this dissenter has been able to impose his authority over all the area, which was taken over by the Northern tribesmen of Bakil, after also claiming to have supernatural powers and that he was the awaited Mahdi, who was to come before the Judgment Day. But the Imam, who called himself, Al-Hadi (the Enlightener), since he was bringing enlightenment to a region that had fallen to this pretender of magic. Though they were outnumbered, the imam's forces prevailed and the rest of the dissenter's forces "pretended to fall under the Imam's authority. When the dissenter tried to rally his forces again he was finally defeated and imprisoned after three battles, in which there were a thousand dead.

1357 AH (1840 – 1841 AD): The year the Ottoman vassal in Egypt broke away from the Porte in Istanbul. The Imam took advantage of this and took what the Turks had taken and even went on to try to take Aden. Al-Mahdi Abbass had previously assign a viceroy in Aden, who eventually became the Sultan Abdilly, who originally came from Iyal Abdillah, a clan of Arhab, and the Sultan Abdullah Al-Fadhly (originally from Anis) had been appointed in Shaqra. The two Sultans have been feuding ever since each trying to take over the other's domain. By 1255 (1839) the Sultan Abdilly had sold Aden to the "foreigners". The author notes that when the "foreigners" took over Aden, they constructed the port and fortified the city.



Trainees illustrate the Yemeni caricaturist's condition.

## "Common Beats" between Europe and Yemen

For Yemen Times

Music and dance festival entitled "Common Beats: Hip Hop Music and Dance" is running from Nov. 25 to Dec. 12 with assistance from the German Embassy, the French Embassy and the Ministry of Culture.

This project represents another step in the cultural dialogue between the

Arab World and Europe, aimed at youth. "Common Beats" will continue the successful cooperation between the two European Embassies and Yemeni people, after the successful cultural events "Musical Gazz" in 2003 and "Street Art" in 2005.

"Common Beats" will feature 2 French and 2 German artists with Arab backgrounds who will come to Sana'a to pass on their experience to 14 Yemeni participants from Sana'a,

Aden and Hodeidah in a two-week workshop, culminating in open air concerts in Aden, Hodeidah and finally in Sana'a.

The hip hop culture is a form of popular youth culture in Europe and as well in the Arab World. Coming up in the late 1970s, it is wide-spread around the entire world: especially in France, from the beginning hip hop culture had a strong connection to the Arab-African culture because most of the artists are descended from African

and Magreb Immigrants. In Germany likewise, many Hip Hop artists are of Turkish origin.

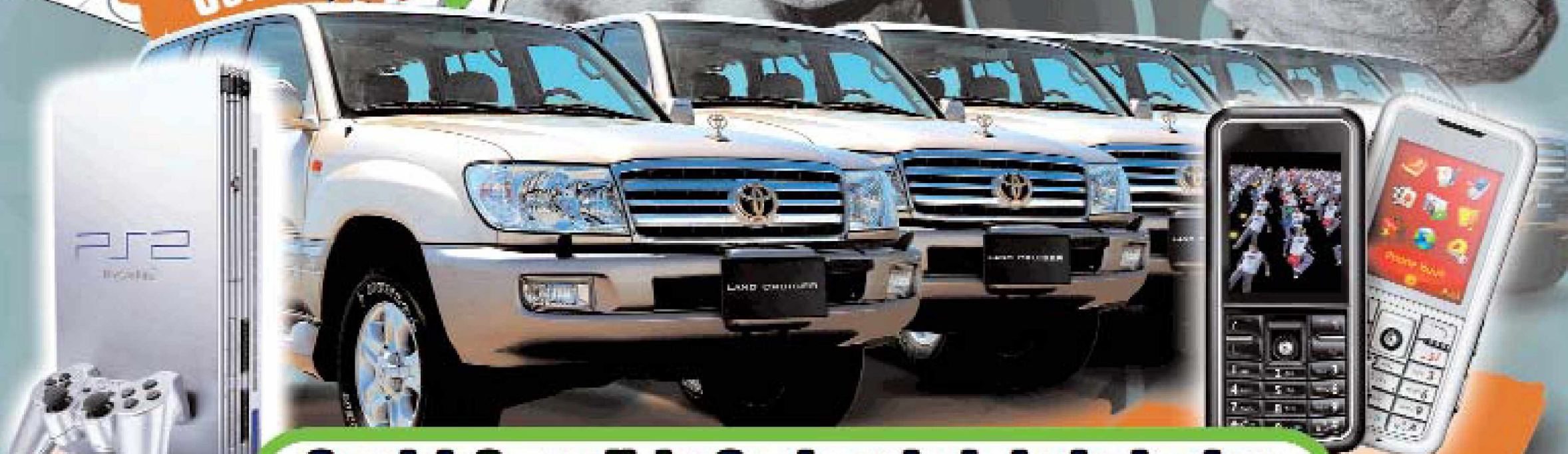
The lyrics often treat topics of the immigrants' experiences in the French and German society and are rich of social issues brought forward in a humorous way – against racism and mistreatment. The dance has a competitive character similar to some tribal dances. Through the 1990s, the music grew to become one of the most popular genres in Germany and

France.

Although hip hop culture and music didn't start long ago in the Arab World, it has a high popularity almost everywhere from the Magreb to the Middle East and is played on radio and TV stations. Very popular hip hop performers are "MTM" from Egypt, also well known is the Kuwaiti hip hop band called "Army of One" and "DJ Outlaw" from Bahrain, "Clotaire K" from Lebanon and the Palestinian rappers "MWR." One of the most

successful Arabic rappers however is the Moroccan artist "Salah Edin" who has performed in over 31 countries in 4 continents. The Yemeni Rap singers and hip hop dancers who participate in the workshop are sportive young gifted talents in this musical style, and are supposed to relate to the Yemeni experience. The workshop, as an alternative to chewing qat, is supposed to animate the young to be sportive and creative. The workshop culminates in the production of a CD.

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# AIDS in Yemen: A silent bomb

By: Amel Al-Ariqi  
amel11ariqi@yahoo.com

The most recent estimate of AIDS and HIV patients in Yemen said there are at least 11,600 cases. However, many experts doubt this number, as many patients don't report their disease. "The situation is very bad. There's a huge silence surrounding AIDS in Yemen," says the director of the Central Public Health Laboratory's virus department, Dr. Abdullah Al-Hababi.

He points out that Yemen's conservative cultural and social context, aggressive attitudes toward AIDS patients and widespread stigmatization about the disease among both health care workers and the general population have led to significant underreporting of cases. He suggested that a hidden HIV/AIDS epidemic is developing in Yemen.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), HIV surveillance systems are very weak in Yemen. Reporting HIV cases is based on laboratory data available at the Central Public Health Laboratory and its governorate branches, as well as in private hospitals and labs.

Ad hoc screening (opportunistic

**"Reporting HIV cases is based on laboratory data available at the Central Public Health Laboratory and its governorate branches, as well as in private hospitals and labs."**

screening) of vulnerable groups has been conducted, but long-term trends are difficult to interpret due to a lack of standard methods. WHO has established an action plan to strengthen second-generation surveillance in collaboration with the National AIDS Program, including routine surveillance of blood donors and screening in all blood banks, as



well as repeated surveys of knowledge, attitudes, practices and behavior among vulnerable groups.

"Evidence has shown that there's a high level of stigmatization and discrimination within health facilities ranging from isolation to total denial of health care services. Access to testing is very limited. Infection control and blood safety measures are weak – no more than about 20 percent of blood donors in the country are screened. Legislation on and regulation of blood services urgently are required to ensure complete blood safety," the WHO report stated.

**Shame, ignorance and poverty**  
Many Yemenis still think of AIDS or HIV as sexual diseases, that is, transmitted only via extramarital sexual relations (considered "illegal"), Al-Hababi says, which causes citizens to judge AIDS patients like criminals and refuse to deal with them. Furthermore, people are scared of AIDS patients because they think the disease is contagious, which is why patients are abandoned by their friends and families.

"An AIDS patient told me he entered a clinic and he was honest with the doctor, informing him that he had AIDS. The doctor immediately

kicked him out, refusing to treat him," said Al-Hababi, who explained that AIDS patients prefer to hide their sickness rather than face the community.

Ministry of Health Deputy Minister Dr. Abbas Al-Mutawakil says AIDS is considered a taboo subject in many Arabic countries, including Yemen, because it was always linked to homosexual relationships "But we can't ignore the fact that this widespread epidemic exists, therefore, we established the National AIDS Program and the National Strategic Framework for the Control and Prevention of HIV/AIDS. This start is considered the first steps toward recognizing and knowing about this disease," he said.

Al-Mutawakil reviewed the three ways HIV is spread: sexual contact with an infected individual, contact

**"Commercial sex and sexual tourism has become common in Yemeni regions, but it's rare to find anyone who wants or dares to speak about this issue publicly."**

with contaminated blood (for example, transfusions using infected blood or wounds from contaminated sharp instruments) and transmission from an infected mother to her child, either before or during childbirth or through breastfeeding.

"All of us are subject to infection if we aren't careful or if we don't know what this disease is and its causes," Al-Mutawakil noted.

In this regard and according to WHO, the availability of voluntary

testing and counseling services in Yemen is very limited, although the National AIDS Program initiated a pilot testing and counseling service in July 2004. Expanded testing and counseling services are planned and a training program for counselors already has begun.

Policies and guidelines for testing and counseling services in public and private facilities are needed urgently and currently being developed. AIDS treatment guidelines as well as nursing care guidelines are being developed in accordance with international standards along with WHO support.

Dr. Mohammed Taqialdeen, former director of the National AIDS Program, says poverty and ignorance are other contributing factors in AIDS spreading in Yemeni society. "When I was working in the AIDS program, I met many Yemeni girls younger than 20 years old who were practicing prostitution.

When I warned them that they may be infected with HIV, their replies were, "We want to give up this type of work, but do you have another job for us in order to live?" At that point, I shut up," said Taqialdeen, who confirmed that commercial sex and sexual tourism has become common in Yemeni regions, but it's rare to find anyone who wants or dares to speak about this issue publicly. He also stressed that most who practice these types of jobs suffer poverty and illiteracy.

Taqialdeen also mentioned "unhealthy sexual relationships in marriage," referring to the lack of condom usage among Yemenis. "We saw many cases where men, particularly those who were abroad and had sexual relations, then transmitted the disease to their wives," he commented.

According to UNAIDS, the primary reported mode of HIV transmission in Yemen is through heterosexual contact. However, apparently, difficulties remain in achieving universal HIV screening of donated blood and adequate blood donor selection. Additionally, unsafe practices in handling skin piercing instruments is common, whether in health care settings or by traditional healers, while intravenous drug use is rare.

Travel history commonly is linked to risk of infection, but in more than half of reported AIDS cases, infection occurred among Yemenis without a travel history. Women face increasing vulnerability to HIV, as the gender gap among reported AIDS cases was closing from 4:1 in 1995 to 2:1 in 1996 and 1:1 in 1999.

It's unclear whether sexual work or homosexuality are influencing the epidemic. Among a small group of prostitutes identified by police, the HIV rate was reported at 4.5 percent in 1998 and 2.7 percent in 1999, but a 2001 report found a 7 percent infection rate.

**Patients seeking rights or revenge**  
Feeling shame, rejection and pain, AIDS patients often choose to isolate themselves from the community. "I left my home, my work and my friends when I discovered my HIV infection," said K.M., who was infected while working as a nurse in a public hospital, "No one knows about my infection except my brother."

However, not all patients take this same attitude, as some confessed that they choose to "take revenge" in their own way. Sa'eed (not his real name) recounted that when people learned he had HIV, he lost his job, he was forced to divorce his wife and the owner of the house he rented threw him out.

"Once, I was upset. I had just come from a center where I met a doctor who taught me how to deal with my sickness, what I must do not to infect others, etc. I left the center and was walking on the street when I saw a barbershop. I then made up my mind. I entered the shop and asked the barber to cut and shave my hair, which the doctor advised me against doing, unless I inform the barber about my condition because there's a risk that another customer could get AIDS/HIV if the barber drew some blood from me and then used the same instruments. I

**"Access to testing is very limited. Infection control and blood safety measures are weak – no more than about 20 percent of blood donors in the country are screened."**



Yemen's conservative cultural and social context, aggressive attitudes toward AIDS patients and widespread stigmatization about the disease among both health care workers and the general population have led to significant underreporting of cases.

SOURCE: WWW.ZANAN.CO



A lymphocyte infested with HIV.

SOURCE: WWW.BBC.CO

don't know what I was thinking ... I don't know," Sa'eed said.

He confessed that he realized that such reckless behavior would expose others to danger. He also confessed that many times, he considered donating his blood to blood banks, but confirmed that he didn't.

Sa'eed's attitude reflects the frustration, loss, blame and pain AIDS patients suffer and such emotions become stronger in a community that treats them like criminals. "We in the Human Rights Ministry receive complaints from AIDS patients. For example, a month ago, we received a complaint from an AIDS patient who was fired because of his infection. We

contacted involved authorities at his work and we managed to allow him to return to his work," said the director of the information sector at the Ministry of Human Rights, Nusiba Al-Ghashmi.

She added, "However, the Ministry of Human Rights sometimes lacks the means and the executive power to defend these people's rights because there's no law defining their rights or their duty toward society."

The National Strategic Framework for the Control and Prevention of HIV/AIDS reveals that most HIV-infected Yemenis are married with children and their needs and rights haven't been addressed.

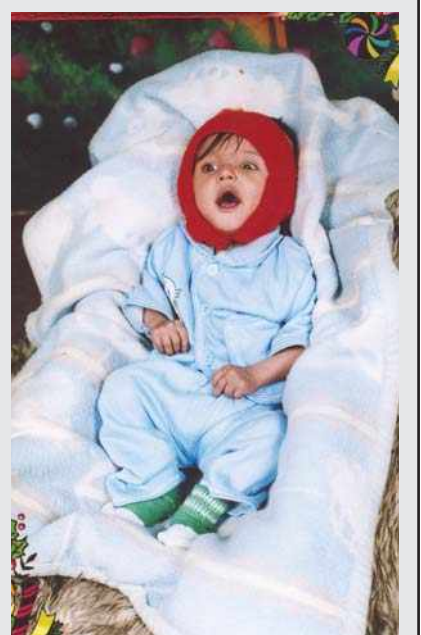
## Appeal

**A**'amer Mohammed Kaid, 16 months old, has suffered a complex congenital heart disease since birth, as well as cyanosis (bluish-colored skin caused by lack of oxygen in the blood), growth retardation and a problem with his mucus membrane.

According to a medical report issued by Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a, the child requires cardiac surgery, but because there are no facilities for such treatment in Yemen, it recommends treating the infant abroad.

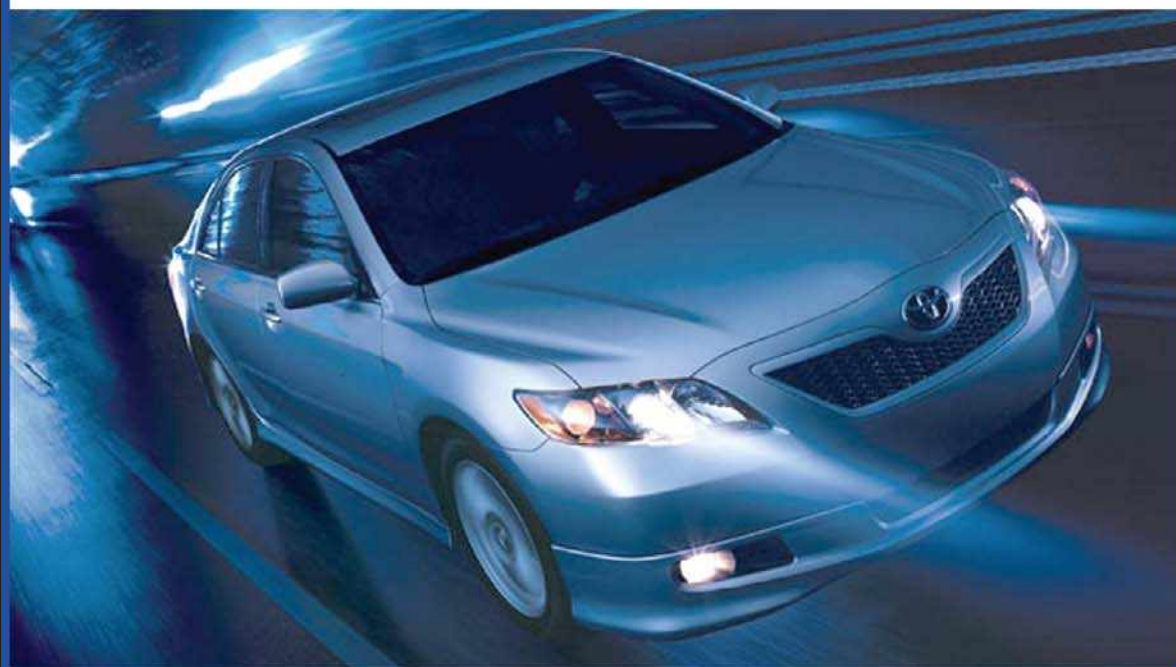
The child's family, which currently is experiencing difficult circumstances, appeals to all good people to help cover the expenses of his travel abroad and his medication.

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# Community affairs projects inaugurated in Hadhramout



The hard living conditions of people in Hadhramout's rural areas have been the primary motivation for Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its partners in Masila Block '14', to establish a number of projects aiming to support the infra-structure in these areas. This support involved vital sectors like education, electricity, health and water and it has left a good impression among citizens and beneficiaries since the year 1997.

The company's contributions have amounted to US\$ 12 million and there has existed a strong relationship between the company and the people based on gratitude and devotion.

Canadian Nexen and its partners in Masila Block '14' have been the first to establish and finance such projects and they were well equipped and furnished. The projects, set up in suitable positions, were made according to special studies to ensure covering as large area as possible. This proves these projects cost much more and great efforts were exerted to make advanced and typical projects, enabling citizens to get the maximal benefit out of them.

Attended by His Excellency Khalid Bahah, Minister of Oil and Minerals, Sa'eed Ba Yuma'een, Local Council Secretary General & Deputy Governor, Mr. Alistair John Mooney, Canadian Nexen's President and General Manager and Ali Sohaiki, the company's Executive Director, Canadian Nexen and its partners in Masila Block '14' inaugurated a number of vital projects in Hadhramout and hereafter some details about those projects.

**1- Project Name:**

Construction of a kindergarten building

**Project Location:**

Al-Qarrah (Ghail Bawazeer District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

7,375 inhabitants

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14" Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 114,000

**Project Brief:**

The constructed building contains four class-rooms in addition to an activities hall and general function space, an office-room, a kitchen, and dining-hall plus utilities. A fence has been added with a total perimeter of 296 meters.

**2- Project Name:**

Construction of a Basic Education school Building

**Project Location:**

Zaghfa (Ash-Shihr District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

965 Students

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14" Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 75,000

**Project Brief:**

The two-storey building has six class-rooms, an administration office, and utilities.

Currently, the required school furnishings i.e. tables, chairs, are being procured for all class-rooms.

**3-Project Name:**

Wadi Arf and Al-Ma'di Villages Electricity-Supply Network Installation

**Project Location:**

Wadi Arf and Al-Ma'di Villages (Ash-Shihr District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

12,500 inhabitants

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14"**

**Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 1,217,000

**Project Brief:**

The installation of high and low-voltage cables to deliver electricity to the households and other rural work-sites. The works include the installation of a transformer station linking the network with Ash-Shihr city electricity network and power generation house at the Local Ash-Shihr Electricity Authority. Villages benefiting from the network include Wadi Arf villages of Miqad Al-A'bia, Al-Barh, Arf, Haqb, Al-Haqla, Al-Qibali, and all the three Al-Ma'di villages.

**4- Project Name:**

Wadi Arf Villages Water-Supply Network Rehabilitation

**Project Location:**

Wadi Arf Villages (Ash-Shihr District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

10,160 inhabitants

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14" Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 170,000

**Project Brief:**

A complete renovations, rehabilitation, and pipes replacement and re-alignment from the water resource in Al-A'rsh, Wadi Arf.

**5-Project Name:**

Construction of a Health-Unit Building

**Project Location:**

(Radhah, Ghail Bin Yumain District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

584 inhabitants

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14" Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 106,000

**Project Brief:**

The construction of a modern health-unit building a total cost of US\$ 106,000 including the sum of US\$ 35,000 that has been allocated for the procurement of medical equipment and furnishings as well as other administrative furniture i.e. chairs, desks, cupboards, ...etc.

**6-Project Name:**

Construction of a Basic Education Girls' School Building

**Project Location:**

Al-Qarn (Ghail Bin Yumain District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

619 pupils

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14" Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 75,000

**Project Brief:**

The two storey building contains six class-rooms and teachers' and administration offices. The company has, through CAP budget, also, provided the school with the required furnishings of desks and chairs.

**7-Project Name:**

Northern Ar-Raidah Power Project

**Project Location:**

Northern Ar-Raidah villages (Ghail Bin Yumain District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

14,949 inhabitants

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14" Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 600,000



Inaugurating Zaghfah school

**Other Contributors:**

The Local Administration in Hadhramout Governorate which has supplied the generators

**Project Brief:**

The implementation works include the linking and installation of two generators provided by Hadhramout Local authority, as well as, the building of two rooms for the generators, construction of electricity distribution network in the villages of Ar-Raidah, of which are the following: Al-Ulaib, Lugna, Dfaish, Al-Garn, Al-Hadhi, Radhah, Bab Al-Haiq, Raidah Al-Joohi (Al-Sufailah), Ga'a Al-Awadh, Rahabat Bin Junaid, ...etc.

**8- Project Name:**

Ladwas/Ressib Road

**Project Location:**

The Hadhramout Plateau (Ghail Bin Yumain and Sah Districts-Hadhramout)

**Beneficiaries:**

All road users and specifically the inhabitants in these regions and oil companies working in the region

**Total Project Cost**

US\$ 4,5 million

**Co-financiers**

- The Ministry of Oil and Minerals
- Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block '14' Partners
- Total-Yemen
- DNO-Yemen
- DOVE-Energy Yemen

**Project Brief:**

The construction of a 65 kilometers long asphalted road along with the construction of all required roads-beds, Irish-crossings, rain-water drainage outlets, and all other non-roadway construction works. The built road includes, also, a cross-road exit to the Ressib village totaling three kilometers in length. The beneficiaries include residents of both Ghail Bin Yumain and Sah Districts including Ressib and its surroundings. Gone are the days of hardships and damages.

**9- Project Name:**

Construction of a Basic Education School Building

**Project Location:**

Haru (Sah District-Hadhramout)

**No. of Beneficiaries:**

3,762 pupils

**Ministry of Oil & Minerals and Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen and its Masila Block "14" Partners Contribution:**  
US\$ 72,000

**Project Brief:**

Construction of a Basic Education School building that has three class-



Part of welcoming festival at Al-Qarrah Kindergarten.



Part of attendance.



Inaugurating a medical enter project.



Inaugurating a school.



An electrical project inaugurated.

locals.

What is eye catching is the crowds that come to receive the inauguration delegation and accompanying guests in every area in which a project was launched, hanging Yemen and the Company's flags and chanting public songs and dancing to that music. Welcoming speeches are always there together with the poems that praise the company's achievements. Locals

awarded the inauguration delegation with appreciation certificates together with guests.

Ali Sohaiki, the Executive Director of Canadian Nexen, noted these projects will not be the last and they are a part of previous projects. The company aims to create a partnership with the local society and diminish the hard conditions people suffer in those areas.



Ribbon cutting at one of the projects.

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## Yemeni women reject the findings of the latest "Gender Gap" survey

By: Pavel Vondra  
For the Yemen Times

It is one thing to rightfully demand that the things get better for women in this country, but it's another story to find out the world doesn't think much of the progress so far achieved here in that field. In the latest Global Gender Gap survey, published last week at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Yemen came out last among the 117 countries scrutinized by the authors, who include Ricardo Hausmann, Director of the Center for International Development at Harvard University, Laura D. Tyson, Dean of the London Business School and Saadia Zahidi, Head of the World Economic Forum's Women Leaders Program.

The relative ratio of the inequality between the sexes in Yemen was calculated to be 0.4672 on the scale where zero signifies absolute inequality and one means the opposite. The desired equality, however, is nowhere to be found in today's world according to the authors of the survey. Even Sweden which came out on top still has a long way to go before it can hope to achieve total equality of genders, its current score being 0.8133.

The report measures the size of the gender gap in four critical areas, namely economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. It is precisely the last category which cost most of the countries precious points. On the other hand, the Scandinavian "gender paradise," where women feel quite at

the highest executive position.

But what about the Arab world? Of the ten Arab countries included in the survey Yemen is the only one where women at least tried to contest the presidency. Still, it ranks much worse than the alleged Arab champion of equality, Kuwait, 88th, and trails even behind Saudi Arabia at the second-to-last position. Sumayya Ali Rajja was the first Yemeni woman to announce her bid for presidency, though she later quit the race, doesn't hide her indignation over the results of the survey.

"I do have trouble with the study because it's done from a very different perspective than the one we live in. The trouble with us is that the West equates the veil with no rights which is totally untrue. And I think it is very important for children to see a woman driving or to see a woman bargaining and understand that this is Okay," says the former presidential candidate. And she is not the only one who has doubts over the validity of the latest global overview of gender equality.

Husnia Ahmad Al-Kadri is no beginner when it comes to studying the inner workings of society. As a director of Gender Development Research and Studies Center at Sana'a University since it reopened in 2003, she believes she knows what she needs to know to discount the findings of the international "Global Gender Gap" team. Yemen certainly has its problems, she says, but that doesn't make it the worst country in the region for women



Despite increasing education of girls there is still a high drop rates. PHOTO BY NADIA STRAKOVA

home in politics and men often stay home with the children on state-sponsored paternal leave, dominated the survey. Sweden is the overall champion of equality, Norway, Finland and Iceland taking the 2nd, 3rd and 4th place respectively and Denmark occupy the 8th rank. With Germany as number 5 and United Kingdom and Ireland in that order closing the top ten it was only New Zealand, 7th, and most interestingly Philippines, 6th, disrupting the European hegemony.

The high placing of the Philippines, where widespread poverty is as much of a problem as in Yemen, proves a society can aspire for gender equality regardless of its dire economic situation. With their second female president since 1986, this developing South East Asian country beats most of the developed Western nations where woman have never reached

to live.

"If we are behind all of the countries of the Arabic Peninsula, it is not a good research. I feel that we are better than the Gulf states, even better than Kuwait," says Al-Kadri and goes on to voice her concern over what kind of signal the survey sends not only to Yemenis, but also to their immediate neighbors to the North. "They will encourage the government of Saudi Arabia not to do anything for the progress because they gave them certificate now that they are better than Yemen. As for us, we believe in our efforts and we are confident about ourselves. We don't need approval from these researchers. But they will help Saudi Arabia to leave the things as they are."

Al-Kadri says the real situation of women on both sides of the Saudi-Yemeni border is best reflected by the fact



A typical scene in the rural areas outside Sana'a, where women do most of the work while their men get the privilege of being bosses. PHOTO BY NADIA STRAKOVA

that many women from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states "come here to learn from our experience."

She is quick to acknowledge the scope of the problems that women in Yemen face. "The status of women is not good, we have high illiteracy, we have high levels of early marriage which restricts the autonomy of women and prevents them from making progress in education and also economically. But I think if we, women and men, do our best to change the status of the women, we will be better than others."

Sumayya Ali Rajja shares the same view. In fact, the need to invest in the development and to make sure that health services and education are available even in the often overlooked rural areas of Yemen, formed a strong part of her presi-

dential campaign platform. She didn't win, but she didn't lose her hope for the better future of her country either. All the more so because she says she can see the potential for change all around.

"I have a lot of respect for Yemeni women. They just need a little bit more education to know that they can do things. But I think for me, being in Yemen, not being veiled, mixing with all sorts of communities, that's good enough for me, I don't even need to be the president," she explained.

Pavel Vondra, is a freelance journalist and independent film-maker, currently working on a documentary film about Yemeni women in politics.

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**ZTCO**



# Education

A free monthly Supplement offered by Yemen Times and presented by Dr. Ramakanta Sahu

No. 10

Dr. Ramakanta Sahu  
Associate Professor,  
Department of English,  
Faculty of Arts and  
Education, University  
of Science and  
Technology, Sana'a  
Tel: (01) 31117  
Mobile: 733523970  
P. O. Box 14533,  
Sana'a  
ramakantasahu@yahoo.com



## Improve Your English: 298

### I. What to Say

Situations and Expressions (93)  
Wishes for a sister (iv)

**A** brother is not only a source of joy for a sister but an unfailing pillar of strength, comfort and pride for him as well. She looks upon him as a friend, a philosopher and a guide in the turbulent course of life's sordid realities

- I may not be the best brother in the world, but I'm sure, that I'm the luckiest. I feel blessed to have a sister like you.
- We've a special closeness that's grown deeper through the heart, a bond that links us strongly through laughter, smiles and tears; we share a deep love and we support each other, too, and it means still more with every year, to have a sister like you.

### II. How to Say It Correctly

Correct errors, if any, in the following sentences

- Before going into the mosque, everyone has to take off his shoes.
- When I tried on my three white shirts, I found that not any of them fitted me any more.
- None of the furniture have arrived yet.
- Unfortunately, few of our houseplants died while we were away on holiday.
- It cost fewer than twenty dollars.

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- She has to do a lot of traveling in her job.
- Everything seemed to go wrong.
- The whole of Sana'a was affected by the power cut.
- Both (of) their children had chicken pox at the same time.  
(\*both' is used after a determiner such as 'their', 'his', 'the', etc)
- Each bus owned by the company is washed once a week.

### III. Increase Your Word Power

(A) How to express it in one word

- Based on error and misleading information.
- Liable to errors.
- Land ploughed but not sown or planted.
- Move, walk, or act in an uncertain or hesitating manner.
- Make well acquainted with.

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- Short tale with animals in it and intended to give moral teaching: **fable** (n)
- Front or face of a building towards a street: **façade** (n)
- One of the many sides of a cut stone or a jewel: **facet** (n)
- Exact copy or reproduction of writing, printing, a picture, etc: **facsimile**
- Story, work or art, etc that looks genuine but is not: **fake**(n)

(B) Words often confused

Bring out the difference in meaning of the following pairs of words

- eminent, immanent
- egoism, egotism
- trip, tour
- arrant, errant
- iniquitous, ubiquitous

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- acquisition** (n) (acquiring): Child language acquisition is a complex, yet fascinating process.  
**requisition** (n) (act of demanding): The Defence Ministry has submitted a requisition for military supplies.  
**inquisition** (n) (thorough search or investigation): The Intelligence officials carried out an inquisition into the assets accumulated by the accused.
- prescribe** (vt) (advise or order the use of): The doctor prescribed bed rest for the patient.  
**proscribe** (vt) (denounce a person, practice, etc. as dangerous): Some books written by Taslima Nasreen have been proscribed in Bangladesh.
- collar** (n) (part of a garment that fits round the neck): He has a fashionable collar stud.  
**color** (n): Dreams lend color to life.
- conceive** (vt) (form an idea, plan, etc. in the mind): I can't conceive in my wildest dream how you can stoop so low.  
**perceive** (vt) (become aware of): I don't perceive any difference between my students and

my children.

- compress** (vt) (get into a smaller space, condense): The writer has efficiently compressed his ideas within the span of this short essay.  
**depress** (vt) (make sad, low in spirits): I am depressed to notice the progressive deterioration in my father's health.  
**repress** (vt) (keep or put down or under): The government repressed the rebellion with a stern hand.

(C) Synonyms and Antonyms

(i) Synonyms

Choose the word that is closest in meaning to the one given at the top

- compunction**  
a. guilt  
b. pricking of conscience  
c. remorse  
d. regret tinged with pity

- concur**  
a. to run together  
b. to meet in one point  
c. to coincide  
d. to act together

- confound**  
a. to overthrow  
b. to confuse  
c. to throw into disorder  
d. to defeat in argument

- conglomerate**  
a. bunched  
b. mass  
c. jumble  
d. collection

- consecrate**  
a. to render holy  
b. venerable  
c. hallowed  
d. devoted

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- | Word              | Synonym                     |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. circumlocution | evasive talk                |
| 2. circumspect    | cautious                    |
| 3. clandestine    | private                     |
| 4. coalesce       | unite into one body         |
| 5. cognition      | knowing in the widest sense |

(ii) Antonyms

Choose the word that is most opposite in meaning to the one given at the top

- ephemeral**  
a. temporal  
b. everlasting  
c. polite  
d. temporary

- fickle**  
a. steadfast  
b. independent  
c. permanent  
d. silly

- firmament**  
a. earth  
b. hell  
c. sky  
d. heaven

- fetish**  
a. object of love  
b. object of hate  
c. object of harm  
d. object of dispute

- fructify**  
a. enrich  
b. fruitful  
c. upgrade  
d. sterilize

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- | Word          | Antonym       |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. effeminate | virile        |
| 2. epilogue   | prologue      |
| 3. extolled   | condemned     |
| 4. esoteric   | none of these |
| 5. endemic    | epidemic      |

(D) Spelling

Choose the correctly spelt word

- a. mirchant  
b. merchant  
c. merchant  
d. marchent
- a. nausea  
b. noser  
c. nousea  
d. nausea
- a. ocured  
b. ocurred  
c. occurred  
d. ocurred
- a. omitted  
b. ommitted  
c. ommitted  
d. omitted
- a. ocaasion  
b. ocesion  
c. occaasion  
d. occagen

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- liberty
- library
- maintenance
- magnificent
- mathematics

(E) Phrases and Idioms

Use the following phrases in sentences

- tempt fate
- leave (someone) in the lurch
- stay the pace
- you can say that again
- fall foul of (someone/something)

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- in hot water** (in trouble): You will be in hot water unless you take your job seriously.
- belle of the ball** (the most attractive girl present in the gathering): Although there was a large gathering of girls in the auditorium, she was decidedly the belle of the ball.
- in seventh heaven** (extremely happy or pleased): Rizq was in seventh heaven when he became the best graduate of the university.
- a different kettle of fish** (something completely different): I have lived in several foreign countries, but living and working in Yemen is a different kettle of fish.
- change horses in midstream** (to change one's decisions, plans, etc. in the middle of a project): It sounded absurd when the manager abruptly decided to change horses in midstream and give a different slant to the project.

### IV. Grammar and Composition

Fill in the blanks with a suitable verb

- The air crash investigators are .... into the cause of the accident.
- It's a lovely sofa, but it would .... up to much space in the sitting room.
- While I was looking for my suitcase in the room, I .... across a box full of lovely old books.
- If you've forgotten his phone number, why don't you .... it up in the phone book?
- When her husband went abroad she .... down and cried.

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

- Running a big car like that can't be at all cheap. It must be very **expensive** running a big car like that.
- Ahmed Azzan started teaching six years ago. Ahmed Azzan has **already** taught for six years.
- What do you find most interesting about the film?  
What **interests** you most about the film?
- 'What's happened to your knee?' Khalid's mother asked him.  
Khalid's mother asked him what had happened to his knee.
- I was amazed by the things he said.  
I thought what amazing things he said!

(B) Composition

Expand the central idea contained in the maxim  
116: A BARKING DOG SELDOM BITES

Suggested answers to the previous lesson's questions

- 115: THE EARLY BIRD CATCHES THE WORM**  
If a bird arrives before other birds he has the privilege of catching the worm because he has no rival to compete with him or to snatch the worm from him. Similarly, a person who gets up or begins his efforts for an enterprise quite early is more likely to be successful in the venture. In an age of keen competition, one who finishes first will naturally be the winner. The one who is first to arrive at the finishing point will get the best award. On the other hand, the one who lags behind has to be content with the least that is available under the circumstances. As the 18th century poet Dryden says "None but the brave, none but the brave, none but the brave deserves the fair." In the struggle for existence, the fittest only survives. Therefore, we should unleash our best efforts to reach the goal ahead of everybody else. We should be the leader, the forerunner, the harbinger, the pioneer if we wish to get the best of the bargain. The essence of the maxim is to be prompt, active, aware and act without wasting the precious time, because opportunity once lost may not come again.

**V. Pearls From The Holy Quran**

"All that hath been promised unto you will come to pass: nor can ye frustrate it (in the least bit)."  
—S6: A134

**VI. Food for Thought**

"A smile is the shortest distance between two people."  
—Victor Borge

## Teaching like a farmer in Yemen

**I** hail from a farmer family. My father was a farmer. To my good or bad luck I became a teacher. But I have problems of giving up my farmer mindset while teaching and I consider my teaching as an extension of farming. When rainy season comes I feel the itching to plough and sow seeds, take care of tender plants and see that these tender plants grow healthy and bear fruits. So also as a teacher when the academic year starts I experience the itching for teaching, get tempted to sow the seeds of learning and feel happy to see my student-plants grow healthy and bear fruits.



Dr. Manmath Kundu  
Associate Professor,  
Department of English  
Faculty of Education  
Hudeidah University

### Farming and Teaching: The Contrast

As farmers we spend more time and energy in cleaning and levelling the ground, sowing seeds and taking care of the plants. And finally we reap and harvest. If the harvest is good, we are happy. If not, we are unhappy. We feel a great sense of loss. But in teaching, unlike in farming, we are less interested in cleaning the ground, ploughing the land in sowing the seed and helping the tender plant grow. Instead we are more interested in reaping and harvesting (examination/testing) than in sowing and taking care of the plants. If the harvest is good I am not happy. If the harvest is bad, I am not unhappy. We experience a kind of dull, dry stoic indifference. We feel as if we work as hired laborer in someone's field. My wages are my primary concern.

### Teaching like farming in Yemen

When I came to teach English in Yemen, my farmer mindset also came with me. First I examined the land. Next I observed my other brother-farmers farming. I saw them sowing wrong seeds in wrong soil. Although the land is good for only maize, they are planting coconut. And I found, to my dismay, the land full of weeds. I saw my brother-farmers (having long experience in farming in Yemen) sowing, often wrong seeds, without cleaning the grounds of weeds. I saw, therefore, plants and weeds growing side by side. I found, to my surprise, some of my experienced brother-farmers failing even to distinguish between weeds and plants. As a farmer I have some knowledge about the weeds. Weeds can survive in most inhospitable circumstances. They take a lion's share of the fertilizer given to the plants. I too have some knowledge of the causes of the growth of the weeds. They are primarily due to bad cultivation. The land is not properly tilled, levelled and sunned and weeds are not removed when very young.

### Some educational weeds in Yemen: Their causes and cure

I came across a variety of educational weeds in Yemen. They exist in great number throttling the plants. Let me describe, in some detail, some of these weeds, their causes and cure.

#### Weed 1: Extensive use of pencil, rubber and white eraser

Pencil and rubber are good for beginners. Adults should use them only occasionally. But in Yemen even the adult learners in colleges are found to use them like beginners. They write, then rub and write. Rub-write-rub-write... the process goes on. I came across some students writing in examination in pencil first. Then write over them in ink, and finally rub off the pencil marks. What a waste of time and energy!

#### What is wrong with this kind of weed in education?

The advantages of writing in pencil is that we can erase it with ease. If we all

the time use pencil and eraser, this becomes a disadvantage, even a disease. It will give us the feeling that this is not the final writing. "I will go wrong and I will correct the errors". This kind of feeling will never help you to think "I'm writing my final draft and I will not go wrong" or "I can write all correct and there will be no need to erase." With great difficulty I made my students give up the habit. I had to ban the use of pencil, rubber, white eraser in my class. But old habits die hard. Old weeds stick to the ground like leeches. There are still some students who use them. This is because teachers in other classes allow them to use them.

#### Weed 2: Overuse of bilingual / electronic dictionary

Almost all of our students are found to carry with them small, bilingual pocket dictionaries, the rich ones the electronic dictionaries. Dictionaries are good for learning language. But instant or overuse of them will kill in us the capacity to give the meaning of a new word from the context. All good readers have this skill. But overuse or frequent use of dictionary will not help us develop this very useful skill of reading-guessing the meaning of a new word from the context. Thus this is a weed in the guise of a plant. Many farmer-teachers fail to recognize this weed. So I had to convince my students the harmful effect of the overuse of dictionary. The weed was so rampant that I had to ban the use of dictionary in my class. I told my students to consult them at home later.

Why this weed? We the farmers are the cause of the weed. This weed is created by teachers who use difficult texts in which every alternative word is a difficult word for the students. Thereby, they are forced to consult the dictionary all the time.

#### Weed 3: Bypassing the mind

Our mind or the brain is the sine qua non or the basic root of all learning. But unfortunately by the way we teach, test and the materials we provide to our students, the mind is bypassed. Without applying their minds our students somehow get through and pass the exam by mugging up without understanding and by reproducing the mugged up answers in the exam. We also help them get through by our very liberal, often half-hearted, ritual-like tests and mode of evaluation.

This is the mother weed and generates other weeds like weed 1 and 2. And weed 1 and 2, in turn, help their mother. We teachers are the main cause of this weed. The way we teach (always explaining and lecturing) does not provide the learners a scope to think. The materials we provide are too difficult for them. As a result, they never ever try to understand them - they only mug up the materials and reproduce them in the exam. Our tests also help proliferate this weed. The students need not apply their minds to answer the questions. And we pass them (almost all) very generously.

Continued on page 3

## ELT Panorama

## BOOK REVIEW

## What is the longest English novel all about?



Prashant K. Sinha  
prashantsinha\_2000  
@yahoo.com

Vikram Seth's "epic" novel *A Suitable Boy*, which, unlike works of "magic realism" of Salman Rushdie and others, adheres relentlessly to realism, won accolades as a masterpiece to be compared in its presentation of themes of love and marriage with the fiction of Jane Austen and in the breadth and sweep of its depiction of a society with the novels of George Eliot and Leo Tolstoy—of course minus their moral observations. The sheer readability of the work carries us through its enormous length, and at the end there emerges a sprawling and graphic description of India of early 1950s in its diversity and multiplicity. The novel, as noted by many critics, with its sheer range of characters, events, social and linguistic and religious groupings takes us through an astonishing variety of circles: its locale moves from Brahmputr (perhaps modeled after Patna) and a few villages in Purva Pradesh to Calcutta, Delhi, Kanpur and Lucknow, and everything is treated with remarkable accuracy. The characters include Hindus (of many castes), Muslims, Parsees, Sikhs and Christians, the classes range from aristocracy and landed gentry i.e. Nawabs, rajas, landlords to rich farmers, middle class traders, professionals— academics, lawyers, doctors, business executives, technicians, elite barristers, bureaucrats and judges—poets, spiritualists, diplomats and down to factory workers, servants, shoemakers and landless agricultural labour. Even the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru appears more than once in the novel. And everything is well researched. The work begins and ends with weddings, with quite logically large congregations of people on both the occasions. The story is carefully manipulated by withholding some information and shifting from one plot to another at crucial moments of suspense and also foreshadowing certain events through astrologers. So it is only appropriate that *A Suitable Boy* should inspire a new anthology of critical essays entirely devoted to itself. Murari Prasad's book comprising essays by both Indian and Western scholars is a welcome step in that direction.

The introduction by the editor neatly covers the biography and the background of Vikram Seth, in the process pointing out the parallels between events in his life and his family and those narrated in the novel. Then it "introduces" the essays that follow, commenting succinctly on them.

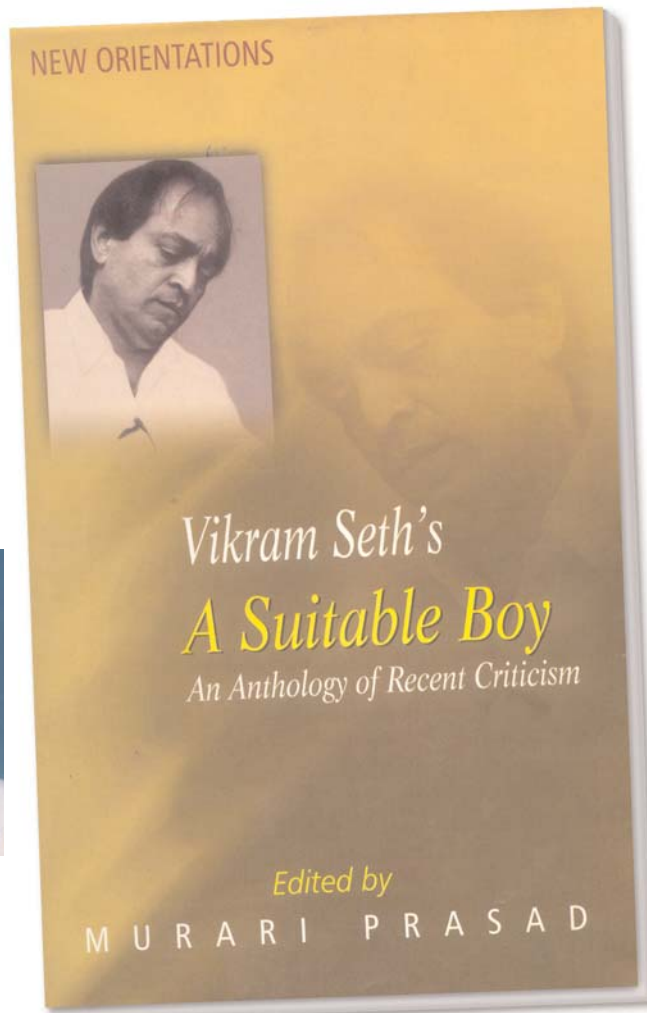
The first essay by Himanshu Mohapatra and Jatindra K. Nayak, "Jane Austen and Vikram Seth: Uses of Realism in *A Suitable Boy*" effectively shows the similarity of concerns in Seth's work and the novels of Jane Austen. They observe that what Gothicism was for Austen, "marvelous realism" is for Seth, and they elaborate the statement by analyzing the tension between romance and realism in both Austen and Seth. They compare *A Suitable Boy* and *Persuasion* in relation to the presentation of the "dominant middle class", noting that Seth's novel is Austenian in its privileging of "sense" over "sensitivity". These perceptive remarks, however, are punctuated by minor flaws.

Thus they allude to "a key moment of sexual surrender". I wonder if there is any "moment of sexual surrender" in Seth's tone! The article evinces a wide range of reading, but interestingly there is no reference to Rajagopalachary and Keerthi's "Social Realism in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*" which evokes Jane Austen. In the list of works cited authors' names are abbreviated somewhat arbitrarily.

The two articles that follow engage Seth's employment of the English language. Neelam Shrivastava's article on the "Challenges of Rendering Indian experience into English in *Midnight's Children* and *A Suitable Boy*" examines "their use of English as a translation from other Indian Languages—and as a linguistic choice, which reveals the secularism of the authors' representation of India" (p.44). The essay perceptively concludes that Seth's prose has a "smooth and eminently readable surface" in spite of "several instances of code-mixing and hybridization from Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and other languages". Christopher Rollason's article on the "Linguistic Aspects of *A Suitable Boy*" is somewhat useful in its detailed scrutiny of the novel's four language multilingualism, especially in his insightful comparison of Vikram Seth and Walter Scott.

However, many of the statements and observations about the contents of the novel are erroneous and inaccurate. Thus he compares Brahmputr to Varanasi, Agra and Ayodhya, but never to Patna where Seth had actually resided. He says that Kabir was a "maths student" whereas he studied History. Firoz is called "a wastrel son" which is a gross exaggeration, but he is justified when he mentions "Seth's crucial theme of the need to connect across barriers" (81).

The two articles on Islam take diametrically opposed stance. Ian Almond's "The Imbalance of Islam: Muslims and unhappiness in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*" is an "essentialist" study representing the kind of prejudiced, unbalanced and partial view that several western scholars and politicians have taken of the Hindu attitude towards Muslims that led to the unfortunate partition of India and propping up of Pakistan's Military Dictators. In a jaundiced reading of the novel, Almond classifies the Nawab Sahib and Dr. Durrani as representing the sickness of the Muslim community. In fact, the Nawab Sahib is a cultured, cultivated, tolerant and compassionate man. Dr. Durrani is an absent-minded unworldly scholar whose introversion represents the ivory tower academic rather than a "deranged" Muslim. Similarly in his pairing of characters to show how in every case, the Hindu is flexible and sensible and the Muslim is tragic and inhuman, he grossly misjudges Rasheed and Maan, as it were. Rasheed's idealism, political commitment and devotion to duty, set him far above many others in the novel. In contrast, Maan is not, as mistakenly proposed by Almond, the norm. He is rather too casual, undisciplined and lacking in self-control. Again the rightist Home Minister Aggarwal is not applauded by Seth but rather unambiguously condemned. Although it is not customary for the editor to write a separate article, refuting the position taken up in another essay in the anthology, Murari Prasad had no choice but to resort to it to undo some of the mischief Almond's article may do. He very convincingly demolishes the structure of Almond's



Dr. Murari Prasad  
Faculty of Arts,  
Department of  
English, Sana'a  
University  
murariip@gmail.com

argument. In addition to Rasheed, he takes up Firoz, Imtiaz and Zainab to show the positive side of Islam as depicted in the novel. Perhaps in his enthusiasm, he goes too far when he says, "[S]ecularism in Islam was, and probably even now is, if not non-existent altogether, a terribly ticklish issue" (108-109). Has he forgotten M.C. Chagla and Bismillah Khan? He is also mistaken when he concludes that in Lata's search for a suitable boy, "Islam is not at issue, or religious affiliations and narrow identities ... for that matter" (114). After all, as Malati tells Lata, Kabir's being a Muslim is a crucial factor. It is said more than once that "mixed marriages" cannot work in India. However, from this, we cannot conclude as Almond does that Muslims in the novel have an association with the "tragic and the gloomy".

Among other articles that explore Seth's vision, Mala Pandurang's feminist reading neatly develops its point of view with illustrations from the text. She convincingly concludes that "Seth[...] falls short off inscribing agency to his women characters, or of investing in them the potential to transform traditional mindsets. The novel does not therefore challenge existing gender conventions. A sincere effort to offer the option of praxis to Saeeda, Tasneem and/or Lata could, on the other hand, have elevated *A Suitable Boy* from the level of a gentle satire to a stringent critique of social and sexual inequities" (p.129). Unfortunately, Pandurang's style is highly jargonistic; sadly enough, she is in the distinguished company of critics like Homi Bhabha

David Myer's detailed scrutiny of "Passion and Prejudice" in relation to the thematic unity of *A Suitable Boy* advances the somewhat one-sided view that "Seth proposes that we deny passion and remain, whimsically, in control of ourselves" (131). Again he writes of Lata that "Her pragmatic and defiant decision is almost like an allegory of modern India turning away from stultifying snobbism and tradition and towards rational planning, capitalist work ethic and economic productivity" (133). It is somewhat simplistic: one cannot ignore that Lata had proposed to Kabir that they elope, and he, being then in a cooler frame of mind, had turned it down. Quoting Foucault on sexuality—source not provided—he proceeds to conclude that repression of sexual passion is linked with "the primacy of capitalist productivity and bourgeois respectability" (133). However, passion, as in the case of Saeeda Bai and Maan is shown as irrepressible. Myers extends the scope of his argument by introducing other varieties of passion such as the religious passion of the Raja of Marh and the passion for power as in Arun and L.N. Aggarwal. He is really perceptive when he concludes that Seth displays "Victorian delicacy" on the subject of sexual passion. Similarly he is quite original when he talks of Maan as a tragic character with a tragic flaw (passion for Saeeda), remorse, repentance, renunciation and transformation. However,

Murari Prasad (ed). *Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy: An Anthology of Recent Criticism*. Delhi: Pencraft International, 2005. Pp 180. Rs 400/\$20. ISBN 81-85753-72-5

he is often faulty with small details: he refers to Arun Kapoor and Varun Kapoor in place of Arun Mehra and Varun Mehra; he talks of Ustad Majeed Khan's "leaning" for Tasneem instead of mentioning Ishaq Khan; he says of the Hindu code Bill; such laws guaranteeing the survival of minority languages and cultural groups, which is obviously untrue.

Felicity Hand in her piece on "Translating India into English" is quite perceptive when she observes that Seth's novel is a calm depiction of the ordinary reality of India, and at the same time, "he can point to the virtues and vices shared by all the human race as opposed to insisting on the existence of an intrinsically Indian identity that the inhabitants of other countries could never hope to comprehend". Both the "calmness" of "depiction" and the "universality" of Seth's work are features that critics have often overlooked. Others have observed the multiplicity of characters and events in the novel, but Hand has also taken cognizance of Seth raising "a large number of issues". However, from here, she moves on to a somewhat sweeping generalization: "Episodicity, for an example, is an outstanding feature of Indian novels..." (158).

Finally, Cielo G. Festino's "The social Geography of *A Suitable Boy*" employs Franco Moretti's strategy for literary interpretation as shown in *Atlas of the European Novel 1800-1900* (1998) and draws a map of the locale. However the map is not entirely accurate in its details, especially of directions. The essay is also somewhat lacking in depth.

The bibliography at the end by the editor serves a useful purpose as it contains several items which have not been mentioned in the articles included in the book

On the whole, the anthology is both insightful and comprehensive. Important facts of the novel including themes, characters, prose style and narrative technique have been covered. Perhaps some other features of the form of the novel and its narrative management, especially in relation to the epigraph, and recurrent imagery can be added in a second edition of the book.

The book is well bought out with an attractive cover. It is a valuable addition to the scholarship on Vikram Seth.

Dr. Prashant K. Sinha, formerly Professor and Head, Department of English, Pune University, Pune (India), was recently a visiting professor of English at the Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

Letters to the learners of English  
A new series

Prof. M.N.K. Bose  
mnk\_bose@hotmail.com  
Professor of English,  
Faculty of Education, Taiz

Dear learners of English,

This is a new series of letters I am planning to write for the benefit of you, learners of English in Yemen. You are aware that I was writing letters to the teachers of English in this country in the earlier issues of Yemen Times Educational supplement in order to share with them certain useful information related to the teaching of English in Yemen. In these letters, I touched on basic issues such as the use of blackboard in the English classes, preparing teaching aids for teaching English etc. to very complex issues such as punishing students by rewards, evaluating teaching materials etc. I believe that my teacher friends in Yemen have read them and benefited from them; a few letters I got as feedback from teachers pleases me and it is this incentive that has motivated me to write this series now.

In all these letters to the teachers, though not stated explicitly many times, I have kept the learners of English, you, at the back of my mind. How could I have told the teachers to do something in the classes without thinking of you? Any classroom activity, though planned and carried out by the teachers most often, targets the learners, doesn't it? There can't be teaching without learners; hence the term 'teaching-learning'

instead of teaching or learning is more common in the ELT literature these days. Of course, there was a time when the classroom teaching was looked at as the teacher's activity without caring about the learners, but those days are gone. So, you, the learners of English—whether you are in preparatory schools or secondary schools or colleges or pursuing your own studies at home—are our valuable consumers and welcome customers. There can be learners without teachers but can there be teachers without learners?

This series of letters is to interact with you, look at your problems, responsibilities, your strength and weaknesses, your success and failure with regard to your learning of English in Yemen and share with you my views which may help you to solve some of your problems and learn better and more successfully.

Read these letters in every issue of Education Page, last Monday of every month, free with the issue of Yemen Times and react; ask your questions without any hesitation and I'll answer them in the following issues. Questioning is the best way to learn, as you know, as it benefits both those that ask and those that answer.

I am going to write in these letters problems and prospects of learning English in Yemen, especially those that hunt you as learners of English; some of the areas I'll discuss are how learning Arabic helps learning English, why you learn English in this country, where you learn English, how you learn, how much English you need, how you can improve your spoken English, writing and reading, how well you can choose your dictionary and extra reading materials etc.

Looking forward to your responses to the letters.

Yours affectionately,  
Dr. M.N.K. Bose

## TEACHER EDUCATION (8)

Teacher education:  
A springboard to unfold  
the teacher's potential

Dr. Ramakanta Sahu  
Associate Professor  
Department of English  
University of Science and  
Technology, Sana'a

indisputably important even for elementary teachers. Therefore, all prospective teachers should acquire a thorough grounding in the subject to be taught and go beyond a mere smattering of the matter of the subject. They must grapple with the fact that subjects include structures and built-in pedagogies that teachers must grasp in order to convey essential outlines and the related problem solving skills to the learners.

Education is not a matter of merely imparting information and enforcing discipline. It is wrong and dangerous to assume that all children are more or less similar blank slates passively awaiting transmission of facts. Educators in public education system must prepare all students, not just a talented few, to face the challenges of the 21st century. This brings into focus preparing teachers to be adequately equipped to accomplish this task. Hence, the pressing need for teacher education.

Teaching is not everyone's cup of tea. The myth that any one can teach so long as you know your subject matter has long been exploded. Of course, one can never underplay the importance of subject knowledge in making a good teacher. Love and command of a subject certainly go a long way to make inspired and efficient teachers. But, over and above the subject knowledge, in this profession you need to have a typical bent of mind, lots of patience and confidence, understanding of children, good organizing capacity and friendly nature to be a successful professional.

Subject matter knowledge is

Teacher preparation should, by all means, take into account a sufficiently solid theoretical knowledge on the part of teacher trainees coupled with practical experience so that the teachers command of this knowledge improves educational practice and learning outcomes and elevates the status of teachers and teaching within the academy and in the larger society as well.

Apart from subject knowledge, teachers ought to develop people skills and pedagogic skills that would stand them in good stead in the classroom. At the same time they are expected to be familiar with a set of managerial skills such as customer handling, hospitality, soft skills, and selling techniques. They must communicate well, and create a perception in the market about the school's professional excellence. They have to be flag bearers for marketing the school's educational system, thereby fulfilling a very vital aspect of professional commitment.

## ANY GUESSES?

1. What is **cloak and dagger operation**?
2. What is the meaning of the word **multiversity**?
3. What does the word **couple** in the sentence **I have a couple of things to do** signify?
4. What is the word **Simpleton** stand for?
5. What does the phrase **Not to do a hand's turn** mean?

Suggested answers to the previous issue's questions

1. A **fifth columnist** is a member of a fifth column, a traitor or spy.
2. Americans call brinjals **egg plants**.

3. Alexander, the Great had no beard. He had a number of remarkable achievement to his credit, but couldn't grow a beard! **Alexander's beard** is a beardless, smooth man.
4. A **bottle neck** is the narrow neck of a bottle. It signifies a narrow or restricted stretch of road which causes traffic to slow down or stop. It also refers to anything that slows down production in a manufacturing process.
5. The word **dead** in the phrase **dead easy** means completely easy. Other such expressions are **dead stop**, **dead sure**, **dead easy**, **dead drunk** etc.

# Comparative Literature: Its Implications for Yemeni learners of English



**Dr Ayid Sharyan**  
(Associate Professor)  
Department of English,  
Faculty of Education, Sana'a  
University, Sana'a  
ayids@yahoo.com

Oh, East is East, and West is West  
and never the twain shall meet

—Kipling

This line from the poet Rudyard Kipling highlights the saliency of comparison which has been the time-honoured practice of examining things whether in literature, anthropology, politics, religion, linguistics and so on. Comparison involves ways of examining things by someone. It tends to bring out similar and dissimilar things; to unite more than divide; to find unity in diversity; to develop a sense of tolerance. In literature it seeks to discover bonds and ties in the apparently dissimilar literary works, pertaining to two societies, two cultures across time. This sort of comparative survey is known as comparative literature.

Comparative studies attempt to demonstrate that different fields of knowledge relate to each other in one way or the other. CL as an academic discipline is based on comparison like any other field that employs comparison. CL is concerned with the relationship between genres of literature rooted in two cultures. One culture may be a giver the other one a receiver. (Al-Qamri, 1991).

Many questions arise relating to Comparative Literature (hence CL). Why do I compare two literatures? Is it a branch of literary history or literary criticism? Is it a way of studying literature that transcends its nationality and takes it to the level of internationality? If one accepts the view that CL is a literature that is beyond national literature, does CL look at some literature as high, sophisticated, superior and the other as vulgar, inferior? Does CL limit masterpieces of the world to Western culture?

One also needs to ask what are the criteria that determine the elements of CL. Does it fall in the domain of language or culture? Is there any scope to incorporate CL in the English curriculum in Yemen?

## Comparative Literature: Theoretical Background

For some critics like T.S. Eliot, literature is to be seen and examined only by comparison with other literary works. For instance he said in his article "Tradition and the Individual Talent" that "No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetics, not merely historical, criticism."

Literature, obviously, is not created in isolation. If it is related in some way or the other to other writers then the proper way of studying it is to examine each literary text against another either in the same culture or from other culture/s. Without CL it will be difficult to understand Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) Very often Poe uses some words that sound like Arabic as titles for his poems, e.g. *Al Araaf, Ulalume, Israfil, Eulalie*. Most of the time, these words are used to refer to his late wife.

Whether CL should focus on the life of the author and his relation to other writers at the same age is a much debated question.

CL gets its importance from several contemporary social and scientific developments: globalisation, democracy, interaction of cultures, business transaction and so forth. As an academic discipline, CL has various ramifications. It has been perceived as a branch of literary history that studies the relationships among nations and writers. CL relates between writers who write similar things in their writings but differ in their culture and language. It looks for universalities in literature. It pays no attention to barriers of language, nation, race, ideas, and biases. It looks at literature as the product of humanity (Wazzan, 1985:15). According to *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, CL 'aims at the study of literary works and traditions of more than one nation or language'. CL, thus, permits fuller understating of international literary movements and affiliations. CL crosses frontiers in search of cross-cultural correspondences (Drabble, 2000: 225). CL can also be seen as the comparison of one literature with other spheres of human expression, e.g. science, religion, arts, music, philosophy, psychology, etc. Unlike CL, national literatures like Arabic or English are defined linguistically and nationally.

CL clearly involves more than one language or culture. At least two writers are studied where similarities and contrasts are involved. CL is associated with the mutual influence of literary trends, forms, thoughts, themes, situations and characters in more than one culture. CL is tied to cultural links that connect different nations culturally, intellectually and socially.

Basically comparative literature has an "interdisciplinary" "trans-national" approach. It crosses linguistic, ethnic, and political boundaries (Bassnett 1993). The reading is not within a single literature, but making associations, connections and similarities with great open space of literature with a capital L. Comparative literature has made world literature common-sense for people all over the world. People hear of *Rubaiyat* Omar Khayyam, *Arabian Nights*, Naguib Mahfouz's novels, Goethe's *Faust*, Dostoevsky's, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Ibsen's *A Doll's House, Crime and Punishment*, Cervantes *Don Quixote* (1605), Shakespeare's tragedies, etc. This has been made easier by marketing of books, availability of translations and comparative literature studies that promote understandings and encourage sharing commonalities.

## Comparative Literature In Practice

Teaching methods in literature are not so clear as they are in other fields such as language (e.g. grammar translation method, direct method, audio-visual method, communicative approach, etc). One may ask how CL can be applied to teaching English to Yemeni Learners or Arab learners for that matter.

A literary work can be compared from the point of view of themes and motifs. Like character analysis, theme allows grouping of literary texts regardless of their background. Forms of literature such as ode, ballad, autobiographies, pastoral poems, adventures, comedy, tragedy, ele-

gies, didactic, etc. as well as structural, sense and sound devices including myth, legend, irony, parody, burlesque, fable, parable, allegories, symbols, metaphor, simile, personification, alliteration, assonance, consonance also permit comparison. (Jabar, 1983: 44-45).

For instance, to discuss the story of Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* is to link it to "The Second Coming" by W. B. Yeats (1865-1939):

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

Similar to this is the origin of Shaw's *Arms and the Man* and Hemingway's *For whom the Bell Tolls* for these titles are taken from John Donne (1572-1631) and Virgil (70-19 BC) respectively. To teach the twentieth century novel Forster's *A Passage To India* is to mention Whitman's "Passage to India". While Whitman's poem is optimistic, Forster's novel ends with a bleak tone: every thing [horses, mountains, earth, sky, etc.] said in their hundred voices, 'No, not yet...No, not there.'

Comparative Literature intends "to unite more than divide; to find unity in diversity; to develop a sense of tolerance... to discover bonds and ties in the apparently dissimilar literary works, pertaining to two societies, two cultures across time."

One finds some relation between Ibsen and G.B. Shaw. Some would study the influence of T.S. Eliot on W.H. Auden or Pound on Eliot. Others may study the influence of Coleridge on Wordsworth. A comparatist finds similarities as between *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* (Alive Son of Awake) by Ibn al-Taufil (1100?-1185; Higiya 494?-581) and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* but it needs some kind of documentation and scholarly studies. A comparatist may study the Romantic Movement in Europe and its influence on the Arabic World or the study of Puritanism and its influence on literature in Britain and America. But these studies are not directly relevant a teacher of literature for Arab students.

A more plausible topic is to investigate the relationship between an Arab writer and a foreign writer. For example, Naguib Mahfouz (1911- ), Egyptian author, and Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945) can be compared on the basis of their naturalistic viewpoints. What binds the two is the naturalistic mode of presentation of their characters, their attitude towards environment, heredity and the gloomy view of life. One finds this is clear in Naguib Mahfouz's *bidaya wa nihaya* (1945; The Beginning and the End) or *al-thulathiyya* (The Trilogy 1957) and *Sister Carrie* (1900). Like Mahfouz's novels, Dreiser recounts in *Sister Carrie* the story of a small-town girl who moves to Chicago and eventually becomes a Broadway star in New York City. The novel depicts explicit treatment of sexual issues. *Khat*, a short story by Dreiser, similarly recounts a gloomy setting (Hodidah, Yemen); it tells the story of a beggar who is a khat addict. He runs after money only to satisfy his basic drive for Khat. Mahfouz's novels can be compared also with Steinbeck's novels. One can explore the linkages between Steinbeck and Mahfouz through the analysis of their major novels: *The Grapes of Wrath, Of Mice and Men, Tortilla Flat, Zuqaq al midaq* (1947; Midaq Alley), *al-liss wal kilab* (trans. The Thief and the Dogs) and *Miramar* (Miramar). The two novelists project the plight of the oppressed class in their works. (Sharyan, 2000). The former presents America during the Great Depression (the end of 1929 until the early 1940s) and the latter presents the migration of

Yemenis particularly during the Imam'a period.

Adultery and sacred marital commitments as a theme can be found in the writings of different backgrounds such as Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880), Hawthorne (1804-1864), Tolstoy (1828-1910) and Naguib Mahfouz (1911-). A comparative study can examine adultery in the four cultural backgrounds. Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880), the father of realistic fiction in France, portrays the dissatisfaction of Emma in *Madame Bovary* (1857). He delineates the specific reality of the main characters and the historical period. Emma the heroine feels disappointed by Charles Bovary as a dull husband. She is charmed by Rodolphe and Léon with whom she had affairs. Emma commits suicide by swallowing arsenic and dies a horrible death. Tolstoy (1828-1910), the Russian novelist, presents an identical context. Like Emma, Anna in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1875-1877) is torn between her dull marriage and a passionate affair with Vronsky, a dashing soldier for whom she gives up everything. In the end, Anna suffers a tragic fate. A similar theme is to be found in Hawthorne's (1804-1864), the Puritan novelist, Hester Prynne, the heroine, in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) is a tale of sin and redemption. It is set in the Puritan Boston of 1600s. The heroine was exiled for adultery. She is made to wear a red "A" on her dress. Her lover remains silent about her passion. Mahfouz's *Zuqaq al midaq* (1947; Midaq Alley) depicts the misery of Hamida, the heroine, who went to the brothel instead of marrying Abbas, the barber. For a comparatist, these novels offer an extraordinary insight into the norms and behaviors of varied societies. Nevertheless, these norms, though varied, are universal..

Such studies represent a particular worldview though with specific local colour. Arabic and English literatures are differentiated in all kinds of ways- linguistically, geographically, historically, aesthetically. But 'similarities and commonalities' is what binds this kind of studies..

## Arabic Literature and the West

The relation between Arabic literature and the West began as early as the crusades that took place from 1095 to 1270. Later the West came back in 18th and 19th century as colonizers to countries like Yemen, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, Libya Morocco, Tunisia, etc. A number of western writers like Hugo, Shelley and Wordsworth admired the East. The first serious attempt to understand Arabic literature was by the British Orientalist Fort William who was in Calcutta, India. The poetical translations from Arabic were introduced to him by Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866), the German scholar. Though self-educated in Oriental languages, he introduced his German readers to Arabic. Goethe (1749-1832), the German Romantic poet, novelist, playwright, and natural philosopher had introduced the eastern literature in his enchanting poems, *West-östlicher Divan* (1819; "Divan of West and East") a collection which was the first response to the aesthetic appreciation of the character of Oriental poetry by an acknowledged master of European studies (*Divan of West and East*; trans. Abulrhaman Badawi). Some of the Arabic literature crept into Europe with the translations (1704) of the fairy tales *The Thousand and One Nights*: collection of Oriental stories whose tales of Aladdin, Ali Baba, and Sindbad the Sailor have almost become part of Western folklore. These tales provided abundant raw material for many a Western writers' plays, novels, stories, or poems about the Islamic East (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). In the 20th century a number of Arabic scholars as Taha Husian were influenced either through their study in the West or through exposure to translation of master world literature like Naguib Mahfouz, Abbas Alaqaad and Mohammad Hussein Haykal.

The Arabic culture has its distinct origin. For example, the novel is not totally new to Arabic literature as some assume. (Some think that Muhammad Hussein Haykal's *Zaynab* (1913) is the first novel in Arabic Literature (Somekh, 1973). The novel which can be traced back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in other parts of Europe has some prototypes in classical Arabic literature: *Alf laylah wa laylah* (Arabian Nights), Ibn al-Muqaffa's fables of *Kalila wa Dimna*, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* (Alive Son of Awake) (a philosophical story), and *al maqamat* (a type of narrative that was popular during the Abbasid Period both in the east and west of the Islamic Empire at that time).

Continued from page 1

## Teaching like a farmer in Yemen

This weed is very rampant and is solely responsible for the poor state of education in this country. Since my coming here a year ago, a major part of my energy has been devoted to rooting out this weed. When a writing task is given to my students, they start writing immediately without thinking. They commit errors while writing. Then they spend a lot of time in erasing their errors- repair and do patch work. Similarly, they hand over the script, often without revising. All of us can correct about 40% of our own errors ourselves provided we try sincerely to think, reflect and revise. But hardly ever any Yemeni learner does this. They have the tendency to solely depend on the teacher correction and never on self correction. The same basic errors, therefore, recur all the time in their scripts. This weed is everywhere in Yemen, even in case of the students doing research. Most of the M. Ed students have the tendency to browse the internet first for their research before spending time to think even over their research topics, for example. In order to root out this mother weed in Yemen I have made it mandatory in my class to spend some time, before my students write their task and after they write sometimes, for revision. I have been moderately successful so far and wish that my teacher friends worked hard so that we could together root out this mother weed since almost all of the common errors and wrong strategies of the Yemeni learners can be traced back to this mother weed: bypassing or non-use of mind.

## Weed 4: Wide prevalence of parasite gangs

Weed or no weed, a very few plants manage to grow against all odds. Some, though very few students (about 5%), manage to learn in spite of bad teaching. In every field (class) there are some such learners. They grow on their own but we teacher-farmer take the credit. In Yemen weak learners tend to flock round such good learners and, by doing so for long, they have formed some parasite gangs with their respective Queen Bees - the good learners. If a home task is given, the Queen Bees do the task and the parasite learners copy from them mindlessly. In the classes these parasite learners manage to sit near their Queen Bees, even in exams, if the seats are not previously marked. The parasite learners are, thus, totally dependent on the Queen Bees. They have stopped thinking and applying their minds to learning. Wide prevalence of these gangs in Yemen makes learning almost non-functional.

Only recently I discovered these gangs in my classes and took up imme-

diated steps. I disbanded these groups by making them change their seats, building up their already ruined self-confidence through simple learning tasks and by converting all my home tasks to class tasks. But, ironically, many of my colleagues (Why many? Almost all!) have not been able to realize the existence of these parasite gangs in their classes although they have been teaching here for more than ten years.

## Weed 5: Too much of negative focus on exam

Exam is like a Frankenstein. It has the innate tendency to swallow up its creator if not kept within control. The system of education creates exam. But exam swallows up the system. In Yemen it seems to have totally swallowed up the system of education. If you, in a Yemeni classroom digress a little to tell a story or an anecdote, the students ask "Doctor, will this come in the exam?" If you cut a joke, the same inquiry follows. They are bent on not learning something that is not related to their exam. Exam has become synonymous with education in Yemen, not allowing real learning to take place. Through devising new types of tests which do not depend on mugging up and memory but on thinking and application, I am trying to root out this weed and have been, to some extent, successful. But there is a need to do so in an institutional, or even national basis.

## Conclusion

All the weeds narrated above are not special to Yemen. They exist all over the third world. But in Yemen they are too many and too resistant. And to make the matter worse, many of the farmer-teachers fail to identify these weeds. Some even confuse them with plants they grow. I got frustrated during the early days of farming-teaching in removing these weeds so much so that I sent my resignation letter to my land lord (Rector). He called for me and asked the reason. I said (read with out the analogy); "Your land is full of weeds. I cannot cultivate." He then asked me to describe some of the weeds. When I narrated some in some detail, he said "None of my farmers have told me about the weeds before. You also tell about this to me now for the first time. By telling and then resigning, you are not helping. Stay another year; I will help you root out some of them." My land lord was a clever land lord. I succumbed to his will and stayed another year, fraught with the weed and have been successful in rooting out about 80% of these weeds in my plot (class). My plants now are growing thick and fast and I am expecting this year a bumper crop much more than I could farm in India.

## Literature as a nourisher of life



**Dr. Bashar Ghazi Askar**  
Head, English Department  
Faculty of Humanities  
University of Applied Sciences  
Sana'a  
basharaskar90@hotmail.com

“Why do we care for literature?” is a pertinent question.

We care for literature on account of its deep and everlasting human significance. A great book grows out of life and experience of life. It does not emerge from imagination or fantasy. Literature is a vital record of what men and women have seen or experienced actually in life; how they have thought of things; issues in life and what they have experienced of it and what they have thought and felt about its aspects. So one can say that literature is nourished by life which it embodies.

The great impulses behind literature may be observed in our personal desire for self-expression, our interests in individuals and groups and how they act or behave or conduct things in life, our interest in the world of reality in which we live and co-exist in it with others, in the world of imagination and in our love of forms, style and philosophy of the writer.

In a sense, our love of literature springs from our interest in men and women, their lives, motives, passions, actions, relationships. In other words, we are interested in the great drama of life. The writer, novelist, or the poet reflects the realities of life in their poems or writings or novels. Man as a social animal is unable to keep his experiences, observations, thoughts, ideas, passions, fancies to himself and share these with his fellow beings.

Thus there is an interaction between man and his social community. No human being can live outside his community. One important thing lies in the conflict of man with the unknown forces that govern his destiny. When one reads a fiction, a play or a poem one feels an unknown pity or sympathy towards the character or speaker in action. This enhances his awareness of and sensitivity to human experience and builds up his responsiveness to them.

## SCIENCE QUIZ LINE

Tick (✓) the most appropriate choice

1. A large iceberg melts at the base rather than at the top because

- of the high pressure, ice at the base lowers its melting point  
 ice at the top is impure  
 ice at the top is below freezing point  
 none of these

2. It is hotter in a cloudy night than in nights with clear sky because

- air increases the atmospheric pressure, thus making it hotter  
 clouds are charged and this charge is transmitted to the atmosphere to keep it hot  
 clouds prevent heat radiations from earth to escape into the atmosphere

none of these

3. The enzyme which along with Hydrochloric acid forms an important constituent of gastric juice is

- Amylase  
 Peptin  
 Chemotropism  
 Pepsin

4. The seeds are winged and therefore are dispersed by wind in

- Calotropis  
 Rice  
 Cyaeas  
 Petunia

5. Give the full form of the abbreviation INSTAR

Suggested answers to the previous quiz

- A class of hormones secreted by male organ 'testes' is **androgens**.
- Raw materials of cement are **limestone and clay**.
- A rainbow is formed due to the fact that **as the sun rays pass through the suspended water drops they break up into seven colors**.
- Calcium is necessary for **bones, teeth, breathing of the heart**.
- The full form of ROM is **Read Only Memory**.

# A reading lesson



**Dr. P.A. Abraham**  
Professor of English  
Taiz University  
abraham\_panavelli@rediffmail.com

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is some books are to be read only in parts, others to be read, but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.

—Francis Bacon

Reading and writing are the two sides of the same coin. It is to writing what hearing is to speaking. Sometimes we don't hear what people are really speaking about. This is applicable to reading as well. You must remember that the book is not about yours and you are reading it in order to get something out of it. According to Canadian Novelist Robertson Davis, one must read selectively, listen to the inner music of the writer's voice and reread books that give you pleasure. I believe that one has to read a book more slowly than some modern teachers recommend. The reason is that the reader is trying to find out what the book has to say. I am sure that you have no intention to finish the book somehow or the other. If you don't like the book, do not strain unnecessarily. Put it aside and read something that interests you. But if you like the book, take your own time, do not rush at it. Read it at the pace at which you can pronounce and hear every word in your head. In other words, one has to read eloquently. You are reading for pleasure and incidentally, it may bring information and enlightenment, but if it doesn't bring pleasure, you should ask yourself why you are reading it.

People who teach Reading are against what they call "verbalizing". According to them if you verbalize, you lose time. But you are not reading to save time. You are reading for pleasure and understanding. During the Middle Ages people used to read aloud and the story of a scholar who had to discontinue his studies because he had a soar throat, is a well known one. In fact verbalizing is one of the best critical procedures especially while reading poetry. While teaching poetry I always ask the students to read/recite it loudly. Read aloud so that you can hear what is read with the inner eye, and it is an important critical method for good reading practice. Try to read a passage loudly from a book that you find it difficult to understand. There is every possibility that you will start understanding the passage soon!

So, in order to read well, first of all you need to derive pleasure in what you read. Secondly we need an open and flexible mind. You see, we can't take words at face value. We must see them contextually in order to make sense. And this context is ever changing. It is generated by the words of a given text, where the text itself is generated by the writer who will generate contexts which a conscious reader can envisage. A good reader has to see all that in a text.

The problem is there is always some sort of discrepancy between what a text says and what it means. So, the reader

has to figure out what a text really means on the basis of what he reads. In other words, a reader often has to construe the meaning on the basis of various clues given in the text. For example, consider the following two different expressions: "They kicked him upstairs" and "They put him out of pasture". Though different, there is something similar here and the similarity is that both these expressions could mean "they forced him into early retirement." Again, observe the following contradictory expressions in English language (Oxymoron), "act naturally" and "found missing". To "act naturally" actually means to act in such a way as to seem not to be acting at all. And it is intelligible to say, that while looking for something, we came to the conclusion that something was missing. The point is that this so-called oxymoron makes sense provided we don't read them with simple-minded literalness.

Hermeneutical philosophy says that in order to understand the whole you must know the parts, but in order to understand the parts, you must first understand the whole. It appears that according to hermeneutical circle, real understanding of a text is impossible. Probably the way to get out of this circle is to reach that point in reading a text where the reader can see how the given parts constitute a certain whole and not some other. In other words we are out of this dilemma when we see that the parts and the whole which they constitute converge into a perfect harmony, a harmonious unit.

"You can't see the forest for the trees". This saying echoes the hermeneutical circle as well as the whole idea that though the evidence for a given interpretation is in the text, it is the text itself that needs interpreting in the first place. The idea is to see the "forest" because of and not in spite of the "trees".

Reading then is an active enterprise (as is misreading of course!). The good reader pays attention to every aspect of a text and does not jump into conclusions prematurely. The good reader allows the text to suggest the context within which it is to be understood. The bad reader either ignores the context or changes it. The good reader implicitly recognizes the fact that an interpretation is not something superimposed on a given text, but something suggested by it.

Many readers think that once you have read a book, it has been read for ever. For example, you have read Shakespeare's "Othello" when you were an undergraduate. You must read it again when you are 25, 50, 56, 60, 70. When you read it again and again you derive more and more insight about the play. Perhaps you may not read every page at these later years, but you should really take another look at a great book, in order to find out how great it is, or how great it has remained to you. Great writers and artists deserve this kind of careful consideration. The more you read a great book the more you derive great pleasure and insight.

And I believe that you must read some rubbish also because an exclusive diet of masterpieces will give you spiritual "indigestion". How can you know that a mountain peak is glorious unless you have scrambled through dirty valley? Similarly while reading great books, read also some current books, periodicals, news papers etc. They will help you to take the measure of the age in which you live. Remember that our aim is not to become immensely widely read (If you do it, it is fine) but to become an expert reader, but to have read deeply with pleasure and understanding and to have invited a few masterpieces into your life.

# Gender and Law: Implication for legal education



**Anupma Tripathi**  
MBA, LLM  
Sana'a  
anupma014@hotmail.com

Legal notions of equality of men and women are full of tensions and contradictions. Law recognizes duality (right or wrong, guilty or innocent, win or lose) rather than diversity. Social law constructed according to "natural law" sets up sex as the primary way to classify persons. Women are classified by sex, as different from men. When this standard prevails, then "Real differences" are alleged to justify differential treatment; women are not considered as "similarly situated" to men. This may work to the advantage of women (as in affirmative action laws or the provision of special training programs for women) or to the disadvantage of women (as in "protective legislation" that excludes women from certain tasks or occupations on the basis of their biology or concepts of nature). When women are treated as same as men, and as exactly like men, legal equality takes no cognizance of social and economic inequalities. The study of women that places women's own experiences in the centre of the process, helps modern movement to promote the full equality of women with men and their high valuation as human beings.

Socially, Islam emphasizes the more immediate family tie existing between a husband, his wife, and their children and aims at elevating the status of the female within the family and the society. The feminist community helps in exploring how gender issues and related issues in law have exerted their impact on the society.

Nowadays, gender-neutral language has gained support from major book publishers, professionals and academic groups. The practice of assigning masculine gender to neutral terms comes from the fact that every language reflects the prejudices of the society in which it evolved. English is a case in point. It evolved through most of its history in male-centered patriarchal society. For example "Man" was once a truly generic word referring to all humans; but was gradually moved in meaning to become a word that refers to adult male human beings. This is not about freedom of speech, there is no rule insisting on gender-neutral language. This is a more pertinent issue involving audience and awareness.

Sometimes the legal system holds out limited protection. It does, however, hold out choices as well. Understanding how the law works in this case depends on understanding how women make choices and exploit the limited opportunities available to them. Law is often depicted as operating on women in particularly unfavorable ways. While such images are not always inaccurate, they are incomplete.

In recent years, the understanding of the Arab world and Islamic Law by the rest of the world has been enriched by new attempts to understand women as agents who craft their own lives and history, even as they operate within sharp social, cultural and legal constraints. Since personal status law governs areas like marriage, divorce, custody, it is often the area of law that treats women specifically and deliberately as women; whereas other areas of law like civil and criminal laws need to be more gender-oriented in their application. In cases where legal system neglects the legal environment that governs women, they always have a part to play in defining their position.

In fact, while women's weakness is generally difficult to deny, it does not erase the ability of women to make positive use of law in negotiating their rights and relationships with family members, employers and others.

# Program of teaching Islamic studies in Yemen: An appraisal



**Dr. Ashi Ali Ben Al-Ajmi**  
Assistant Professor  
Coordinator, Program of Islamic Studies  
University of Science and Technology, Sana'a  
ali\_ashi2003@hotmail.com

the fundamental tenets of Islamic education.

## Islamic studies programs in Yemeni universities

There is a department of Islamic Education in every university in Yemen – public or private. The curriculum components of Islamic studies consist of memorization, recitation and Tajweed (techniques of reading) of the Holy Quran, scientific elucidation of its basic cardinal principles, the Islamic belief system, Hadith and its terminology, Islamic jurisdiction with all its culture and thought patterns, the present Islamic world, science of religions, the Islamic mission, and such courses that can potentially be included while planning the curriculum renewal in future.

## Objectives of Islamic Studies programs in Yemeni universities

Islamic Studies programs in Yemeni universities are geared

- to re-associate sciences with their respective Islamic origin
- to stabilize the deeper significance and Islamic cultural values matrix and belief system in the deeper consciousness of the Yemeni people.
- to make them aware of the true essence of worship, sterling moral precepts, foundations of model codes of conduct, purity and transparency in personal life situations away from factional and sectarian conflicts.
- to adequately prepare cadres of Yemeni Islamic missionaries as well as Islamic and Arab scholars in Yemen, properly qualify and equip them with the right sorts of religious knowledge away from destructive extravagance and extremism.
- to put the whole range of the Islamic concepts in proper perspective constituting it as a life's mission, characterized by comprehension and flexibility, interacting with human life through time and space.

## Suggested ways and means to innovate these programs and methods of teaching them

- The revision of these programs in future has to be in harmony with the progressive development and change of life. Any attempt for restructuring of the curriculum has inevitably to be accompanied by a suitable textbook that adequately fulfils the curricular objectives. In this context, it won't be out of place to mention here that the currently prescribed text, Dr. Ali Jreesha's *The Present Situation of the Islamic World* seems inappropriate because, with due respect for the book and its author, it was written in the middle of 1970s, that is more than 30 years ago. Moreover, it is not updated to include the latest thinking in the Islamic World.
- There should be support for the scientific programs in the field of preparing specialists for teaching the Holy Quran and Islamic Studies so that they enrich Yemen with their scholarly contributions.
- The universities should provide for the use of the modern media in imparting instruction in Islamic science incorporating the modern advances in the field.
- There should be facilities for utilizing the contemporary information storage technology to facilitate the comprehension of Islamic science and modernization of the teaching technology.

Translated by Zeena Mohammed Al-Tarib  
Level 4, Faculty of Education, University of Science and Technology, Sana'a

## POETRY CORNER

### Mabrook a million

Professor M N K Bose  
Taiz

Mabrook a million  
Man of the masses!  
Father of United Yemen  
Brother of twenty million.  
Victory is not yours  
It's ours, people say.  
Victory is not new to you

It's part of your history.  
It's no wonder  
You are the chosen leader  
You alone can make wonders  
To lead Yemen in the path of progress.  
Mabrook a million  
Man of the masses.  
In the path of progress.

## RESPONSE TO ARTICLES

I thank Arif Al-Ahdal for his informative and comprehensive article on *Michael West's contribution to teaching English as a second/foreign language (supplement 8, dated 5 October, 2006)*. Currently ELT seems to have become, like some other disciplines, theoretical, more so for us who teach English in very difficult situations, (as almost all the ELT writings are by people who teach English in comfortable circumstances.

Michael West was an exception. His approach to ELT was very practical and he taught English in difficult circumstances.

**Dr Manmath Kundu**  
(Associate Professor)  
Department of English,  
Faculty of Education, Hudeidah  
University,  
Hudeidah

## WONDERWORD by DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: First read the list of words, then look at the puzzle. The words are in all directions – vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backward. Circle each letter of a word found and strike it off the list. The letters are often used more than once, so do not cross them out. It is best to find the big words first. When you find all the words listed in the clues, you'll have a number of letters left over that spell the Wonderword.

### CLUES

- |           |           |           |          |         |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|
| Acre      | City      | Large     | Pays     | Sold    |
| Advertise | Condo     | Lawns     | Phone    | Spot    |
| Agent     | Costs     | Listing   | Plans    | Starter |
| Alarms    | County    | Live      | Pool     | Stores  |
| Area      | Current   | Loan      | Porch    | Street  |
| Avenue    | Customers | Location  | Post     | Style   |
| Bank      | Deal      | Losing    | Price    | Team    |
| Basement  | Deck      | Lots      | Private  | Term    |
| Bath      | Design    | Market    | Property | Test    |
| Bell      | Doors     | Meet      | Ranch    | Tour    |
| Boats     | Drive     | Models    | Rear     | Trees   |
| Borrow    | East      | More      | Road     | Trust   |
| Brick     | Fence     | Mortgage  | Roof     | Units   |
| Broker    | First     | Neighbors | Room     | View    |
| Builder   | Grass     | Office    | Rush     | Walk    |
| Buyer     | Hall      | Office    | Sales    | West    |
| Calls     | Home      | Open      | Savings  | Windows |
| Career    | House     | Options   | Schools  | Wiring  |
| Cash      | Interest  | Owners    | Showing  | Work    |
| Central   | Land      | Patio     | Size     |         |

### REAL ESTATE

### Solution: 10 Letters

E	S	E	L	A	S	M	D	R	I	B	U	I	L	D	E	R	U	S	H	
T	S	O	S	T	R	E	E	T	E	P	S	A	D	E	S	I	G	N	T	
O	O	I	O	E	C	K	A	L	O	C	R	D	L	A	W	N	S	E	S	
P	L	L	T	K	O	T	L	D	I	T	E	O	U	N	I	T	S	K	E	
S	D	C	U	R	R	E	N	T	N	V	N	O	P	V	T	T	C	S	R	
N	A	O	B	A	E	O	Y	E	I	R	W	R	A	E	S	I	N	W	O	
T	O	U	R	M	C	V	C	R	G	E	O	S	P	E	R	O	M	O	T	
A	R	N	C	B	S	V	D	E	C	A	L	L	S	B	I	T	K	D	S	
C	E	T	U	T	H	C	N	A	R	E	N	A	H	O	T	F	N	Y	N	L
R	M	Y	S	I	Z	E	R	S	E	N	O	H	P	A	O	H	I	O		
E	E	O	T	V	I	E	W	T	S	W	F	O	E	B	N	I	S	W	O	
R	C	H	O	M	E	G	E	V	I	L	F	U	N	T	H	T	A	B	H	
I	S	N	M	R	A	A	E	N	A	F	I	S	R	D	I	A	C	A	C	
N	G	B	E	E	M	G	G	E	V	C	E	T	N	H	C	W	L	S		
T	N	O	R	F	R	T	P	R	P	L	E	R	G	A	C	O	A	A	O	
E	I	A	S	A	K	R	O	A	O	S	U	N	L	L	R	L	L	R	I	
R	R	T	L	R	I	O	T	S	S	S	T	L	U	R	O	T	K	M	T	
E	I	S	O	C	F	M	I	S	T	Y	L	E	O	E	P	M	E	S	A	
S	W	W	E	S	T	N	E	M	E	S	A	B	E	T	A	V	I	R	P	
T	E	N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R	S	N	P	T	M	O	D	E	L	S	

## YOUTH FORUM

### Living life

This is Life.....  
For better or worse  
This is Life...  
Where the beautiful and ugly co-exist.  
We have to live  
And strive to see beauty in everything,  
Even if sorrows and sadness destroy our life,  
We have to face life bravely.  
We must bear up with life  
And learn from its experiences

From what is good and what is bad  
From what is beautiful and what is ugly.  
We should build our life  
Away from hatred and petty things  
And try to see everything in its right perspective  
And say, "Life is beautiful, the mere living! That is Living Life."

Ahalem Alsuleehi  
Level 3 Faculty of Education  
Taiz University

### My country

To you, O my country  
I vouchsafe honestly  
I love you deeply.  
To you, O my country  
I say proudly  
You are my beloved country  
For you, O my country  
I mourn sadly when something sad happens

to you.  
To you, O my country  
I vow to do any thing  
To live and let live peacefully.  
Hanan Mohammad Al-Shibami  
Level 4  
Faculty of Education  
University of Science and Technology,  
Sana'a