



DHL Yemen Celebrates 2007 Achievements' Success and Awards Its Employees for Excellent Performance

Sana'a January 16, 2008: Held at Shahrhan Hotel the 2007 Achievement Event for DHL Express whereby more than 50 employees from the Country Office and substations had come together to celebrate the company's success in 2007.

Mr. Omar M. Omar, the General Manager and Dr. Monsoor Alabsi the Country Manager expressed their high level of satisfaction of DHL Yemen Achievements

coming future".

Commenting on the future plans, The Country Manager said "we have solid plans to develop our sales and explore strategic growth and expansion prospects as well as technology and system enhancement to achieve best practices and quality service".

He added "DHL Yemen is in the process of opening its new office in Belhaf in January 2008 and prepare its plan to building an airport facility in the new Sana'a Airport. The new expansion demonstrates how our plan is focused on anticipating and meeting the growing needs of our customers especially in gas and oil industry. As a leading Express company, we are aiming at growing fast and will continue to invest with the assistance of our partners, DHL Global - Deutsche Post World Net".

We are proud to say that our company operating 24 hours a day. Seven days a week and 365 days a year. With its main office in Sana'a and express centers in Taiz, Ibb, Aden, Hodiedah, Seiyun and Mukalla it has the largest geographical and operational coverage among all courier companies in Yemen with daily round trip by land and air transportation to all main cities.

During the years, DHL Yemen contributes effectively to DHL global success and has accepted the difficult market challenge and become the major market leader in the country and continuously pushes for business expansion to serve and improve its customers' satisfaction.



From right to left: Omar M. Omar - DHL General Manager, Hussein Ba Shuaib - 2007 Employee of the Year, Dr. Mansour Al-Absi - Country Manager, Mohamed Helmy - 2007 Outstanding Achiever.

in 2007. "These achievements would not have been possible without the total commitment by top management and collective effort of all members of the staff," stated General Manager, Omar M. Omar. In his talk to audience, the Country Manager commented on high growth of business and the awards that DHL Yemen received from the Area Office during 2007. He added "these achievements clearly suggest that we are moving in the right direction to further enhance our market leading position and maintain the annual sales growth in the



The company awards for excellence in performance were given to the winners in 2007.



2007 Employees of the months with DHL-Yemen management.



Dr. Mansoor Alabsi
Country Manager



Osama Bahakim
Sales Manager



Amir Saeed
Aden Branch Manager



Enas Al-Shaibani
Customer Service Advisor



The achievements would not have been possible without the total commitment by top management and collective effort of all members of staff



All employees have been awarded Mr. Ken Allen prizes for 2007



When migration results in degradation

By: Mohammed Al-Jabri

A young man proudly stands behind the Oromo flag in a small room where Jamal Abdu Wadai often spends hours discussing the social affairs regarding Yemen's Oromo community. Wadai claims to be the leader of the Oromo community in Sana'a.

The word "Oromo" is written boldly on the wall of another room where three mothers sit with their small children. On the other wall of the room is a poster of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. A medium-sized television in the corner broadcasts Oromo programs.

The Oromos gather in the first room with the flag after the second becomes too crowded and likely has no window for ventilation, which reflects their poor conditions. They begin speaking about their life and the problems they face in Yemen.

Wadai explains that the Oromos are the largest refugee group in Africa, dwelling in Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Djibouti, South Africa and Somalia.

Some have sought refuge in the United States and Europe, while there are more than 40,000 Oromos in Yemen.

He continues, "We used to have our own independent state, but Ethiopia besieged our land 120 years ago. When the Ethiopians - whom we call Abyssinians - occupied our country, they changed the name of our capital, Finfinne, to Addis Ababa. Our country, Oromia, was rich in agriculture and natural wealth; thus, it was a land of blessings."

Oromos are an indigenous African ethnic group found in Ethiopia and to a lesser extent in Kenya. With a population of 25 million, they are the largest single ethnic group in Ethiopia. Oromo nationalists established the Oromo Liberation Front, or OLF, in 1973 to promote the Oromo people's self-determination against the Ethiopian government.

Wadai was an active member of the OLF, for which Ethiopian authorities detained him several times. Four of his fellow inmates died from torture, but he survived. "The last time I was imprisoned in 2005, I got out only after my relatives bribed the guards with \$1,000," he recounts, noting that he

immediately came to Yemen.

Hailing from a strong family that has struggled alongside the OLF for a long time, Wadai maintains that approximately 45 of his family members have died in the struggle for liberation since 1994.

With three wives and four children, the eldest of which is a 21-year-old son, one wife lives in Djibouti while the other two remain in Ethiopia. "Because of my support of the OLF, my daughter, who is 17, was refused permission to study in Addis Ababa. Ethiopian authorities even threatened her with death and detained her mother for a month before releasing her on bail," he recounts, describing how he misses them. "My eagerness to see them is immeasurable, but I'm helpless here."

He explains his badly injured left thigh, which has left him crippled, saying, "Ethiopian forces shot me when I joined the OLF in 1977."

Besides translating Arabic into Oromo back in his home country, Wadai also sold Harari qat - Ethiopia's best - to Yemeni officials. "I sold qat from our qat fields to Yemeni officials through Yemen's embassy in Addis Ababa, selling between 20 and 25 kilos per day. The Yemeni Embassy then transported it to Yemen by air, with each kilogram costing \$50," Wadai recalls.

Illegal immigrants

Oromos began flowing into Yemen in 1991, the same time Somalis were fleeing to Yemen due to war in that country. While Yemen is a party to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, it only grants automatic refugee status to Somalis. Other African migrants, including Oromos, are regarded as illegal immigrants and therefore, not granted refugee status. Only in exceptional cases does Yemen's branch of the U.N. refugee agency, UNHCR, grant Ethiopians and Eritreans refugee status.

According to Ministry of Interior statistics, there are 800,000 African immigrants in Yemen, mostly Somalis. However, UNHCR estimates 113,000 Africans - again, mostly Somalis - registered in Yemen through the end of 2007; and, in fact, it says the number is even more because not all Africans entering Yemen register. More than 29,500 arrived at Yemeni shores in 2007 alone, with more than 1,400 dying or still missing - and presumed dead - while making the hazardous journey.

"Oromos keep coming to Yemen, particularly after the Ethiopians defeated the Islamic Courts and entered Mogadishu," Wadai notes. According to him, 380 Oromo migrants arrived to Yemen Jan. 27 on smuggling boats and 120 died when their boat capsized offshore.

He maintains that the main reason Oromos come to Yemen is persecution by Ethiopian authorities, adding that Yemeni authorities arrest many of them and deport them back to Ethiopia. "When Oromos are deported, Ethiopian authorities treat them harshly, torturing them even harsher than Israeli forces torture Palestinians," he claims.

Oromos living in Yemen have menial jobs, with some working in sewage works and women working as house cleaners. "Very few of us have good jobs, such as translators or medical lab specialists," Wadai laments. Oromos also work in qat fields, particularly in Al-Beidha governorate.

Hardships and trampled rights

The biggest problem the Oromo community faces in Yemen is that they aren't granted refugee status and, unlike Somalis, they don't possess refugee cards. As Wadai explains, "When they [Oromos] seek work, they are asked to show their refugee card, which they don't have; thus, they lose out on many job opportunities."

Further, he indicates that Oromo women also face problems in Yemeni hospitals because of not having a refugee card. "When a woman is sent to a government hospital to deliver a



A child from the Oromo Community sitting behind the Oromo flag.

YT PHOTO BY MOHAMMED AL-JABRI



Oromos live a miserable condition.

YT PHOTO BY MOHAMMED AL-JABRI



Oromo face a lot of hardships in Yemen.

YT PHOTO BY MOHAMMED AL-JABRI



Several Oromos find difficulties getting jobs in Yemen. YT PHOTO BY MOHAMMED AL-JABRI



Many Oromo children attend public can't schools.

YT PHOTO BY MOHAMMED AL-JABRI

baby, health workers request to see her marriage contract and if she doesn't have one, she's arrested and accused of prostitution. In such cases, we intervene by obtaining a letter from the Yemeni leader of her neighborhood, affirming that she's married. However, many married Oromo women don't have a marriage contract," he notes.

For this reason, Wadai says many married Oromo women prefer giving birth at home rather than hospital deliveries.

He cited another example of an Oromo woman who encountered

obtaining of which increases the chances of getting a job," he explains.

Renting a house is another problem for those without refugee cards, which only five or six out of every 100 Oromos in Yemen have, Wadai indicates.

Oromo children can't attend public schools in Yemen for the same reason. "Children are left home alone while their parents work or look for work. Their parents tie them up like dogs to

ensure that they stay in the house. What kind of a life is this?" he asks.

Despite all of these hardships, Wadai is exceedingly thankful that the Yemeni government at least has allowed those Oromos already in the country to remain.

However, concluding his comments, he declares, "We call on international and local charities to assist us, in addition to Yemeni businesspeople to support us."

4U

Are you Interested in supporting Oromo community in Yemen?

Please contact Jamal Abdu Wadai at 00967-733 311 782

problems on the job due to not having a refugee card, recounting, "Beginning in 2007, one Oromo woman worked as a maid for a Yemeni family for about a year. She received her monthly salary regularly, but they procrastinated giving her money during the last four months. In the end, she resorted to shouting outside their house, demanding her money, so they took her to a Sana'a police station."

He continued, "Because she had no employment contract, police jailed her, but then released her on bail shortly thereafter. However, when her husband went to file a complaint against the family at another police station, they jailed him and took his refugee card, which had been issued by UNHCR. They demanded he pay \$100 to get his card back and it remains there until now."

Wadai claims that the members of his community don't enjoy their full rights because they aren't recognized as refugees. "Getting a job is contingent upon a refugee card, the

Vacancy Announcement

The Yemen Red Crescent Society and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies would like to employ a national **coordinator for planning and organizational development** with the following **core skills and competencies**

- Strong background in planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting with high level analytical skills in English and Arabic
- Sufficient background and experience in organizational development including
 - Human resource development (training of leaders, managers, volunteers, staff)
 - Financial and material resource development
 - Development of systems and procedures
- Proven capacity to coordinate with others for greater results through team work

Qualified applicants are invited to send their application and CV as soon as possible

E-mail: mohammed.sharif@ifrc.org
 Fax No: +967-1-481871
 Deadline : 10 February 2008

It's al-Qaeda, stupid!

By: Bilal Y. Saab

This time in Middle East relations, it is crucial to get it right...and fast. Why? Because the stakes are so high.

Failure to have comprehensive peace between Arabs and Israelis is going to have consequences and repercussions of a magnitude we have never seen before. In other words, failure, at the risk of sounding too cliché, should not be an option.

A realist pause would suggest that failure can never be discounted in the Middle East given the miserable record of the many ambitious attempts to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or to make serious breakthroughs on the Syrian-Israeli track. So far, those anticipating the failure of Annapolis appear more rational and more confident than those betting on its success. And it's not just a hunch or a feeling. Events on the ground speak for themselves:

Israel continues to collectively deny Palestinians their basic rights for what Hamas and other militants do, while Hamas continues to provoke and threaten Israel by terrorising its people.

Predicting who will have an upper hand in screwing up the process of peace is impossible and futile. It could be anyone or all of them, separately or at the same time. It could be Israel not agreeing to freeze its settlement expansion; it could be Hamas conducting a terrorist operation resulting in mass casualties; it could be Olmert and/or Abbas not being able to deliver on their promises, weak leaders that they are.

But process, we are told, is better than no process at all. True, but what has fundamentally changed is the rise of a new and much more fanatic evil-doer in the Middle East: al-Qaeda. Today, located at the heart of the Arab world, al-Qaeda has become a real player in the peace process; its voice is much louder and its actions much deadlier than those of the other spoils,

namely Iran, Syria and their proxies. The Middle East peace puzzle has a new piece. The problem is, this piece does not and cannot fit.

The continuation of the status quo – no peace, just process – will unquestionably empower the already powerful forces breeding radicalism in the region.

Popular frustration, despair, realisation and conviction in the region that Annapolis will not produce any meaningful results and will not give Palestinians a viable state is going to persuade people in the region that the use of force is the only tool to achieve their aims. Some will fight like nationalists. For example, Syrians have repeatedly said they might recover the Golan by creating a Hezbollah-like guerrilla force. Others will stray, go extreme and join the global Islamic insurgency. This means more recruits for al-Qaeda – music to the ears of Osama bin Laden, whose focus these days has been redirected toward Palestine, after he apologised to Palestinians in his latest

message for not giving enough attention to their cause.

You can imagine from here the sort of nasty scenarios that could happen were al-Qaeda to expand in the Middle East: Gaza could become an Islamic emirate in Palestine (Fatah al Islam, an al-Qaeda sympathiser group, which recently fought the Lebanese army for more than three months in the northern part of that country, has already named an emir in Gaza) and Lebanon, already experiencing one of its most serious political crises since its second civil war, may well sink into the abyss were another Nahr al Bared scenario to emerge in another refugee camp.

By spilling over from Iraq into neighbouring countries and gaining new safe havens, al-Qaeda could start working on its tactical and strategic objectives. On the tactical level, al-Qaeda would work on triggering wars between its adversaries and has already begun trying. The recent firing of rockets by al-Qaeda in Iraq from southern Lebanon into northern

Israel is only one example. We have seen that scenario before, only with different actors: the 1978 and 1982 Israeli invasions of Lebanon were largely in response to Palestinian attacks from southern Lebanon. At the same time, al-Qaeda would assiduously work on causing a war between Syria and Israel and a round two between Hezbollah and Israel. The biggest prize for al-Qaeda, obviously, is to ignite a war between Iran and the United States – something al-Qaeda's Iraq leader, Omar al Baghdadi, has talked about in a recent message. On the strategic level, al-Qaeda would start planning for one of its most precious goals: taking ! the fight to Israel's backyard by actively supporting Palestinian radical jihadists in their war against the Jewish state.

So how do you stop these terrible scenarios from happening and how do you reverse the powerful trend of radicalisation? Through peace. With peace comes hope, prosperity and human development. From a counter-

terrorist perspective, peace wonderfully dries up the swamp of terrorism and puts a serious dent in al-Qaeda's recruitment process. Al-Qaeda, more than ever, has turned into an ideology and without its foot soldiers. This ideology can be neutralised if we realise that defeating it once and for all will require winning the war of ideas.

At Annapolis, the Bush administration got it mixed up.

There is nothing wrong in rallying the pro-US Arab states to better contain the long-term threat of Iran, but the real and more imminent danger is not the Islamic republic, it is al-Qaeda.

Bilal Y. Saab is a senior research assistant at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution. This article was written for the Common Ground News Service, and can be accessed at www.commongroundnews.org. Source: Common Ground News Service, 25 January 2008, www.commongroundnews.org.

Gaza: Frozen and dark

By: MJ Rosenberg

The latest news from Gaza is that Israel's Minister of Defence Ehud Barak has ruled that, starting now, even the transfer of medicines and humanitarian aid into Gaza would be allowed "only in exceptional circumstances."

He said that the IDF "will carry out continued, decisive actions with the goal of battering the Kassam crews until they can no longer target Israel. It won't be simple and it won't happen by the end of the week, but we will bring an end to the assault on Sderot."

Does Barak really believe he is freezing and denying medicine to Kassam crews?

Watching the news from Israel, it is clear that he isn't. It's regular people. Its kids.

It is always a little jarring to watch news reports from Gaza in which the Palestinians comment on their situation in fluent Hebrew. There they are, the supposed enemies of the Jews, easily speaking the Jewish national language, a language hardly any Jews here in the states can manage a sentence in. For me, hearing Palestinians describe their suffering in Hebrew makes it all the more real.

Gaza is totally dependent on Israeli supplies of fuel: gasoline for cars, gas for cooking, and diesel fuel to operate generators, hospitals, and public utilities, including Gaza's sole electrical plant. Europeans finance the fuel itself, but Israel controls Gaza's borders and decides how much can get in.

The cuts have already left 220,000 Gazans with running water for only an hour a day. The streets are empty of cars and there is a huge demand for donkeys to replace them. In short, a modern, although poverty-ridden, society is being pushed into the Third World.

The fuel cut-off does not make news here. We see the rocket attacks on Sderot and Israeli retaliations against Hamas fighters. We do not see shivering kids and nursing mothers, young people whose jobs disappeared along with the fuel, or the elderly who are contracting infections and dying. Imagine trying to take care of an infant or an aged grandparent in the depth of winter with no heat. It is an awful thing to contemplate.

I cannot imagine any justification for freezing kids in Gaza, just as I can't imagine any justification for traumatising kids with incessant rocket attacks in Sderot.

That is why I will not criticise Israel for going after the terrorists who are inflicting these horrors on its citizens.

But the people freezing in Gaza are not the people bombing Sderot. They

are simply people being punished for the actions of a government they – may or may not have – voted for.

Assume the worst. Assume that they did vote for Hamas. Does that mean they should be denied the necessities of life? What about kids and babies?

I recall a conversation I had in Israel with a Canadian during the Vietnam War. He was very unfriendly. I asked him what his problem was and he told me that he "despised" Americans. He said he believed we were committing "war crimes" in Vietnam and he "hated" us for it.

I told him that blaming a random group of American kids, almost all of whom had demonstrated against the war, was outrageous. His response was "America is a democracy. All Americans are responsible for the actions of a government you elected."

I thought that argument was obscene then and I think the same now. Happily the self-righteous student could only snub my friends and me; he couldn't hurt us. No big deal.

But freezing people is a very big deal. And I don't see that it accomplishes anything.

The leaders of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad surely have enough fuel to keep themselves snug and warm. Leaders invariably are protected from the consequences of their actions.

Even if the people of Gaza rose up and tried to stop the shelling of Sderot, does anyone believe they could? Here, in this great established democracy, the clear majority of Americans that want an end to the Iraq war are incapable of bringing it about. Palestinian democracy, rudimentary at best, is infinitely less

reflective of popular will. We can hardly expect Gazans to take policy into their own hands.

Humanitarian concerns dictate an end to the punishment of ordinary Palestinians, and so does international law.

Under international law, occupying nations are responsible for the welfare of the local population. Although the Israeli army left Gaza, along with the civilian settlements, Israel still controls Gaza's borders, its air corridors, and its sea lanes. To put it bluntly, the difference between people in a prison and people who are free is that free people control their own destinies. By no definition do Gazans control theirs.

Accordingly, Israel may not punish an entire people whose fate lies entirely under its control.

Punishing innocent people damages Israel's reputation worldwide. It makes negotiating more difficult for President Abbas, and it clearly endangers the life of Corporal Gilad Shalit, the captured Israeli soldier.

Furthermore, it hastens the day when Israel will have to all-out invade Gaza, an eventuality the military fears would be more difficult than the US action in Mogadishu. And it raises the very real possibility that Hamas will be replaced by Al Qaeda, which would love to have Gaza as its capital for worldwide terror.

So what should Israel do about Sderot?

Writing in Thursday's Washington Post, recommendations were offered by Robert Malley, President Clinton's adviser on Middle East affairs who was a key player at Camp David in 2000, and Oxford University

Professor Hussein Agha, an expert in Palestinian issues.

"Synchronicity is key," they write. "The Israeli government, President Abbas and Hamas all need to act in parallel and simultaneously."

"Fatah and Hamas will need to reach a new political arrangement, this time not one vigorously opposed by Israel. Hamas and Israel need to achieve a cease-fire and prisoner exchange, albeit mediated by Abbas. And Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert will need to negotiate a political deal with Abbas, who will have to

receive a mandate to do so from Hamas."

Israelis and Palestinians, and their supporters abroad, must "cast aside their dysfunctional, destructive, ideologically driven policies. Instead, they should encourage a choreography that minimises violence and promotes a serious diplomatic process. Otherwise, no matter how many times President Bush travels to the region, there is no reason to believe that 2008 will offer anything other than the macabre pattern of years past."

You don't break the cycle of vio-

lence by hurting your enemies' children. On the contrary, you guarantee that it continues.

MJ Rosenberg, Director of Policy Analysis for Israel Policy Forum, is a long time Capitol Hill staffer and former editor of AIPAC's Near East Report. This article is distributed by the Common Ground News Service and can be accessed at www.commongroundnews.org. Source: Israel Policy Forum, 18 January 2008, www.israelpolicyforum.org.



Tender No (2) for 2008 Yemen General Corporation for Radio and TV announces tender No (2) 2008 for

Procurement, guaranty, delivery of mobile broadcasting and digital (professional) recording devices and their accessories for the Public Program broadcasts- Sana'a and the Second Program- Aden as well as local broadcast.

The manufacturing companies specialized in this field must apply to the head-quarter of the corporation Engineering Sector- General Administration for Projects – Sana'a-next to the Ministry of Health and Population during the working hours....

Tender fees \$ 100 non-refundable

Those interested to have a copy via courier (postal) \$100 will be added as postal fees

General Conditions:

- 1- Bond guaranty with 2.5% of the total value of the bid and valid for four month of envelopes opening date.
- 2- Copy of the tax card valid for 2008.
- 3- Copy of the register certificate for the general tax on sales valid for 2008.
- 4- Copy of the commercial register valid for 2008.
- 5- Copy of the insurance card effective for 200.
- 6- Copy of charity card valid 2008.
- 7- The bids are to be presented in envelopes sealed with red wax.
- 8- Abiding by special and general conditions available in the tender documents.

Date and place of opening envelopes:

Envelopes will be opened at 11:00 AM on Wednesday, February 27, 2008, in the corporation headquarter.

For more detail please visit our website: www.ygcrtv.com, or send email to info@ygcrtv.com

إعلان

تعلن شركة يمنية رائدة في مجال البرمجيات ونظم المعلومات عن حاجتها إلى موظفين عدد أربعة في المجالات التالية:-

- 1- مهندس كمبيوتر
- 2- مبرمج كمبيوتر
- 3- مندوب تسويق
- 4- سكرتيرة

على أن تتوفر في المتقدم الشروط التالية:-

- 1- أن يكون يمني الجنسية
- 2- أن يكون حاملاً للشهادة الجامعية
- 3- خبرة لا تقل عن ثلاث سنوات
- 4- العمر من ٢٥ - ٤٠ سنة

فعل من يجد في نفسه الرغبة في العمل معنا إرسال السيرة الذاتية على البريد الإلكتروني التالي:-

ytshrdpt@yahoo.com



2008 Arrived




XL7



- All-Wheel Drive (AWD)
- 7-luxurious & comfortable seats with state-of the art cabin
- 6-cylinder engine with 252 HP
- Extra Safety Features (front/side-curtain airbags)
- DVD system with an LCD screen and 7-speakers

The Family SUV
Powerful ♦ Bigger ♦ Luxurious

Sana'a - Zubair Street
next to Ministry of Oil
Showroom: 01-404340
Offices: 01-201359 / 201319
Fax: 01-209532

suzuki@yemen.net.ye
www.sabehagroup.com

سابعه
SABEHA

The European Commission, for and on behalf of the Ministry of Human Rights, announces the launching of a

Call for Proposals

under the
"Sharaka" Programme,
addressed to Yemeni NGOs active in the field of Human Rights.

The relevant Guidelines can be obtained from the Delegation of the European Commission to Yemen (address below) or downloaded from EuropeAid's website at <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl> (Select "By Country"; Select "Yemen" and tick on "Open" and "Grants", and click on "Submit")

Interested organisations are strongly encouraged to attend the

Information Session

on this Call for Proposals, which will take place on
Wednesday 6 February 2008
from 9 am - 2 pm
at the
Sheraton Hotel in Sana'a

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is:
Saturday, 1 March 2008 at 15.00 PM

Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Yemen
Diplomatic Area, Junction St. no. 1 and no. 16 (Opposite Hawaii Billiard Club), Sana'a, Yemen, tel. 01-440883/4/5

emirates.com/ye

Six flights weekly.

Introducing an additional weekly flight to Dubai and beyond.

Emirates gives you more flexibility and choice with an extra flight every week from 5th February 2008. You can now fly to Dubai and onward to over 90 destinations around the world at your own convenience.

Fly Emirates. Keep discovering.

Days	Depart Sana'a	Arrive Dubai	Flight
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	1015	1345	EK962
Days	Depart Dubai	Arrive Sana'a	Flight
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	0710	0900	EK961





Damascus Street (Hadda) Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
 Tel.: 00967-1-418545/6/7/8
 P.O.Box: 16183
 Fax: 00967-1-418549-418564
 Website: www.shammrhotel.com
 E-mail: info@shammrhotel.com
 shammrhotel@hotmail.com

فندق وأجنحة شمر
 Shammer Hotel & Suites

A Yemeni in the Land of the Rising Sun

**By: Mohammed Shamsaddin
 For The Yemen Times
 mshamsaddin@yahoo.com**

Despite the fact that I visited Japan from 2005 to 2006, my memories and impressions of the country remain fresh in my mind. I spent nine months in various Japanese cities, but primarily in Osaka. Funded by the Japan Foundation, my language and cultural visit was organized for those working with Japanese offices in Yemen, such as embassies and cooperation organizations. I am the Ministry of Planning's local coordinator for the Japan International Cooperation Agency, or JICA.

Even before going to Japan, I had admired Japanese civilization and its people. I'd heard that the Japanese are a very conservative people who prefer to stick together and don't interact much with strangers. However, this turned out to be wrong – at least in my case – as I found the Japanese very welcoming and friendly. They wanted to know about me and my culture, as much as I wanted to know about them.

Although my Japanese isn't so good, I did mingle with people, and in fact, I was the first student in the course to start venturing out on my own during my second week there.



The Katana, a traditional Japanese sword, was the preferred weapon for the Samurai warriors.

Religious history

Ancient Japanese civilization and heritage has led to the existence of unique civilizations and various religions in Japanese life. Japanese society reacts positively to such traditional and religious beliefs, with Japan's constitution affirming freedom of religion and belief. "Kamisama" means God in Japanese.

Originating in Japan, Shinto became the Japanese Empire's official religion

during the Nara Era (710-794), while Buddhism entered the nation in the mid-sixth century via Korea, spreading among the ruling upper class.

The empire's support at that time led to the vast spread of Buddhism and the building of Buddhist temples. With more than 10 types of Buddhism, another school known as Zen, which entered via China, spread among Japanese soldiers.

While Shinto was the official religion

during the Meiji Era (1868-1912), it no longer was following Japan's surrender in World War II.

Although Christianity and Islam represent only a small percentage, there are a number of churches and mosques in city centers; thus, all may perform their religious rites and ceremonies freely.

While Islam appears to be new in Japan, entering via Indonesian and Malaysian immigrants, Japan deported Christian missionaries during the Tokugawa Era (1603-1868), but they were allowed to return during the Meiji Era.

A warm people

My time in Japan included field visits to many places and I stayed with several Japanese families, who mostly were retired, as they had the time to host and entertain visitors and, because of this, I realized that the Japanese are very generous and giving.

I still remember Yuku Cya, head of a cultural organization and my hostess for two days. Because of her home's proximity to the language center where I studied, I visited and spent time with her regularly and it is from her, as well as many other Japanese people, that I learned about their nation's traditions and its people's habits.

I learned that the Japanese deeply respect others' traditions and religions; for example, they never imposed anything on me and understood my objection to drinking alcohol.

I also was highly impressed by how engaged Japanese students were in their own culture. Nearly every day, schools would arrange field trips for students to visit their national monuments and sites. Everywhere I went, I saw groups of students and their teachers visiting some office or historical site and I was deeply touched by their appreciation of their history.

The Japanese have many beautiful but difficult to wear traditional clothes, as evidenced by the tough time I had donning the traditional clothing for men. I also liked their food, which was mainly seafood, and found it very healthy, so I quickly adjusted to the local living and eating habits.

The first thing I did upon my return to Yemen was work on a project to put up a page in Japanese on Yemen's



Sumiyoshi shrine.

Ministry of Tourism web site; however, such project has yet to be completed due to waiting for an answer from the Japanese Volunteers Association, which will help create the page.

New Year's Day

While Japan has numerous religions, nearly all of which are connected to the four seasons, climate changes or the agricultural season, New Year's Day is its most famous religious holiday. Japanese families start preparing early for the day's celebration. Women rearrange the house while markets become crowded with those buying gifts, as the Japanese are famous for exchanging gifts on such religious occasions, as well as out of basic courtesy.

Millions visit religious temples before midnight on New Year's Eve, but larger numbers go on New Year's morning, when newborn babies also are taken.

Train stations are extremely crowded New Year's morning, with most Japanese wearing traditional kimonos, thus creating a beautiful scene. However, wearing such traditional clothing has lessened in the past few years due to increasing prices and the amount of time to put it on.

Former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's wearing of a kimono on New Year's Day 2006 was a sign of attaching importance to wearing such traditional

clothes and sought to encourage other Japanese to wear the kimono during temple visits and other occasions.

Additionally, the New Year's Day meal differs from everyday meals and members of cultural associations organize and hold New Year's Day parties and celebrations at their own expense.

Before returning home, people hang pieces of paper or wood in the trees around temples, on which they write their hopes and what they want to achieve in the New Year. The Japanese donate much money to such temples.

From Japan to Yemen

In an attempt to tell them about Yemen and Yemeni traditions, I represented Yemen at a cultural gathering and gave presentations on two occasions, during which I talked a lot about Marib. They especially liked my pictures of Shibam. They were very interested and wanted to know more. During my nine months there, Japanese television aired a tourism documentary on Yemen three times.

Unfortunately, because terrorist acts have occurred against tourists in both Marib and Shibam, I received emails from my friends in Japan asking why anyone would want to harm tourists – but I had no answer for them.

I can only hope that Yemen will become stable and peaceful so my Japanese friends can come and visit here as they would like.



Japan traditional clothes.

Odd News

Nose means new Thai PM in sign language

BANGKOK, Thailand – (AP)– Sign language interpreters in Thailand have run aful of some ruling party supporters by holding their noses to refer to the new prime minister.

Samak Sundaravej, chosen in parliament Monday as the first elected prime minister since a Sept. 2006 coup, has been nicknamed "Mr. Rose Apple Nose" because many claim his nose resembles the fruit.

Thai sign language interpreters often indicate prominent facial features as shorthand for dignitaries, and during a live broadcast of Monday's parliamentary session, they held their noses between two fingers numerous times to refer to Samak.

One interpreter, Kaniitha Rattanasin, said this gesture has long been used for Samak but is drawing wide notice only now.

"It is not meant as a nose joke," she said. "We have touched our noses for years to refer to Samak but people noticed this time because we had to repeat the movement over 300 times."

Juthamas Suthonwattanacharoen, another interpreter, said Samak supporters have called the National Association of the Deaf in Thailand to say the sign does not unfit the country leader, and the Thai daily newspaper Matichon said the gesture angered some members of Samak's party.

Samak, 72, a combative right-wing politician, easily beat Democrat party candidate Abhisit Vejjajiva, 43, to head the country.

"We refer to a person's most unique physical appearance and for Abhisit, it's

his good looks," Juthamas said. "If someone has very long eyelashes, or prominent ears, we use those."

Kaniitha said some reference to Samak's popular cooking show might work as a new sign for him. But for now, there are no plans to change it, Juthamas said.

Swedish bank stops digital theft

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP)– A gang of Swedish criminals was seconds away from completing a digital bank heist when an alert employee literally pulled the plug on their brazen scam, investigators said Wednesday.

The would be bank robbers had placed "advanced technical equipment" under the employee's desk that allowed them to take control of his computer remotely, prosecutor Thomas Balter Nordenman said in a statement.

The employee discovered the device shortly after he realized his computer had started an operation to transfer "millions" from the bank into another account, Nordenman said.

"By pulling out the cable to the device, the employee managed to stop the intended transfer at the last second," he said.

The foiled heist happened in August at a bank in Upland county, north of Stockholm, police said. They announced it only Wednesday after seven suspects, all from the Stockholm region, were arrested this week while allegedly preparing another heist.

Police did not name the suspects, but said many of them have prior fraud and theft convictions. Investigators do not give other details on the device, or how it was placed under the desk.

Man wins, then loses, then wins lottery

SYDNEY, Australia – An Australian retiree won a \$1.8 million lottery prize, then lost it, and then won it again Wednesday through a court ruling.

Werner Reinhold bought the lottery ticket at a newsstand in Australia's largest city of Sydney on Sept. 19, 1995. His original ticket did not print correctly, so he asked for a new one, which turned out to be the winner.

But when Reinhold, now 73, went back to claim the \$1.8 million jackpot, he discovered that the replacement ticket had been canceled, not the misprinted original, and was unable to claim the prize.

He sued NSW Lotteries, which oversees lottery tickets in New South Wales state, and the newsstand which sold him the ticket.

Supreme Court Judge Reginald Barrett awarded Reinhold \$1.8 million in damages, citing negligence and breach of contract by the newsstand and the state lottery company. Barrett had not yet ruled on what portion of the award each party should pay.

Japanese firm offers "heartache leave" for staff

TOKYO (Reuters) – Lovelorn staff at a Japanese marketing company can take paid time off after a bad break-up with a partner, with more "heartache leave" on offer as they get older.

Tokyo-based Hime & Company, which also gives staff paid time off to hit the shops during sales season, says heartache leave allows staff to cry them-

selves out and return to work refreshed.

"Not everyone needs to take maternity leave but with heartbreak, everyone needs time off, just like when you get sick," CEO Miki Hiradate, whose company of six women markets cosmetics and other goods targeted for women, told Reuters by telephone.

Staff aged 24 years or younger can take one day off per year, while those between 25 and 29 can take two days off and those older can take three days off, the company said.

"Women in their 20s can find their next love quickly, but it's tougher for women in their 30s, and their break-ups tend to be more serious," Hiradate said.

Hime & Company staff can also take two mornings off twice a year as "sales shopping leave", so they can race to stores to hunt for bargains.

"Before, women could take half-days off to go to sales, but you'd have to hide your shopping bags in lockers by the train station," Hiradate said.

"But with paid leave, we don't have to feel guilty about bringing our shopping bags to work, and we can enjoy the best part about sales shopping -- talking about our purchases afterwards."

Man sets station on fire over playlist

AUSTIN, Texas – A volunteer at a community radio station set fire to the station because he was upset that his song selections for an overnight Internet broadcast were changed, police said.

Paul Webster Feinstein, 24, has been charged with second-degree felony arson for the Jan. 5 fire that caused \$300,000 damage to the studios of 91.7 FM KOOP. He faces from two to 20

years in prison and a \$10,000 fine if convicted.

Feinstein told investigators that he was "very unhappy" about the changes to his playlist, said Austin Fire Department Battalion Chief Greg Nye. The songs were intended for an Internet broadcast that occurs when the station is off the air.

"He had a dream of a career in radio and was very disappointed about where it had led him," Nye said.

An attorney for Feinstein could not be reached for comment.

Station president Andrew Dickens said Feinstein had been in a dispute with another volunteer about what kind of music should be put into a digital library for the Internet program.

Feinstein was a jazz fan and his Internet program was called "Mellow Down Easy," Dickens said.

"We knew there was a disagreement, but I would characterize it as a little clash of personalities over types of music to be played and not a big blowout," Dickens said.

Feinstein, who had volunteered at the station for about a year, quit a week before the fire, saying he was going to do other things, Dickens said.

"He seemed like somebody who was young, enthusiastic, had a life, was a professional and was educated," Dickens said.

Nye said Feinstein acknowledged making a copy of the station key and then waiting for the station to clear out on the night of Jan. 5. Feinstein poured gasoline on the control panels in two studios to start the fire, Nye said.

The fire department's trained dog smelled gasoline at the scene, tipping investigators to the arson, Nye said.

YEMEN - AMERICA
YALI
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

*Yemen's Premier Language
 Institute Since 1975*

Announcing Term 107:
February 9 - March 12, 2008

Registration:
 February 3 - 6

*Classes Available at 9 Levels
 (Mornings, Afternoons & Evenings)*

**- Extra Computer Lab for all Students
 - Plus Many Special & Elective Courses**

TOEFL Preparation Courses:

- Internet-Based Test
- Paper-Based Test

For information, contact YALI at:
 448 039 or 445 482/3/4 • FAX: 448037 •
 E-Mail: info@yali.org.ye