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In brief

IBB

Implementing 98 drinking water projects in Ibb

Aug. 24 — At present, 98 drinking water projects are being implemented in Ibb governorate's districts for about a billion and 74 millions YRs, from which 244 thousands people will benefit.

Najeeb Dammaj, the general manager of the general corporation branch for the countryside water. The implementation is included in the projects of the exceptional plan for the celebrations of the 17th national day of Yemen in this governorate.

Dammaj clarified that the exceptional plan's projects include 45 new wells as well as supplying and assembling 15 pumps. The investment plan's projects include 9 components for water drinking tanks and pumps with water pipes. All those had been financed by the government with about 340 millions and YR 500 thousands, including other projects.

ADEN

A training program in moving dolls theater technology

Aug 25 — Ibhar Corporation for Childhood and Creativity in cooperation with UNICIF and the social services in Aden held activities of the training course in the technology of moving Dolls Theater within August 22-29.

20 children from streets are targeted to be trained on dolls Theater. Such course focuses on giving children the chance to express their opinions, conditions, and creativity in the fields they are interested in.

Preparations for broadcasting the second channel

Aug 25 — The chairman of the Yemeni Corporation for Radio and Television Abdullah al-Zalab surveyed with the people in charge of the second channel and Aden radio the preparations for receiving Ramadan and its prepared programs' map.

He confirmed the necessity of making the map for this great religious occasion, which will be coincident with the nation's celebrations of the 26th of September, the 14th of October, and 30th of November, to be for fulfilling the interaction between the media and the audience.

Distributing 202 weak-hearing sets for kids.

Handicapped qualifying and caring fund distributed special sets of weak hearing for children. The fund presented already 102 sets costing YR 20 millions. Recently, it has distributed 100 sets for the handicapped children for about YR 19 millions and 500 thousands.

SANA'A

Scouts in action

Aug 25 — The Arabic study activities for the leaders of the scouts, which have 48 participants from Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and Emirates, are being carried out within August 23-30. The aim of this study is to develop the knowledge and skills of the participants and to strengthen the relationships among the participating countries.

SHABWA

Mechanisms of easing oil companies' activities

Aug. 23 — Shabwa governor Ali al-Maqdashi discussed on Thursday with local authority officials, sheikhs and dignitaries of Markah al-Sufila and Jordan districts here mechanisms of easing activities of oil and gas companies working in the two districts.

The meeting also reviewed people's needs in terms of these companies' activities according to previous agreements over local labour in foreign companies operating in the governorate and giving them priority to work with these companies.

SANA'A, Aug. 25 — With an unemployment rate exceeding 30 percent and a growth rate of 6.8 births for women, Yemeni youth are at loss. "Not only is our problem with the authorities who did not plan right for the young men and women seeking jobs now, it is also with the fathers and mothers who keep having many children," said Abdullah Obaid, an unemployed young man from Lahj.

Obaid is a member of a newly formed association called: "unemployed youth" steering committee in Lahj. A similar association had been established in Mukalla – Hadramout. The later carried out their second event last Thursday in presence of activists and lawyers from Hadramout and Dhale governorates. In Abyan, Basim Mansour, a young man from Musameer district, chaired a similar association that deals with youth unemployment.

According to the United Nations Population Fund representative in Yemen, Hans Obdeijn, the country was ranked sixth globally in 2006 in population growth rate. "Nearly half of the Yemenis are younger than 15 years, which is a reflection of the high population growth rate," he said.

The problem is that infrastructure and

development are not improving in a rate quick enough to contain the demands of population growth. Yemeni youth realize that they are facing a dreadful future if they let things continue as they are. Education, jobs, and accommodation were the primary demands for the unemployed youth association in Hadramout. Although these demands seem fairly basic, the key note delivered by Hassan Ba-Uom at the association's function last week unveiled the discrimination and prejudice Yemeni youth face.

"There is no equal citizenship. Our wealth and opportunities are wasted on the irresponsible corrupt officials. This is why we will fight for our rights until we achieve them," said Ba Uom.

Unemployed youth in Lahj governorate declared that they will be going on a peaceful sit-in today, Monday. The demonstration is to take place in front of the governor's office demanding better attention and more opportunities for youth.

"It is all over the country, and we want to start taking up actions instead of passively waiting for someone to solve our issues," said Afrah Qassim Ali, a youth working in a phone booth in Sana'a. She also added that although she has a university degree she could not



Male and female students in basic level education. More than 50 percent of Yemeni population are 15 years and below. Estimate that in 2040 Yemeni population will double. Many of the young children will have difficulty finding a job when they grow up.

SOURCE: CHF

find a better job and she has to support her family.

Additional to the high population growth rate, bad management of the education system and not matching the education system outcomes to the market demands are of the main causes of unemployment, which causes unrest and economic problems.



Chamber of commerce warns of subsidies

SANA'A, Aug. 25 — Deputy director of the capital secretariat chamber of commerce Mohammed Sallah has warned the Yemeni government of the consequences of subsidizing wheat and flour. He stated that the retail prices of wheat and flour at the government's outlets are around 350 Riyals below cost, he also added that the government should first make a careful study of the consequences of such interference in the market.

Sallah also stated that while the notion of reducing the prices of wheat and flour for Yemeni consumers is a honorable one, but doing as such without studying the consequences will have dire effects on the economy and the government's budget. He quoted from previous experiences that showed how the government's eventual removal of such subsidies had disastrous effects.

Leading wheat and flour businessman Yehya Al-Habbari stated that his corporation will not be selling any more wheat or flour until the ministry of trade interferes and regulates and monitors the prices of wheat and flour. He said that he is anticipating that the price list would be fair and would not permit flooding the market, adding that he has a shipment of wheat arriving this week in order to maintain supply for the local market especially as the holy month of Ramadhan is approaching.

Sources at the government-owned Yemen Economic Corporation said the public are pleased to know of the corporation offer to sell 50-kg wheat bags at 3700 Riyals. A maximum of two bags for each customer is allowed in order to ensure the sold wheat is for household use, not commercial retailing.

However, economic experts stipulate that the usual Ramadhan bonuses which are given by the private sector as well as the extra salary given by the president to government employees for Ramdhan will increase purchasing power. This might increase the tolerance of the public to the increase in prices, in turn stimulating demand for the same supply of foodstuff resulting in an eventual price hike offsetting the Ramadhan bounce.

There are four main trading companies importing and supplying the domestic market with wheat and flour, they are Al-Habbari corporation, Hayel Saeed group, Fahim Trading Corporation and Al-Udaini Trading Corporation, in addition to the latest addition, government-owned Yemen Economic Corporation, importing over 15 brands of wheat.

Gas and oil carriers are released in Abyan and Shabwa

SHABWA, Aug. 26 — Local sources in Shabwa governorate, north to the capital city of Sana'a, revealed that the tribes of Al-Fayadh released 39 gas carriers last Sunday after detaining them for 24 hours. Al-Sahwah net said that the release of gas and oil carriers came after the local authorities' commitment to interfere to release their detainees over old revenge issue.

A tribal group belonged to Al-Fayadh tribe in As-Sa'eed district in Shabwa governorate detained more than 30 carriers last Saturday. Most of these carriers belong to strategic gas project in Al-Sha'ba area located between Al-A'rm and Al-Na'qabah areas in Huban district. The group refused to release the carriers until their demands are met. They demanded the release of two persons accused of killing Mohammed Muhsen

Al-Babkri one year ago in Huban city. The issue is reviewed by the Primary Court of Huban.

The two accused persons face death penalty and imprisonment, which make the local authority as well as security refuse to meet their tribal demands. The security committee held an urgent meeting last Saturday and Sunday to investigate the problem and look for a possible solution for it.

The tribal group which detained the carriers said that the two accused persons are innocent, demanding the application of the law on everybody. The group added that the issues of the area should not be treated or dealt with in different ways. The tribesmen attempted to find solutions for the discrimination problem which the security as well as authority deals with. However, the prob-

lem is still going on and the measures undertaken by the security committee in the governorate are not known yet.

Worth-noting, one of the tribes in Al-Mahafad district in Abyan governorate blocked the road and detained 12 carriers of the same kind. The tribesmen did so to demand the release of their relatives who were detained in Al-Manssourah prison in Aden governorate for four months. However, there were some promises to release them.

Likewise, two oil carriers and nine vehicles were detained over the crisis that took place between the local authority and Al-Maraqasha in Zonjubar three days before the incident occurred. This came as retaliation from Al-Maraqasha tribesmen because the local authority detained four sheiks of their clan without any charges.

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YIAL celebrates

The Yemen Institute for Arabic Language held a party on Sunday August 19th to commemorate its first graduating class and to celebrate the success of its first academic term in operation. Having opened this past May, the Institute has several innovations, including selecting instructors from among other Arabic language schools in Sana'a and allowing them to own shares in the school. The Institute currently has students from America, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Australia, Quebec, Spain, and the Netherlands. Vanessa Knibbe a new graduate of the Institute, reflected on her experience by stating that her instructors were "The best teachers I've ever had." The celebration featured speeches by graduating student Christian Brink and Professor Osama, along with a traditional Ude concert. Asked to comment about future plans for the Institute, Manager Abdul Jaleel Al-Bazeli stated that he plans to keep the Institute small to allow for maximum Arabic language interaction between students and staff, but to branch out and start other small employee owned institutes under the same general administration. More information on the Institute can be found on the internet at www.yialarabic.com.



Advertisement

Sa'ada humanitarian situation remains tense

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, August 26 — An official source from the presidential committee supervising implementation of the Sa'ada ceasefire agreement denied media reports of resumed confrontations between army forces and Houthis. According to the source, Al-Motamar.net reported, "There are not any confrontations. Dialogue is still going on between the committee and Houthi loyalists."

However, local sources revealed that confrontations continue in intervals throughout many areas of Sa'ada, including the exchange of gunfire between the two sides early Thursday morning into the evening.

Officials and political activists revealed that the humanitarian situation in Sa'ada is still tense. Displaced families remain unable to return to their homes despite signing of the peace agreement.

The International Islamic Agency reported, "Relief organizations sent humanitarian assistances to displaced families who could not return to their homes in Sa'ada after the war. The International Committee of the Red Cross cooperated with the Yemeni Red Crescent to assist 37,100 displaced over the last few months." Assistance included distribution of carpets, water



Displaced families remain unable to return to their homes despite signing of the peace agreement.

containers, blankets, washing equipment, in addition to medication for health centers.

The agency added, "Displaced families live with host families in secure areas inside Sa'ada and its surroundings. However, some families escaped to areas close to the Yemeni-Saudi borders."

The Social Democratic Forum, an NGO, reported difficulty in accessing and assisting needy citizens. According to Abdul-Hafeedh from The Civil Society Coalition, a group of NGOs,

the coalition prepared a relief caravan to provide humanitarian assistance to displaced families, but was refused license by the government.

The central committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party revealed their continued opposition to the Sa'ada war and its resultant bloodshed. The committee thanked Qatar and the presidential cease-fire committee for their mediation efforts and encouraged both parties to continue. It also suggested the formation of a national committee to tackle the impacts and consequences of the

war.

The committee urged withdrawal of the army from citizen villages and farms. It also suggested the quick relief of thousands of displaced and facilitating their return home as well as releasing hundreds of citizens detained due to the Sa'ada war.

The foreign affairs minister, Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, reported that the government anticipates Houthi loyalists will descend from mountains to ensure that the crisis is over.

"The government along with the mediation committee will remain in a prospective situation for what is happening in Sa'ada. Houthis will descend from mountains and return to their homes, handing over their weapons as per the reached agreement," he stated, adding, "The president as well as the government are taking care to end the war soon in Sa'ada so they can begin relief measures, including in the disadvantaged areas of Sa'ada. The most important steps are those that serve the best interest of the country."

Eleven men detained in connection with the Sa'ada conflict urged human rights organizations to vouch for their immediate release or prosecution. In a written appeal, the detainees revealed they have been held in the political security jail in Tamar since mid-last month without charge. They denied any relation with the Sa'ada war, stating, "We are peace-lovers and believe in the principles of justice and freedom."

Pakistan tests new cruise missile

Al-Jazeera — Pakistan has successfully test fired a new air-launched cruise missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads, the military said on Saturday.

A statement said the Ra'ad weapon "has been designed exclusively for launch from a variety of Pakistan's air platforms, providing these with a strategic stand-off capability on land and at sea."

Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's president, and Shaukat Aziz, prime minister, congratulated those involved in designing the new weapon, the statement continued.

"Pakistan's defence will continue to be strengthened as an imperative of national security," the two leaders were quoted as saying.

The military said the new missile,

which has a range of 350km and uses stealth technology, is as accurate as Pakistan's longer-range Babur cruise missile, a version of which was test fired in July.

Nuclear concerns

Saturday's test comes as political opposition to Musharraf has increased, prompting international concern about the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal.

"Every time you fire a missile there is a political connotation to it," Talat Masood, a defence analyst and retired army general, said.

"Pakistan has a very strong and robust missile programme and it can match any country, especially its adversaries. It is not lagging behind in its

missile programme."

Pakistan and its nuclear-armed neighbour India have routinely conducted missile tests since both countries carried out detonations in May 1998.

Pakistan did not say if it had informed New Delhi in advance about the Ra'ad missile test.

The two countries have an agreement to notify each other about tests of ballistic missiles but not cruise missiles.

In 2004 they began a peace process aimed at resolving their dispute over Kashmir, the divided Himalayan region that has been the subject of two of their three wars.

In February, Pakistan signed a historic deal with India to reduce the risk of accidents involving nuclear weapons.

Blast kills Somali children

Al-Jazeera — A roadside explosion has killed two children as they walking to school in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, witnesses said.

An elderly man was also wounded in the blast in Gupta district of northern Mogadishu when on Sunday.

"The two were torn into pieces and an old man who was walking nearby was also seriously injured," Hirabe Mohamed, a witness who lives near the Alami primary and elementary school, said.

Moalim Nur Aden, another witness, said: "The kids would not be recognised because the bomb cut them into pieces. It was a very awful thing to happen to children going to school."

Faisal Haji, a tribal elder, said: "We are grieving now with the parents ... these children are innocent".

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Al-Nadhari: Proponent of Sufism and Democracy

Interviewed by: Emad Al-Saqqaf & Mohammad Al-Lutaifi

Mohammed Al-Nadhari was born in Bani Ghazi in Al-Hujariah district of Taiz governorate. He received his primary education in Aden and transferred to Zabeed for his preparatory and secondary schooling. He obtained a bachelor's degree from the Islamic University of Al-Madinah Al-Munawarah and a master's degree from Umm Al-Qura University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1986. He also obtained his Ph.D in Um Darman University in 1990. Al-Nadhari is married and the father of three boys and two girls. His studies and travels ultimately landed him in the United Arab Emirates, where he currently serves as senior mufti of the Supreme Committee of Ifta.

He defended Sufism, considering it the soul of existence; an attribute he claimed protects it from corruption that pervades political parties. He made courageous statements on casual marriage – known as “tourist marriage” commonly done by rich tourists – and divorcing via SMS. He also deplored

the current situation of Yemeni women in villages. He considered the issue of Hijab, and female circumcision.

Disputes often take place in the Islamic world when deciding the first day of Ramadan. How can this be solved?

The disputes take place because in many Muslim countries the scholars refer to texts of Hadieth – prophet's teachings – where two respectable adults must concur to have seen the moon and hence declare the beginning of the month. There is no point these days in maintaining this method because more accurate ways of detecting the moon have been invented. Scholars must make use of modern technology such as telescopes to solve such disputes. The moon may disappear in some places of the earth and appear in other places.

A religious scholar in one of the Gulf countries issued a fatwa allowing divorce via SMS. What do you think?

First of all, in Islam, the intention of divorce has to be spoken orally to be applicable. There are certain requirements that must be fulfilled in order for

a divorce to take place, one of which is to be spoken clearly unless any of the people in question are dumb or deaf. In the latter case it could be written but through a formal method of communication and in front of eye witnesses, in order to prove the situation and the person who has written the words is the one who has the capacity to divorce. So divorce by SMS is not acceptable.

In Saudi Arabia there is a fatwa, which allowed tourist marriage, do you agree with this?

When we talk about marriage, we know that it is a concept created to sustain human kind in an organized fashion. If you marry someone, the presumption is that you would want to continue with that person. Tourist marriages, are another form of casual sex but given a legal frame. Arabs, Yemenis and others go to Russia to study. They marry and by the end of the academic year, they divorce. It is a marriage for the sake of thesis or residence permit. If the marriage was created in order to create a family atmosphere for the bachelor where he feels settled in the foreign country, then it is welcomed so long as the intention is not to end it by the end of the academic year or so on, but to have a life lasting commitment. Of course, there is the option of divorce if the two don't get along, but divorce should not have been the intention from the very beginning.

Talking about different conceptions and interpretations in Islam, don't you think that many different sects, such as Sufism have emerged?

Let me correct your understanding, Sufism is not a sect but it a level of practicing religion. It is a spiritual attainment that comes with sacrifice and to abstain from many of the earthly attractions. Sufism actually protects the essence of religion and the purity of Islam as a concept and belief. It cannot be compared to the other sects and religious divisions you are mentioning.

What do you say of the state's attempts to limit the influence of

Sufism?

I would like to say to anyone who wants to demean Sufism that they can't because it comes from within the soul and not from the outside. And if they feel that they can oppress Sufis and their rituals the Sufis will only get stronger and more popular.

What do you say about democracy?

Democracy is a moral practice for people, which is turned into a concept to fight about. Let me give you an example: In Yemen, during the rule of Judge Al-Eryani, the common belief was that political parties ruin democracy. Now we say political parties are a manifestation of democracy.

The point is that democracy has not exceeded being a term in politics and not truly practiced and taught through the educational system in the schools, home, and local community.

What are your views on mixed gender education? This has been an important issue in Yemen, and for example, in Al-Silow district in Taiz, more than 100 female students were deprived from education because of the unavailability of all girls' schools?

Adultery is forbidden along with things that lead to it. For instance, the manager and the female secretary stay in a closed place. So, she may be subjected to exploitation by the manager. Therefore it is very circumstantial. Majority of the Muslim people live in rural areas where the women work side by side with men without a problem. It is only a problem when there is a chance of exploitation or indecency.

Parents must teach their children right from wrong and prepare them for life. They must provide them with continuous guidance and support in order to be good and productive citizens in the community. If circumstances oblige women to go to work, they must not be prevented or harassed. In fact, I believe if there is a choice that must be made, education should be prioritized for females because they are the ones to raise families and educate the coming generations through nurturing the children.



Mohammed Al-Nadhari, senior mufti of the Supreme Committee of Ifta.

Currently, some women resort to enlarge their breasts for cosmetic purposes. What is the Islamic view about this?

This is a change of what Allah created because they do so in view of deceiving. Deception is prohibited. However, if there is a married woman and her husband requests that, she is allowed to do so.

Recently a lot of dispute and controversy was raised over the issue of female circumcision. Some medical studies showed that female circumcision deprives women of sexual pleasure. It also weakens the husband-wife relationship. It may also lead to family collapse. What is your point-of-view regarding this issue?

First of all, we must know that jurisprudence did not make it [circumcision] an obligation for women. It is an obligation for men to be circumcised as a matter of hygiene. When Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) came to Al-Madinah, he found that people circumcised their daughters. He prohibited that.

What is your advice to Yemeni men and women?

I advise them to always turn to Allah. If we all do not turn to Allah and pray to Him we will then have no good.

Al, being kind to people aiming at having an integrated and unified society. I want to make hearts submissive and supplicating to Allah, because if the hearts do so, the everything will be fine.



Emad Al-Saqqaf interviewing scholar Al-Nadhari.



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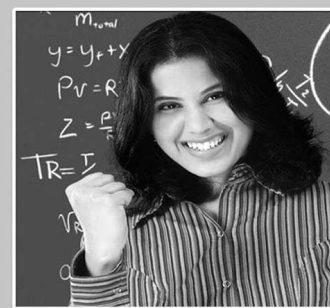


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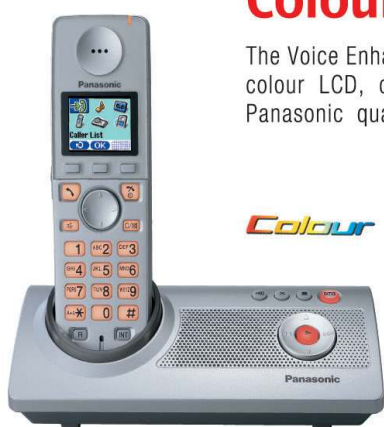
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هذا حفل كبير يهدف إلى إحياء الذكرى المئوية لبدء القرن الجديد في إثيوبيا. والذي يبدأ من 30 أغسطس 2007 (2 سبتمبر 2007). وهو سيقام خلال هذه الفترة في صنعاء، وسيسمى الاحتفال "المسلة الجديدة السعيدة".

ويهدف هذا الاحتفال من قبل منظمة المجتمع الإثيوبي في إثيوبيا إلى تقديم عروض موسيقية حديثة وفولكلورية، وعروض بيع الحرف اليدوية والملابس التقليدية، وكذلك توزيع نشرات تجارية متنوعة. كما سيتم عرض الصور الفوتوغرافية التي تعبر عن الحياة المادية والروحية للإثيوبيين. هذا الحدث هو بمثابة تذكير لك بالثراء الثقافي والروحاني لإثيوبيا، وهي واحدة من أكثر الدول استضافة ودية في العالم.

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Words of Wisdom



If more meaningful change is to be made in respect for human rights, the daily violations against the rights of ordinary citizens have to be addressed. This means introducing new values through education and re-education. One clear target is to train law-enforcement agencies and officers on the rights of citizens and how to respect them. Another has to do with re-training of prison wardens and personnel.

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

OUR
OPINION

Living up to our responsibilities

Nisreen Shadad, a Yemen Times journalist, has been following the case of the illegal detention of more than 40 Yemenis including children, some of whom have been in Hajja governorate's prison up to 5 months. They were accused of supporting Houthism, whatever that means.

There are many aspects to this issue. To start with, there are no legal grounds for the prosecution or detention. More so, there had been no trial or estimation of how long the detainees will remain in prison. In fact, three of those arrestees are 15 years old, and another three are below 18 years of age. Even if whatever they had been charged with was true, their detention with adult criminals would do enormous damage to their psychological health and they may as well turn into vicious criminals themselves. It is because of this fact that Juvenile centres are created, but unfortunately in Yemen this issue does not receive the attention it deserves.

The relatives of seven prisoners contacted HOOD (National Organisation for Defending Human Rights) which then forwarded the plight of the detainees to the General Prosecutor in Sana'a. He in turn instructed the local security in Hajja to release of the detainees or give them a fair trial. The security in Hajja decided the detainees could be released if they guarantee not to indulge in any practice that would upset the government. Although the local Sheikhs and district MP provided the guarantee, the detainees are still in prison.

The story is bigger than merely 40 Yemenis illegally detained in Hajja. It is also more than imprisonment conditions for underage criminals. It is about the corrupt judiciary system Yemen has; how there is no respect for human life and human rights.

According to the international agreements Yemen has ratified, this country is accountable to its people and the international community for its deeds. Yet, the State cannot care more or less about either, since it gets away with whatever it does without much questioning.

And here comes the role of free media. Yemen Times is one of very few media outlets in Yemen that has taken up upon its shoulders to become the voice of the violated and raise their issues in order to be heard. What's new now is that we have decided to take up some cases chosen to illustrate a widespread problem, and we will persist with those cases until we have a satisfactory outcome. We will constantly remind the authorities and the stakeholders that we are watching and closely following up what they are doing.

We will help spread information and educate our readers on what is going on, and we hope that everyone takes it from there and in their own capacity helps set things right. This is the least each one of us can do if we really want to live up to our responsibilities as human beings and also as professionals. There is nothing more satisfying than being an advocate for good and making a difference in other people's lives.

So, dear readers, help us with our cause by letting us know if you come across similar cases in Yemen, and we will do our best to live up to our promise.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf
Editor-in-Chief

Domestic wars are symptomatic of political imbalance

By: Ali Al-Sarari



By: Ali Al-Sarari

Up until the moment, nobody is convinced that Sa'ada fighting has ended. However, the official media turned to behave in a way that may lead the war to break once again but in the southern governorates and its target will be the Yemeni Socialist Party.

Like their behavior in the past, the official media began using a package of ready-made accusations, which have been used in all the domestic wars Yemen went through without any change in the form or the content. The single policy exercised by the regime was the primary reason behind civil wars. This kind of policy never provided constructive solutions to the repeated issues and crises so far experienced in Yemen.

After these years of civil wars and crises, the regime has never taken serious steps to develop and improve their destructive methods. The regime preferred to use the same accusations, allegations, means and tools and demonstrated no serious efforts to alleviate sufferings of Yemeni people.

The official media began to direct charges and wage war against the Yemeni Socialist Party. In the meantime, the official media propagate the ideal of liquidating Al-Houthi followers in Sa'ada although they reached an agreement with Houthis to stop any media campaign against them, thanks to the efforts exercised by Qatari mediation to end the fighting. But, those who trigger domestic wars don't respect the agreements, and after their military campaigns failed to achieve the sought goals throughout the war that lasted for five months, they turned to achieve them via the committee mandated to supervise implementation of the agreement. In fact, the members of the committee didn't question how the army retains its status amid calls by the official media to eliminate Houthis, whom the army failed to defeat. The behavior exercised by the official media is pondered upon as a campaign of revenges and conflicts between tribesmen and volunteers backing the government troops.

The charges used for justifying the endless Sa'ada war, as well as the prospective war on YSP in the south parts of the country were combined in the same package, according to statements by Vice President Abdurabbu Mansour Hadi during his speech to local council members in Lahj governorate few days ago. Hadi noted that the republican regime, unity, and democracy are three redlines.

Unwanted wars and charges:

The Vice President, who does nothing of his job except for listing charges against the YSP and hindering the progress of discussing persistent issues in the southern governorates, doesn't deeply think about the three redlines, which, according to his belief, are excerpted from the national tenets and principles. If he imagines that protecting the republican regime is a sufficient justification to launch Sa'ada war, he should understand that the

problem faced by the regime doesn't exist in Sa'ada, but it does exist in another place.

The Houthis have listed no demand except for the call for returning the royal regime. Being loyalists with the Zaidi sect, their rejection of the single-dynasty and bequeathed regime is based on the fact that they have firm ideological commitment. Their sect encourages people to revolt against the oppressive regime.

The transfer of the imamate of Beit Hamid Addin into a bequeathed regime and single-family dominance had been one of the primary reasons for the 26 September Revolution in 1962 that overthrew the imamate. So, the Vice President has to seek the risks posing threats to the republican regime, not only in Sa'ada, but also in the areas of establishing the single-dynasty regime and paving the way for bequeathing power from fathers to sons.

It is terribly wrong that the Vice President accuses protesters, who claim their legal rights in the southern governorates, of being instigators of apostasy and enemies of the national unity. YSP played the major role in establishing the national unity because it is the only party that made concessions for the sake of unity and its members in the southern governorates accepted to sacrifice everything they had for the sake of reunification.

If the Vice President has forgotten, it is our duty to remind him that a large number of protesters, who claim their legal rights, stood by him during the 1994 Civil War, which he is pleased to describe as a unity war against apostasy. Being a colleague of these protesters, he should respond to their demands and join their protest, based on the fact that claiming rights is a constitutional right ensured by the law. It is not a behavior of extortion or looting.

If this Vice President cares for exploring any risks posed to the national unity, he has to seek these risks in the arbitrary procedures and policies, which are heavily responsible for human right abuses and discrimination among Yemenis due to their tribal affiliations or birthplaces. He is required to explore the risks in the embezzlements, extortions and lootings exercised by those who claim that they scored triumph in the 1994 Civil War. Owing to this war, the south part of Yemen has turned into a ground for influential persons to dominate and loot public and personal property and exercise the illegal earning of wealth.

Anyway, the official procedures and policies applied in the southern governorates since July 7, 1994, fuel different kinds of protests, and sometimes lead to angry reactions to the unbearable oppressions. Such procedures and

policies forced protesters to raise stupid slogans in Aden, as well as in the sporting stadium in Abyan governorate. However, this type of deviation shouldn't seduce the judicial individuals in this country and draw their attention away from contemplating on the situation. Additionally, congestions may originate once again in the southern governorates due to the irresponsible, non-national and non-unity procedures and policies, which damaged citizens' interests and inflamed their feelings. Nevertheless, the stupid slogans being raised during the protests reflect the states of chaotic anger.

Now, we will discuss the third redline, which the official referred to as democracy. Via this charge, the regime, which is monopolizing power and wealth, seeks a sufficient justification for waging wars everywhere and confronting any factions nationwide. For the regime, these factions are enemies of democracy and unity, and when they exercise democracy, they cross redlines designed by the regime and the ruling party. These redlines appear as if they are latitudes, which are usually affected by the excessive care for democracy and safety in exercising democracy.

When the Vice President referred to democracy as a charge, he forgot that he was at the moment violating the simplest aspects of democracy, which never allow him to use the official media to defame and libel any political opponents threatening his party's stay in power. The regime of domestic wars has its unique quality, which is the first of its kind. This quality is manifested by the regime's resorting to contradictory justifications to adapt and adjust its pretexts with the aim of waging wars. It fights with republicans under the cover of being enemies of the republican regime. It also fights with unifiers after it accuses them of apostasy and battles democrats under the pretext of damaging democracy. All these domestic wars and their consequences are symptomatic of the political imbalance.

Ali Al-Sarari is a Yemeni Journalist and a well-known politician. He is the head of the information department at the Yemeni Socialist Party. Source: Al-Thawri Weekly.

SILVER LINING

Incapacitating state constitutional agencies

Last Wednesday, President Saleh established a new committee whose task is "following up and studying social phenomena that negatively impact on the social peace, national unity, and development." The committee, which is associated directly to him, is also to focus on studying security disorders such as revenge, carrying weapons, kidnapping, extremism, and banditry.

The committee, according to the decree, will study other passive practices like tribal, regional, and sectarian fanaticism and propose solutions. It also would assess negative consequences of the 1994 civil war and suggest complete answer. It will also tackle economic and administrative issues. Before that, Saleh set up an eight-member committee to follow up the implementation of his elections platform. This is weird, is it?

Such committees are meant to declare that the constitutional institutions like the government, parliament and even his ruling party have failed in doing their job and that the President needs such people to work on issues that fall in line with the tasks of these constitutional institutions. What is then the business of the government if this committee would handle such crucial social, economic and even political issues? The ruling party should have a team to assess the implementation of the president's elections program rather than an independent committee. It is the job of the ruling party and its government to implement the program and then assess its points of strengths and weakness.

Yaser al-Awadhi, a leading figure in the ruling party's politburo analyzed the pitfalls of the regime of Saleh in his interview with al-Shar'e newspaper. He openly said the PGC is not ruling and that the traditional party composed of the cronies of the president is really running the country from behind the curtains. He also said the problem lies in the full power of the man, letting no room for other agencies to operate.

After his interview, al-Awadhi was praised for voicing the ailments crushing the majority of the people. However, many people at the ruling party have been shocked by the openness of the man as they are used to just exercise lip kissing regardless of the consequences. If people with good visions like al-Awadhi are available in the ruling party, why do not they make use of them and their insights to find a way out? Why should not he work under the umbrella of the ruling party rather instead of such committees?

I do not mind that they make use of the expertise of some people in carrying out such tasks if those consultants have enough experience to be of a true help. Unfortunately, some of the people of the recent committee have no experience to enable them produce an efficient study or analysis of the relevant problems. Again, such members of these committees may be used as records to justify the failure of the ruling party and its government in addressing very serious issues that could embroil the country into turmoil.

Otherwise, the president has a consultative or Shoura council whose job is to look into such problems and advise the president. If we assume that the state agencies are not able to do the job, which I do not think so as their power is intentionally paralyzed, they then have to be held accountable for their failure and substituted with competent people.

This is because addressing such issues does not require tribal Sheikhs or social dignitaries representing regions but people with good expertise to come up with concrete solutions. They should work under the umbrella of the agencies that are constitutionally accountable before the public. This is really meant to further weaken and incapacitate the function of these agencies and put all the magic keys to all Yemen's ordeals in the hands of one person.

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



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Yemen Press Review



Al-Sahwa Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Islah Party
Thursday, August 23

Main Headlines

- Teachers protest arbitrary practices against educators, poor services
- Sana'a University Students Union claims corruption authority to investigate returns of paid-seat programs
- Prime Minister invites philanthropists to support the Charitable Society for Cancer Patients
- Yemeni journalists condemn Al-Houthi statements, describe them as sectarian
- Al-Eryani: No development can be reached in the absence of freedom and respect for human rights
- Citizens protest state's failed policies

Thousands of Yemeni citizens in different provinces nationwide streamed into streets of main cities in protest against corruption and price rises, the weekly paper reported in a front page article. It added that Yemeni politicians considered those protests sponsored by the Joint Meeting Parties, as attempts to prevent the country from becoming a failed state. For his part, the Islah Party's political section chairman Sayed Al-Mamri said that the authorities' efforts to resolve current terrible conditions are unreal and only alleviative.

"JMP has plans to set up sit-ins in all Yemeni provinces with the aim of condemning the corruption and deteriorated public services" he added. Assistant Secretary General of Popular Forces Union Party Dr. Mohammed Al-Mutawkel said that JMP would not

adopt the military option which the government often tries to convince these parties to use it, affirming that peaceful struggle is the best solution.

He further called the ruling party to admit its failure, quit power and prepare for early fair elections. The senior leader of the Yemeni Socialist Party, Ali Al-Srari denounced the authorities' acts of repressing those who try to express their opinions through peaceful protests.



26 September Weekly, Organ of the Yemeni Army
Thursday, August 23

Main Headlines

- Ministry of Finance: Government employees to receive extra salary next week
- Economists praises President's efforts to fight unemployment and foster development
- Yemen supports second phase of Somali reconciliation
- Interior Ministry prevents entry of weapons into the Capital City, cancels any arm-bearing licenses
- Sana'a Zoo receives over 132 thousand visitors during the summer vacation
- Saleh orders government to cash a month salary to employees on the advent of Ramadan

The Yemeni army's organ reported that President Saleh ordered the government to cash one month's salary to all the state's civil and military employees and retirees on the advent of the holy month of Ramadan to minimize the citizen's burden caused by the price rises in the local market due to the unprecedented skyrocketing

prices of foodstuffs in global markets. Saleh chaired a meeting over evaluating the current economic, developmental and security situations and reviewing the government plans to improve its performance. "The government work is an integrated system and every authority should shoulder its definite responsibilities to execute the electoral platform of the government which has become a national practical program," Saleh said.

His directives demanded the government to improve the governmental administration, reform banking system, restudy monetary policy, bolster investment mechanisms, keep on developing and modernizing judiciary, improve living standards of the government employees and retirees, complete reviewing local authority law in order to extend privileges of local councils and improve their financial sources. He called upon the government to prioritize implementing tasks and invest pensions funds to encourage local investments and contribute to creating job chances and resolving housing insufficiency.



Al-Wasat Comprehensive Political Weekly
Wednesday, August 22

Main Headlines

- Presidential Committee confirms receipt of citizens' complaints
- Nu'man to Al-Wasat: We support sit-ins but never organize them
- Qaeda operatives in Yemen plots to burglarize Central Bank of Yemen
- Sana'a to become a field for eliminating tribal revenges
- Yemeni Consulate in Dubai

confiscate a VIP's passport

- Syria to help Yemen, Jordan and Egypt meet growing demand for wheat

The weekly paper reported that the Syrian Minister of Economy and Trade Amer Hosni Lutfi declared on Wednesday that President Bashar Al-Assad decided to provide Yemen and Jordan with 50 thousand tons of wheat to each and 176 thousand tons of wheat to Egypt.

The total quantity will be taken from the Syrian strategic reserve to meet the needs of those states. In a statement to reporters, Dr Lutfi said that "this decision came upon requests of the Arab brothers to complete signed contracts with them," adding that the international market witnessed a shortage in this material this year, particularly in the Mediterranean states.



Al-Wahdawi Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)
Tuesday, August 21

Main Headlines

- Joint Meeting Parties confirms adoption of pressmen's demands during dialogue with ruling party
- General People Congress suspends Al-Methaq editor over charges of links with Houthis, accuses him of being traitor
- Al-Haq Party conferences attain success in six governorates
- Amran Forum sponsors training course on Cinema Scenario Writing
- Joint Meeting Parties to organize public protests in the governorates of Lahj and Taiz
- University guards open fire on

students, injure one in his head

- Three Aden policemen shot dead in mysterious incident
- At least one killed, five others injured in Amran tribal fighting
- Three people arrested on suspicion of involvement in terrorist attacks

The Yemeni security authorities have arrested an Egyptian and two Yemenis suspected of participating in the July suicide attack against a Spanish tour group visiting the country, the weekly quoted a security official as saying. The Egyptian was identified as Mohammed Yaqout, an alleged al-Qaida member who entered Yemen illegally a few months ago, according to the official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press.

The newspaper reported that the official did not disclose the names of the two Yemenis, and it was unclear if they were suspected of belonging to al-Qaida, which authorities have blamed for the attack. The three arrests occurred Saturday, the official reported. The newspaper went on to say that the Yemeni security authorities have arrested dozens of suspects since the attack, which occurred in early July against a Spanish tour group visiting an ancient temple in the central province of Marib.



Al-Methaq Weekly, Mouthpiece of the General People Congress (Ruling Party)
Monday, August 20

Main Headlines

- Government takes serious procedures to resolve land disputes
- Minister of Electricity and Energy:

Options on the table

By: Noam Chomsky

In Washington a remarkable and ominous campaign is under way to the sequel bears close scrutiny as it unfolds under the direction of former Kremlinologists Condoleezza Rice and Robert M Gates, according to Wright. Stalin had imposed an Iron Curtain to bar Western influence; Bush-Rice-Gates are imposing a Green Curtain to bar Iranian influence.

Washington's concerns are understandable. In Iraq, Iranian support is welcomed by much of the majority Shia population. In Afghanistan, President Karzai describes Iran as 'a helper and a solution.' In Palestine, Iranian-backed Hamas won a free election, eliciting savage punishment of the Palestinian population by the United States and Israel for voting 'the wrong way.' In Lebanon, most Lebanese see Iranian-backed Hezbollah 'as a legitimate force defending their country from Israel,' Wright reports. And the Bush administration, without irony, charges that Iran is 'meddling' in Iraq, otherwise presumably free from foreign interference.

The ensuing debate is partly technical. Do the serial numbers on the Improvised Explosive Devices really trace back to Iran? If so, does the leadership of Iran know about the IEDs, or only the Iranian Revolutionary Guards? Settling the debate, the White House plans to brand the Revolutionary Guards as a 'specially designated global terrorist' force, an unprecedented action against a national military branch, authorising Washington to undertake a wide range of punitive actions.

The sabre-rattling rhetoric about 'containing Iran' has escalated to the point where both political parties and practically the whole US Press corps accept it as legitimate and, in fact, honourable, that 'all options are on the table,' to quote the leading presidential candidates — possibly even nuclear weapons. 'All options on the table'

means that Washington is threatening war. The UN Charter outlaws 'the threat or use of force.' The United States, which has chosen to become an outlaw state, disregards international laws and norms. We're allowed to threaten anybody we want — and to attack anybody we want.

Cold War II also entails an arms race. The United States is proposing a \$20 billion arms sale to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, while increasing annual military aid to Israel by 30 per cent, to \$30 billion over 10 years. Egypt is down for a \$14 billion, 10-year deal. The aim is to counter 'what everyone in the region believes is a flexing of muscles by a more aggressive Iran,' says an unnamed senior US government official. Iran's 'aggression' consists in its being welcomed within the region, and allegedly supporting resistance to US forces in neighbouring Iraq. Unquestionably, Iran's government is reprehensible. The prospect that Iran might develop nuclear weapons is deeply troubling. Though Iran has every right to develop nuclear energy, no one — including the majority of Iranians — wants it to have nuclear weapons. That would add to the much more serious dangers presented by its near neighbours Pakistan, India and Israel, all nuclear-armed with the blessing of the United States.

Iran resists US or Israeli domination of the Middle East but scarcely poses a military threat. Any potential threat to Israel might be overcome if the United States would accept the view of the great majority of its own citizens and of Iranians and permit the Middle East to become a nuclear-weapons free zone, including Iran and Israel, and US forces deployed there. One may also remember that UN Security Council Resolution 687, of 1991, to which Washington appeals when convenient, calls for 'establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery.'

Washington's feverish new Cold War 'containment' policy has spread even to

Europe. The United States wants to install a 'missile defence system' in the Czech Republic and Poland that is being marketed to Europe as a shield against Iranian missiles. Even if Iran had nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, the chances of its using them to attack Europe are perhaps on a par with the chances of Europe's being hit by an asteroid. In any case, if Iran were to indicate the slightest intention of aiming a missile at Europe or Israel, the country would be vaporised.

Of course Vladimir Putin is deeply upset by the shield proposal. We can imagine how the United States would respond if a Russian anti-missile system were erected in Canada. The Russians have every reason to regard an anti-missile system as part of a first-strike weapon against them. As is well known, such a system could never impede a first strike, but it could conceivably impede a retaliatory strike. On all sides, 'missile defense' is therefore understood to be a first-strike weapon, eliminating a deterrent to attack.

Even more obviously, the only military function of such a system with regard to Iran, the declared aim, would be to bar an Iranian deterrent to US or Israel aggression. The shield, then, ratchets the threat of war a few notches higher, in the Middle East and elsewhere, with incalculable consequences, and the potential for a terminal nuclear war. The immediate fear is that by accident or design, Washington's war planners or their Israeli surrogate might decide to escalate their Cold War II into a hot one.

There are many nonmilitary measures to 'contain' Iran, including a de-escalation of rhetoric and hysteria all around, and agreeing to negotiations in earnest for the first time — if indeed all options are on the table.

Noam Chomsky is a professor of linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the author, most recently, of Hegemony or Survival Americas Quest for Global Dominance. Source: Khaleej Times online.

Second time lucky for Gul?

By: Gareth Jenkins.

Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul looks set to be appointed as president of Turkey on 28 August, less than four months after his previous attempt triggered an intervention from the Turkish military and forced the moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (JDP) to call an early election.

Gul formally submitted his candidacy on 14 August, a little over three weeks after the JDP was returned to power with 46.6 per cent of the popular vote. Under Turkish law the president is elected by parliament. The candidate requires the support of two-thirds of the 550 MPs in the unicameral assembly in the first two rounds of voting, falling to a simple majority in subsequent rounds. In April this year, Gul was forced to abandon a previous attempt to stand for the presidency after a strongly worded warning by the Turkish military prompted the country's Constitutional Court to invoke a hitherto unknown law that at least two-thirds of the parliamentary deputies had to attend each presidential vote. With the opposition boycotting parliament, the JDP had no choice but to call an early election. However, it is unlikely to face similar problems this time. It only has 341 seats in parliament but the opposition Nationalist Action Party (NAP), which has 70 seats, has already announced that it will participate in each round of the voting. In the first round on Monday, Gul won 341 votes, ahead of Sabahattin Cakmakoglu of the NAP with 70 and Tayfun Icli of the Democratic Left Party (DLP) with 13. A similar result is expected in the second round on Friday, leaving Gul to be formally elected in the third round on 28 August when he will need just 276 votes.

With the vote in parliament apparently a foregone conclusion, attention has now turned to the Turkish

military. The incumbent president, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, frequently used his presidential veto to block laws passed by the JDP and refused to appoint several hundred of the party's nominees to positions in the government bureaucracy. Many in the military suspect that Gul harbours a long-term radical Islamist agenda and that, once appointed president, he will allow the JDP government to chip away at the principle of secularism enshrined in the Turkish constitution. In addition, Gul's wife covers her head. Most Turkish secularists are appalled at the prospect of Turkey having a headscarfed first lady.

Last week, Gul tried to allay their concerns by holding a press conference to express his commitment to upholding the Turkish constitution. He promised that, if he was elected president, he would put aside his sympathies for the JDP and be equidistant from all parties and strains of opinion. Few are convinced, perhaps least of all those in the JDP who have been lobbying so hard for Gul's candidacy.

But support within the JDP was far from unanimous. It is an open secret that Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan would have preferred Gul to withdraw his candidacy in favour of a less controversial figure. Erdogan apparently feared that Gul's appointment as president would increase tensions and make the job of governing even more difficult at a time when Turkey is facing a host of problems, from a cooling economy to its increasingly frayed relations with the EU to the perennially unresolved Kurdish issue. Yet Gul was insistent. Rather than risk a public display of disunity, Erdogan backed down and publicly endorsed Gul's candidacy.

But Erdogan's reluctance to be more assertive has come at a price. In the aftermath of the last month's election victory Erdogan publicly reached out to those who had not voted for the JDP, promising consultation and conciliation. But on the most

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- Presidency denies authenticity of what has been published about Guantanamo detainee
- Press Law meeting participants recommend strengthening media freedom, facilitating ownership of media
- President of the Republic meets governorate problem-solving committee
- Prime Minister launches Arab Championship for School Sports
- Central Bank of Yemen injects \$ 68 million to market to maintain stability of local currency

The weekly newspaper reported that the Ministry of Human Rights is making the necessary arrangements for the National Conference on Human Rights, scheduled to take place in the Yemeni Capital City of Sana'a in December 2007. The conference is due to cover different national functions in the presence of representatives and leaders of political parties, academic and social institutions and civil community organizations.

Yemeni Minister of Human Rights Huda Al-Ban met on Sunday here in Sana'a Mujes Ploum, Technical Advisor at the Danish Foreign Ministry, Velhing Soreins, Senior Advisor of the Yemeni-Danish Cooperation Program and Sesa Banig, Representative of the Danish Human Rights Institute in Sana'a. The meeting was devoted to discussing the means of enhancing cooperation between the two countries in human rights and implementing the Yemeni-Danish Program concerned with human rights. The meeting highlighted the Danish efforts in supporting and funding the National Conference on Human Rights. Al-Ban stressed the necessity of making the conference a success and coming up with positive results.

controversial issue facing the new government, he ignored all but his own party and eventually endorsed the most divisive candidate. In the process Erdogan has probably destroyed what little faith secularists previously had in his sincerity.

Gul's supporters in the JDP maintain that, with the JDP still fresh from its election triumph, the military will not dare to stage a coup and that, once Gul is appointed president, the secularists will simply get used to the idea. But the evidence suggests that it is a dangerously naive miscalculation.

So far the Turkish military has been circumspect and avoided commenting directly on Gul's candidacy. Nevertheless, when asked by journalists last Thursday whether the military would be prepared to relax the ban on the wearing of the headscarf in its facilities if Gul became president, the chief of staff Gen. Yasar Buykanit pointedly replied: "We don't want to argue with anyone. But we have our rules and our principles and we shall apply them."

Although an outright coup remains unlikely, neither is the Turkish military likely merely to shrug and accept Gul as president. At the very least, the JDP can now expect a long campaign of attrition.

Last week, President Sezer served notice of the secularist establishment's intentions by publicly humiliating Erdogan. On Thursday, following over a week of preparation, Erdogan arrived at the presidential palace to present Sezer with the list of the new members of his government for presidential ratification. Sezer refused to accept it, leaving a tense and bewildered Erdogan to try to explain what had happened to the television crews waiting outside the presidential palace.

Although Gul is still expected to be elected on 28 August, the JDP may yet find that appointing him as president was the easy part; the difficulties will come afterwards.

Source: Al-Ahram Weekly.

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Yemen Times Readers' Opinion Questionnaire

Dear Reader

The Yemen Times editorial management would like to take a few minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. It is important for us to know what you think about our paper, and how you think we might improve our performance. Either send your reply by post or submit it to Yemen Times offices in Sana'a, Taiz or Aden. Replies will be entered into a surprise draw.

Thank you.

Nadia al-Sakkaf
Publisher and Editor in Chief

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Name: **Nationality:**

Age group: ☐ <15 ☐ 15-19 ☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-45 ☐ >45

Gender: (☐ Male ☐ Female) **Marital status:** (☐ married ☐ single) **No. of children**

Occupation

Level of education: ☐ high school ☐ diploma ☐ university ☐ postgraduate

Contact information and email:

1. How often do you read the Yemen Times?

- ☐ Every issue
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Whenever it comes to my hands

2. How do you get the Yemen Times?

- ☐ From bookshop in (street or area name)
- ☐ From friends
- ☐ Subscription
- ☐ It is provided in my workplace
- ☐ Online

3. What do you like most about Yemen Times?

- ☐ Availability
- ☐ Ads and vacancies
- ☐ Language
- ☐ Quality of paper and size
- ☐ Other.....
- ☐ Design and layout
- ☐ News coverage
- ☐ Features article
- ☐ World news

4. What do you dislike most about Yemen Times?

- ☐ Availability
- ☐ Ads and vacancies
- ☐ Language
- ☐ Quality of paper and size
- ☐ Other.....
- ☐ Design and layout
- ☐ News coverage
- ☐ Features article
- ☐ World news

5. Which section/s do you enjoy reading?

- Front page
- Polls
- Business
- Health and environment
- Youth
- Editorial
- Local news
- Opinion
- Culture
- World News
- Op-ed
- Community
- Press review
- Letters to the editor
- Back page

6. Which section/s do you dislike reading?

- Front page
- Local news
- World News
- Polls
- Opinion
- Op-ed
- Business
- Culture
- Community
- Health and environment
- Press review
- Youth
- Letters to the editor
- Editorial
- Back page

7. Have you ever written to / for Yemen Times?

- ☐ Yes, more than once
- ☐ Yes, once
- ☐ Never

8. If you have, was the feedback satisfactory?

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes, to an extent
- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ No feedback

9. Would you like to visit the Yemen Times and see its operation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. Do you know any of the Yemen Times staff?

- ☐ Yes, I know (please give name/s)
-
-
- ☐ No

11. How can the Yemen Times improve?

-
-
-
-
-

12. What topics, features would you like the Yemen Times to cover in the future?

- [illegible]

Medical waste solution needed in Yemen

By: Bushra Al-Anesi
For Yemen Times

Yemen is unable to manage its medical waste. It burns waste in an open landfill in Al-Azraqeen. This is causing health problems and environmental pollution. The proposal for a central incinerator is on hold, while problems with cost, location and safety and environment issues are addressed.

The simple solution, a sophisticated incinerator that could handle all waste (hazardous and non-hazardous together) is considered too expensive for a developing country. Furthermore the hospital incinerators lack safety because of their emission of dioxin (see box). Additionally, most of the hospitals are located in residential areas.

The cheaper alternative is to separate non hazardous waste and burn it; and to bury hazardous waste in a specially designated site.

Five years ago, the Social Fund Development allotted a budget of \$1.2 million for establishing a central incinerator to burn medical waste produced by hospitals and health care facilities in Sana'a, whose population is around 1.8 million.

This proposal came after a comprehensive study that included field surveys of 50 hospitals and health centers. This revealed that all of the hospitals and health centers in Sana'a produced an estimated 22 tons of medical waste daily. This quantity contained approximately six tons of contagious and dangerous waste. The study was presented to the General Authority of Yemen Environment Protection, as well as the Center of Environmental Consultations



This is the way that most hospitals in Sana'a rid of their medical waste. The photos show the cleaners who wear no protected clothes carrying the waste to the truck which drive these medical waste to open landfill in Al-Azraqeen where they burn it in open air.



in Egypt (ECOSe/vcom).

The study gave the opportunity for environmental experts, doctors and officials to discuss the ability of Yemeni government to build modern incinerators to get rid of the medical wastes. Some experts suggested establishing two incinerators with a daily holding capacity of four tons of medical waste each. This is in addition to

the placement of micro units inside every hospital, which are programmed to sort waste.

In 2005, these suggestions and recommendations became a project funded by the Social Fund Development and municipality. They stated that components for the project included the main site along with other buildings with an area of 3,600 m2. There was one hall for treating dangerous wastes, one storage room and one room for waste recycling. The project also included one maintenance workshop, administrative facilities, a treatment unit, special equipment and other accessories.

However, the project scheduled to start operation the beginning of this year has not been completed. Fifty percent of the remaining construction is still awaiting financial support. Therefore, the incinerator, which is supposed to be in the southeast direction of the landfill in Al-Azraqeen, 16km away from the city center is not yet working.

There are many reasons for the delay. The most important are cost and environmental impact. The General Authority of Environmental Protection said that the incinerator has direct impacts on the population, soil, air and water. It is also close to residential areas near the landfill (Al-Azraqeen).

Because of this the environmental

authority sent a letter to the Social Fund for Development informing the organization of its rejection of the incinerator, because "it does not meet certain environmental conditions". According to the letter the social fund wanted to burn all medical waste in this incinerator, whereas the environmental authority stipulated that contagious waste is only to be burned via the thermolysis

Incinerator (decomposition of compounds by heat.) . The authority also requested the social fund to import a rotary fern incinerator if it wanted to burn all waste. The cost of the rotary fern is very high. The authority stated that the current incinerator does not meet all requirements of environmental protection in terms of reducing dioxin emissions and other gases.

Abdu-Baqi Ghailan, officer for water and environmental projects at the Social Fund for Development, commented on Environmental authority's letter saying, "people must be realistic. Yemen will not be able to afford a highly sophisticated incinerator. The social fund will have to accept the specifications of the agreed-upon incinerator." He added that the current situation is very miserable as medical waste is burned in open air, causing environmental pollution and health problems.

Ghailan also pointed to the financial problems that faced the project. "The

Yemeni government, represented by the municipality now has two choices: accepting simple technology despite its dangers or pay an unaffordable amount to obtain sophisticated and modern technology valued at roughly \$5 billion."

Eng. Ali Al-Thoubhani, manager of the poisons and dangerous wastes unit in the Environmental authority insisted the necessity of inviting the private sector to contribute to purchasing a modern incinerator based on the principle "those who contaminate the environment must pay."

World health organization expert, Raqi Zankali says that Yemen, being a

developing country, cannot afford the costs and maintenance of a highly sophisticated incinerator. He proposes a low-cost program to manage medical waste. The program depends on classifying medical waste. That is separating the general waste or solid waste, (packaging materials, food scraps, bottles), from the hazardous medical waste, that is contaminated and considered as a source of potential infection. Hazardous Medical waste includes used needles, anatomical remains, used chemical disinfectants and pesticides. Such waste should be stored separately and properly, and then taken by certain cars to be buried in special location.

Hospitals' Incinerators

Of 47 incinerators located in Yemeni hospitals, only three are operative. Four health facilities, namely Ath-Thoura hospital, Al-Saba'een hospital and blood transfer center as well as its branches in Sana'a and Aden decided to obtain medical incinerators.

Regardless of the sophistication of those incinerators, burning medical waste is dangerous to human health. The British Association for Environmental Medicine says that Medical waste incinerators are a major source of toxic air emissions, especially dioxin and cadmium. They are connected to cancer of the liver, lungs, and stomach.

Exposure to these substances affects the immune system and weak-

ens its ability to resist disease. They also affect woman's reproduction. A study conducted by a specialist of infertility in Syria showed that dioxin increases the production of INHBN, a poisonous substance that demolishes the ovaries. It consequently causes miscarriages and weakens fertility.

The American Agency for Environmental Protection confirms that dioxin is a cancerous. The agency says that dioxin is transferred via air, entering primary food substances even in areas far away from the site of emission. Meat, milk derivatives, eggs and fish are the main foods through which dioxin is transferred. It accumulates in fat tissue. Babies are exposed to dioxin five times more than adults, due to the high proportion of fat in a mother's milk.

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1. Executive Assistant Position #0707

Job Duties:

- Reporting to the President and General Manager, and with the assistance of one direct report, brings excellent organizational and administrative skills to ensuring the efficient delivery of professional office systems and processes to meet and support the requirements of the executive management team.
- Administrative tasks for the executive management team, include typing, responding to urgent phone calls, coordinating meetings, assisting with expense reporting, maintaining stationary and coordinating schedules and travel arrangements, consolidation and integration of information for monthly and quarterly reports, ad-hoc reports, etc.
- Tracks Ministry approvals to ensure Nexen is fully compliant with all required processes relative to out of country business visitors. Liaises with translation, the sponsoring Manager other stakeholders as required on out of Yemen business visitors.
- Manages information flow to and from the executive management team including appropriate documentation of correspondence, filing, and archiving.
- Coordinates and manages the distribution process related to delegations of authority for the executive management team in their absence.
- Frequent contact with senior Yemen Government officials, the CNPY Operating Committee representatives, Calgary-Yemen Operations Group and offices in the UK and Dubai. These interactions with internal and external personnel are typically of a confidential and highly sensitive nature that requires mature and professional conduct at all times.
- This position may require frequent travel between Nexen Yemen's two Sana'a offices.
- In keeping with the needs of our business this position is five days a week, 8am to 5pm.

Minimum Requirements:

- Minimum high school diploma with 5 years in the petroleum industry as an Administrative Assistant or Executive Secretary; or business administration/English literature degree with minimum of two - three years as Administrative Assistant or Executive Assistant.
- Secretarial Arts or Office Administration Diploma or equivalent would be considered an asset.
- Supervisory skills are desirable.
- A high level of proficiency with Microsoft Office programs is required.
- Familiarity with electronic filing systems is an asset.
- Fluent in English and Arabic, both written and verbal a strong requirement

2. Mechanical Foreman- CPF (Position #01115A, 0158)

Job duties

- Oversees the construction of pipelines, mechanical facilities and associated work scopes. Under general instructions from his supervisor, arranges with contractor for necessary materials and equipment and supervises contractor's equipment on site. Signs time tickets and provides progress reports on construction activity.
- Carries out other similar or related duties such as preparation of work sites, constructing foundations, structural components, testing of the same.
- Ensures the work is carried out in a safe manner and that CNPY policies and procedures are being followed. Participates in CNPY Safety programs
- Ensures that work is completed cost effectively and within the scheduled time allotment.
- Prepares cost estimates and work plans for various projects and tasks

Minimum requirements

- Bachelor degree or related trades certification.
- 3-4 years experience in Mechanical / piping systems, 1-2 years as a lead hand.
- Good understanding of Construction practices and equipment capacities.
- Ability to read mechanical and piping drawings and communicate to fabrication personnel.
- Ability to read and write English, fluency in Arabic.
- Valid Yemen driving license.

3. Civil Construction Foreman - CPF (Position # 0152,0151)

Job Duties:

- Oversees the construction of concrete foundations, pre-cast concrete units, block and metal buildings, finishing works, structural steel erection and associated work scopes. Under general instructions from his supervisor, arranges with contractor for necessary equipment and supervising contractor's equipment on site. Signs time tickets, provides progress reports on construction activity.
- Ensures the work is carried out in a safe manner and that CNPY policies and procedures are being followed. Participates in CNPY Safety programs
- Ensures that work is completed cost effectively and within the scheduled time allotment.
- Prepares cost estimates and work plans for various projects and tasks

Minimum Requirements:

- Bachelor Degree or related trades certification
- 3-4 years experience in civil and concrete construction, 1-2 years as a lead hand.
- Good understanding of civil and structural construction and concrete practices.
- Ability to read civil and construction drawings and communicate to Contractor personnel.
- Ability to read and write English, fluency in Arabic.
- Valid Yemen driving license.
- Computer experience in MS Word and Excel would be considered an asset
- Ability to use survey instruments e.g. levels and theodolites.

4. Fab shop foreman - CPF (Position # 21-23)

Job Duties:

- Oversees, organizes and assigns work to welding, mechanical and piping fabrication crews on a daily basis. Work projects are outlined on work orders filled out by the Construction Supervisor. Includes coordinating and fabricating such things as well site spools, hydro cyclone spools, facility platforms. Directs work of Contractor supervisors and foremen who in turn, direct heavy equipment operators and welders to assemble materials used for fabrication.
- Maintains documents for Quality Assurance / Quality Control program. Includes checking drawings and piping to ensure dimensions are correct. Coordinates subsequent quality testing to ensure that pipe or equipment was made according to specifications and ready for safe use.
- Teaches and monitors safe work practices on the work site. Includes using safe work positions and using appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Monitors the tool crib and consumables and requests replenishment when necessary. Includes filling out requisition to replace such items as cutting out bits, welding rods, cutting discs, grinding discs, oxygen and acetylene.
- Distributes timesheets and work orders to contractors. Ensures proper coding
- Prepares weekly progress reports and forwards to Construction Supervisor. Reports outline status of work done and number of people involved in job.
- Carries out other similar or related duties such as acting as an interpreter between Construction Foreman/Supervisor and contractor personnel.

Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of secondary education (12 years) followed by 2 years' full-time formal training in mechanical or pipefitting trades and 5 years of related experience.
- Good understanding of fabrication practices and ability to read mechanical and piping drawings.
- Ability to read and write English, fluency in Arabic.
- Valid Yemeni drivers' license.

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The Old City of Sana'a: An architectural paradise

By: Ikbal Al-Haji

Strolling down the streets of Sana'a, one can't help but be attracted by the city's architectural beauty, intricately decorated buildings with their traditional, colored-glass, half-moon-shaped window panels (Qamariyya). This unique architectural detail makes the Old City of Sana'a special. Envious of the city's homeowners, the by-passer wishes to possess one of these architectural gems. The houses usually consist of two or three floors, sometimes four. A common feature of these buildings is the "Mafrag," an elaborately decorated room located at the top of the house, overlooking the neighboring building. This room functions as a place for chewing Qat and resting. The remaining floors consist of three rooms with small windows. The moon panels play a vital role in filtering light into the space. Every ceiling features colorful decorative accents.

It is uncommon for the actual owners of these buildings to reside in their property, instead leasing the building to tenants. A recent study found that 70 percent of the Old City of Sana'a are renters, whereas homeowners do not exceed 30 percent. The study added that residents of the city who are originally from Sana'a are scarce, abandoning their houses for several reasons.

"My house is being rented for 15 years. I rented it because I have a big family and I do not need it. It is rented at YR 35,000 as it is inside the Old City of Sana'a," Ahmed Ali shared.

"You can hardly find real dwellers of the city. I rented my house to foreign students," Mansour Hussein commented.

"I have three houses. Two are in the Old City of Sana'a and one in Al-Asbahi city. I rented those in Sana'a's Old City to tradesmen to store their goods. I am living now with my family in Al-Asbahi.



Painting describing famous features of Sana'a.

Every house is rented at \$250," Nu'man stated.

On the other side of the Old City of Sana'a, people are reluctant to rent their houses. "This is my house. I will not leave it even if I die out of hunger. This is an archeological house. I will maintain it for my grandsons. This is the Old City of Sana'a, the origin of Yemen," Ateeqah Ahmed stated.

A popular teahouse in the Old City is decorated with stone arches and small chimneys along with small windows allowing sunlight to illuminate stone tables carved in the ground. The owner, Mutahar, is warm and welcoming. He has been known by the people in the area since the time of his father. Now an old man, Mutahar revealed that Yemenis as

well as tourists visit his teahouse to observe the uniquely carved tables and other architectural details. Many top off their observation with a cup of cold, fresh raisin juice. They ask about the builder of the teahouse, how old it is and how it was built. Mutahar stated that Sana'a needs to be developed by its own citizens.

Ahmed Yahya, an old man and long-time resident of Sana'a, said, "Most of the dwellers of Sana'a are Sana'anized. Nowadays you cannot differentiate between the natives and the new inhabitants."

"I was living in the Old City of Sana'a but I rented my house because the city is very crowded with markets, shops and restaurants," Mustafa Ahmed stated.

"This is the only house I got from my

uncles. I left the countryside 30 years ago. I am living in this house. Tourists visit it to observe me and my house. It is one of the most decorated houses. It has rare antiquities and beautiful moon panels. I am 90 years old. I will not rent my house to anybody because it is my heritage. I will never leave it," Omar Nassir shared.

The Old City of Sana'a was deemed the "Cultural Capital of the Arab World" by UNESCO in 2004. It is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Despite such recognition, natives continue to abandon the city, leaving its crowded markets and streets to be inhabited by foreign dwellers and tourists, mesmerized by this ancient city's architectural beauty and charm.



Al-Saila in the old city of Sana'a.



Old city of Sana'a is known for its peculiar architecture.

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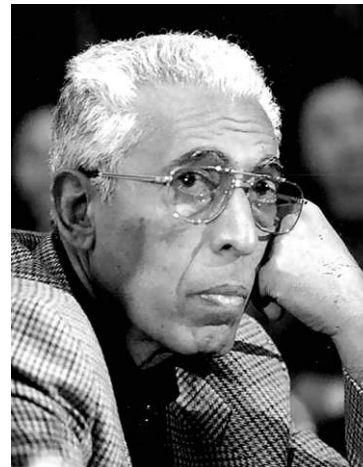
Abdul-Rahman Ibrahim Munif The prolific and renowned Arabic novelist of our time

Prepared by: Eyad N. Al-Samman

Abdul-Rahman Ibrahim Munif (1933-2004) was a Saudi novelist, economist and oppositional intellectual. He was born in Amman, Jordan to an Iraqi mother from Baghdad. His father was a trader of Saudi origin, originally from Qusayba village in the region of Najd in central Saudi Arabia. Munif studied the Holy Qur'an first and then attended Al-Abdalia School in Amman and obtained his baccalaureate. In 1952, he departed to Iraq to study law at the University of Baghdad. Munif joined the Ba'ath Party and participated in demonstrations against the Baghdad Pact in February 1955. Due to his career as a political activist, he was expelled from Iraq together with other student activists and went to Egypt where he pursued his academic study and graduated from Cairo University in 1958. He won a Ba'ath Party scholarship to the former Yugoslavia and obtained a Ph.D in petroleum economics from Belgrade University in 1961.

He returned to Beirut, Lebanon and worked for the Ba'ath Party's head office for a year. In 1964, he settled in Damascus, Syria for nearly a decade and worked as an expert in the Syrian Oil Ministry. In 1963, Munif was banished from the Ba'ath Party and he consequently resigned from the party in 1965. His political activities caused stripping of his Saudi nationality in 1963 when he criticized the then-regime. He moved to Beirut in 1973 to work on editing "Al-Balagh" cultural journal and left Beirut after outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975, settling once again in Baghdad. He worked as a consultant for the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and as an editor-in-chief of the journal "Al-Nift Waa Al-Tanmiya" (Oil and Development) in Baghdad. The Iraq-Iran War (1980-1988) pushed Munif to leave Iraq for France, taking up residence in Boulogne near Paris, where he remained until 1986. He then moved to Damascus, Syria where he settled down, devoting himself to writing up until his death.

Munif was a prolific and advanced writer in the Arab world. He believed that the Arabic novel is the history of those who do not have a source of historical reference. Munif is the author of 15 long novels and more than 9 non-fiction books as well as studies on political, socio-economic and cultural issues. He wrote his first book entitled, "The Principle of Partnership and the Nationalization of Arab Oil" (Beirut, 1972), which was a documentary research about the future of the oil industry. In "Democracy First, Democracy Always" (Beirut, 1992), Munif expressed his commitment to democracy as a tool to face, deal with, and solve many of the regions' problems. In 2003, Munif published his last



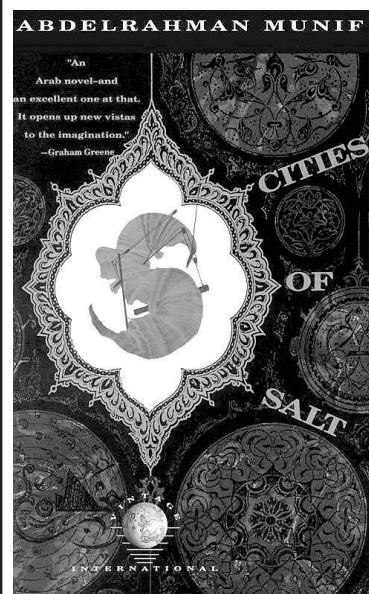
book which was a study of situations in Iraq from 1917 to 2003 entitled, "Iraq: Notes on History and Resistance".

Munif started producing fictional works when he was almost 40. His first literary debut was in 1973 when he published his first novel entitled, "Trees and the Assassination of Marzooq", which presented new and persuasive means for the creation of a more humane, free, and just society. Munif was one of the writers who excelled in prison fiction with his two novels "East of the Mediterranean" (1975) and "Now and Here or East of the Mediterranean Once Again" (1991). "A Magian Love Story" (1974) is another novel in which Munif romantically discussed the embedded relation between the two civilizations of the Orient and the Occident. "Aalam Bela Khara'it" (A World Without Maps, 1982) is a novel written by Munif and coauthored by Palestinian author Jabra Ibrahim Jabra.

Munif's most important literary work was the quintet of "Mudun Al-Milh" (Cities of Salt, 1984-1989). "Cities of Salt Quintet" is the longest novel in modern Arabic literature, which took more than six years to be written at 2,500 pages and was banned in several Middle Eastern countries, including Saudi Arabia. "Cities of Salt Quintet" registers the history of Arab life through the critical eye of an insider and emphasizes the fact that Arabs have been victims of their rulers and foreigners. Each of its five volumes has a different plot and are unified with a distinctive tone. The first volume, "Al-Teah" (The Wilderness, 1984), covers the years from 1933 to 1953. The second volume, "Al-Ukhdoon" (The Trench, 1985), deals with historical events between 1953 and 1958. The third volume, "Taqaesim Al-Layl Waa Al-Nahar" (Variations on Day and Night, 1989), moves backward to the period between 1891 and 1930. The fourth, "Al-Munbatt" (The Uprooted, 1989), moves forward to the years between 1964 and 1969. The fifth, "Badiyat Al-Dhulumat" (Desert of Darkness, 1989), which is divided into two parts, first returns to 1920-35, and then moves to 1964-75.

Munif's last monumental work was "Ard Al-Sawad" (Land of Darkness Trilogy, 1999), which comes in three volumes covering 1,500 pages, imaginatively narrating the era of Iraqi history during the early 19th century. Munif's literary works were translated into over 10 languages and in 1989 Munif won the Al-Awais Cultural Award. He also won the Award of Cairo Gathering for Arab Creativity in Novel Writing in 1998. Munif's posthumous published works include "Mother of Vows" (2005), "Pseudonyms" and "The Open Door" (2006).

Munif passed away on January 24, 2004 after a prolonged sickness while living in exile in Syria. Munif has not been awarded the recognition he deserves, especially in the English language, but he will be remembered as the Arab novelist who enriched Arabic culture through his literary prose.



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Yemen entranced by Sufi Music

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Mohammad Ahmed Warsi devotes his life to Sufi music. So have many members of his family for many generations. They perform all over the world. The group, who are based in India where Sufi music is prevalent, came to Sana'a on Friday (and Aden on Saturday) to give Yemenis the opportunity to hear a musical form that is becoming rare. They were invited by the Indian embassy in Sana'a as part of 60th anniversary of Independence celebrations.

Mohammad Warsi's group of seven musicians include four of his brothers, two of his cousins and his son, who one day will take over the leadership from his father.

"It's been in my family over seven generations and I intend to maintain this profession in the family for many more generations to come," said Warsi.

Qawwali pronounced as Kaval, is form of devotional music of the Islamic mystics also known as Chisti Sufis of the Indian subcontinent. Performers use dhol or tabla (type of drums) harmonica and vocals of different levels. The group which is usually between 6 to 8 members, sits on the ground in two rows and start chanting and using the drums and clapping to regulate the singing pace. Warsi plays the harmonica while he sings passionately, swaying his head every now and then completely overwhelmed with the music and the words.

Staying original

The words are usually poems written centuries ago, probably since the emergence of the art in the 8th century in Persia. It originally used to be performed in Sufi shrines but has expanded to cultural theaters and social gatherings.

Like any other art, Qawwali has gone through transformations to suit modern taste.

The central themes in traditional Qawwali are love, devotion and longing for the divine. The poetry is implicitly understood to be spiritual in its mean-



Mohamad Wari and Group: Keeping Qawwali alive through passing the profession from one generation to the other.

ing, even though the lyrics can sometimes sound widely secular, or outright hedonistic. An example of this is the Ghazal, which talks about the joys of drinking and the agony of separation from the beloved.

Today there are songs using modern music techniques and rhythm, and in some areas there are female and male groups in which the performance is done like a singing conversation between the men and women. However, Warsi is old school, and does not approve of this.

"I stick to old poems we heard from our fathers and will try to maintain it this way in my family," he said.

His son Mohammad Waris Nawaz barely 18, nods his head in agreement and a charming smile. He had been playing the tabla since age five and has made it a full time profession since long ago. Although he managed to go to high school, he is not interested in college like the rest of his siblings.

"I am strongly passionate about Qawwali and hope to fill my fathers shoes when the time comes. I travel with the group around the world and don't feel I am sacrificing anything by taking this line of work," the young Warisi said. Mohammad Waris is also proud of the fact that his daughter is married to a Qawwali singer from

Pakistan.

Keeping it alive

Qawwali is not taught in schools like other forms of Indian arts. Although this Sufi music usually written in Urdu and Panjabi is found in India and Pakistan there is a threat of it fading away. Some of the difficulties according to Warsi are the popularity of modern and international music. Therefore the demand for Qawwali as such is dwindling among the public.

Warsi's group is famous throughout India, therefore the group can afford to perform full time. He also travels the world with his music performing in Europe, Russia, South Africa and the Far East.

He says that non-Urdu speakers can enjoy his performances because in theatres there is often a translation of the lyrics for the audience to read. "Even foreigners relate to Qawwali as they are moved by the music and rhythm," he said.

A state of trance?!

Listeners, and often artists themselves are transported to a state of Wajad, a trance-like state where they feel at one with God, generally considered to be the height of spiritual ecstasy in Sufism. The music starts off slowly with soothing rhythm and gradually builds up to an exciting frenzy.

Naseem Urrehman is a UNICEF officer from Pakistan was clearly moved at the Qawwali evening. "It takes you out of your surroundings and overwhelms you with spiritual feelings that I cannot describe," he said. "It touched me deeply because I am away from home. But I did not reach a state of trance on Friday because the environment could not allow this. The performers were on the stage far from the audience. Usually the audience surrounds the performers."

The group is on a tour of Gulf countries, sponsored by Indian Council of Cultural Relations. In Yemen, Arif Ali, an Indian national is the organizer of the local sponsorship for accommodation and local transport from the Indian community in Yemen.



The listeners and often the performers reach a state of spiritual ecstasy as the rhythm of music goes faster and louder.

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Yemeni Weddings

Supplement

YEMEN TIMES

27 August 2007

Weddings in Yemen Traditions and social customs of marriage

Wedding ceremonies in Yemen are not much different from those of other Arab countries, particularly those of tribal and rural areas.

Nonetheless, marriage ceremonies in Yemen differ from one area to another. In the northern parts of Yemen the man pays the costs of marriage ceremonies; he pays the dowry, prepares and furnishes the house, and takes care of the wedding banquet. In southern areas, the bride takes to her husband's house all that she'd need (e.g.) bedroom furniture, kitchenware.

Here, we will take an overall look at a particular side of these wedding: the social side. In such side, social soli-

come from nearby cities and villages, in addition to groom relatives who would take the hardship of traveling far distance to attend the wedding.

Usually, the groom's neighbors help in preparing banquets for those guest, which is a strong social tradition called "Al-Garm."

To alarm the neighbor of Al-Garm, the groom's father go to the neighborhood chief who, in his turn, notify everyone in the neighborhood of the kind of food they should prepare like bread, sweets.

However, the responsibility of preparing of the banquet's main meals, likes meats and broth, is the groom's family's. Those meals are usually prepared from the goats and cows that the groom's guests bring along with them.

Al-Mizayn -servant- does the cooking part of those meals. Ash-Showa'ah, a group of the groom's guests, have the duty of going to the bride's house (or village) to accompany her procession to the groom's house.

Even though, a lot of money is spent in such weddings, it is all ok as long as the wedding went on a way that's up to the family or the tribe's honor and nobility. That's because weddings are looked at as important tribal festivals. Nonetheless, one can reduce the cost of wedding according to his financial ability, in some cases wedding would be limited to immediate family members and close friends.

Weddings in Sana'a

Weddings in Sana'a are looked at as a way to vie in glory with others, where the total cost reaches a million YR, more or less.

The wedding ceremonies usually starts with distributing wedding invitations, followed by "Lailat El-Hena" - night of Henna, for both the bride and the groom. In that night, guest must do "At-Tarh", giving the groom amount of money each according to his ability.

At-Tarh could also be done after the wedding procession. During At-Tarh, the Mizayen collects the money for the groom, announcing the name of the giver using a traditional phrase that goes "O' groom, it is collected for you from so and so (giver's name) the amount of..."

If the groom decided that there would be no banquet, just to save on the cost, then the night of Henna and A-Tarh won't take place. Instead, the groom goes with his guests, in the early morning of the wedding day, to a traditional bathroom.

After finishing his bath, the groom and his guests head back to the his house where they eat their breakfast then they leave for a drive around the city (or to

the close villages) accompanied by drummers. They perform different traditional dances till the lunch time, at which they head back to have their lunch.

Al-Magyal, sitting for chewing Qat, starts after lunch. During Al-Magyal, a chanter or a vocalist sings some chants, and attendees repeat after him, until 7 P.M. where people get ready for the wedding procession.

The ceremonies of the wedding procession in sana'a start with some traditional dances followed by the Zafah, actual wedding procession that lasts for an hour and a half to two hours.

During Azafah, the chanter sings some religious chants as the groom, carrying a sword, walks slowly from the start of the street, till he reaches his house doorsteps. The street is usually lit by special lamps and candles. Unusual habit is pricking with needles, as away to distract him during Azafah. Therefore family members should keep an eye on the groom at all times.

After Azafah, the groom asks permission to leave for his bride, as guests dance until from 10 P.M. till the dawn. As the groom arrives at the bride's room, he sits next to her and juices and coffee served.

The next morning, dances are performed. And in the afternoon, the similar ceremonies are conducted just like the previous day.

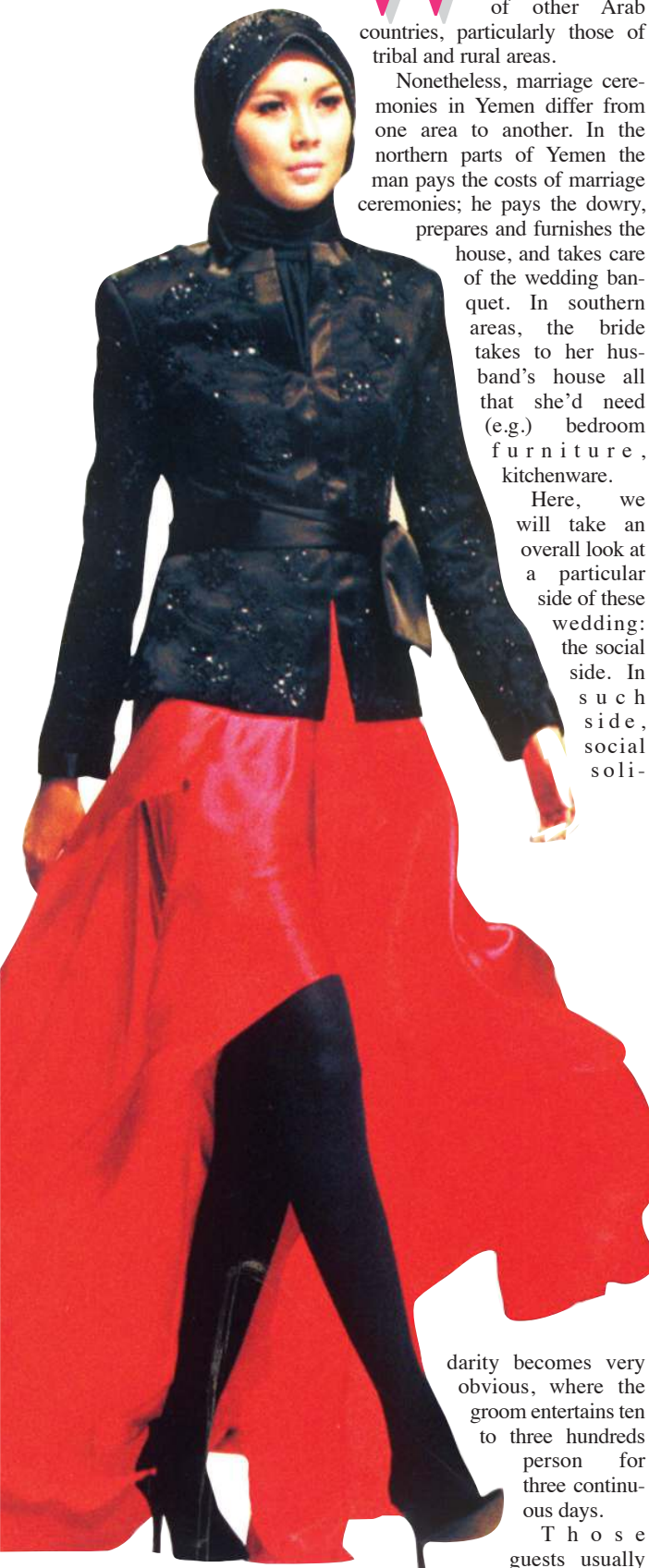
Lailat El-Haky

In the night of El-haky, they take the bride to traditional bathroom where she is giving a bath. Then they take her to the divan of women, as her face is covered with a black veil with beautiful variegations called "Moqana' Elhena."

Four women start applying henna designs on the bride's hands and feet. Meanwhile, in the groom's house, the drums are beaten and groom is taken to the bride's house, while Henna is still in his hand. After that, groom is taken back to his house to wash off the henna, which is applied in design like it is with the bride, of his feet and hands.

The next day is called "Al-Mashti." In Al-Mashti, ceremonies start at a very early hour, where bride is given another bath before the drummers arrive. Coffee is served in this day, then more henna is applied to bride's hands and feet. The guests leave when the henna session is done with, just to come back at lunch time carrying At-Tarh and gifts.

The bride's family brings a censer, while one of the bride's little brother or sister cuts the bride's hair from the front and the back. After having lunch, the bride's guests head to the groom's house. At night, entertainments are performed while serving coffee to attendees.



arity becomes very obvious, where the groom entertains ten to three hundreds person for three continuous days.

Those guests usually

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Wedding parties in Hadramout: Keeping with traditional rituals

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It is exciting to travel around Yemen, in every city and village you discover thrilling rituals that keep you amazed and eager to learn more. What you may see in one area, you will see differently in another area. It is because of Yemen's rich cultural heritage. In talking about wedding rituals in Yemen, you will find many differences.

Weddings in Hadramout feature such things as aldeqaqh, which is the cutting of the bride's hair. Hadramout weddings are usually four days long and the traditional practices are

time of the wedding was confirmed two years after the day of the engagement. If the girl was 10 years old at the time of engagement, the wedding would during her twelfth birthday and normally she was unaware her wedding had been set.

During the preparations for the wedding, women would grind coffee and ginger in mortars with pestles in the groom's home in a custom called "Aldeqaqh." Women would sing and dance accompanying a singer. This ritual would usually occur during the morning of the second day of the wedding.

Neighbors, relatives and friends attended the wedding celebrations alongside the fami-

home. She usually didn't know what was happening around her. Her family would not tell her anything because she was normally still a young girl. In those days it was believed it was better for her to be inexperienced in life and that it was better for the girl married early – usually between 10 and 12. With this in mind the family would order her out of her home when they called her.

When she reached the door of her home, one of her relatives, usually her uncle would carry her on his back. The women then covered her with the "a green Sebaih, which usually had the girl crying by then. This ritual is called the "Alrebout" because the bride was unaware of her own wedding and no one would ask or take her opinion. And of course, there were no objections, no discussions. This is considered the first event in the wedding party and the most traditional. Alrebout is still one of the rituals in Hadramout still in practice until now.

The female guests, relatives and friends would start to sing and dance into the night. The next day, in the morning, the bride would prepare for the second party, in which she wore a green dress while her hands and legs were decorated with henna. The singers would sing wedding songs to the bride. This event is called "Sout Al Henna'a." In the afternoon, the bride covered by the green alsebah and with part of her hair exposed and dangling around her face, she would sit on a chair while they put a dish on her thighs. In the dish was a pair of scissors. Her father and relatives would then come one after the other and take the scissors to cut a little bit of the hair dangling by her face. After this ritual the bride was presented with gold rings, earrings and other jewelry.

During that night the bride would be prepared for bridal night, called "Leelth Al Dokhlh" because the groom would then come to take his bride to his new house. Naturally, the bride would be very afraid at the moment, yet curious to meet her husband. In the past, the bride would bring all her furniture, from her family, to her new house.

On foot the bride would walk the streets to reach the groom's home. There was no transportation and the bride and groom walked toward their new home while the women sang until they reached their destination. In modern times the bride usually rides in a luxurious car decorated with artificial flowers and writings in the mirror of the car wishing for a happy marriage.

At the groom's house the ceremony would begin when he signs the wedding contract with the bride's father. The signing usually

occured during the afternoon followed by the groom and a number of his relative visiting the bride's father, then going either to the masjid for Al Asha'a or after Magrib prayers.

In the night, the groom was prepared for Al-Saherh Al-Henna'a or "Al – Makhderh." Men gathered and sat the groom on a stage while a hired team sang to liven up Al-Saherh. In these teams a great singer would preside over the ceremony such as the likes of Muhammad Jeamh Khan or Abudalreb Edrees. He would sing until midnight and then the men would put henna on the groom at the end of the night's events.

The next day for the "Aldeqaqh," relatives of the groom gathered in the tent, the women to grind the coffee and ginger. Each woman would place one hand on the hand of the other woman next to her, together hammering the coffee and then the ginger while singing at the beat of the drums until noon.

In the afternoon, all of the groom's family would go to the bride's home to have lunch. They would then go home to prepare for that night by outfitting the groom to receive his bride. His mother accompanied him to the bride's home for the bridal night as is customary in many places over the world.

On the third day all the events occur in the groom's home where everyone assembles for the lunch meal. The bride would then appear dressed in her jewels and beautiful dress. Smiling, she would dance among the women. This ritual is called "Al Subeh."

On the fourth day, drums and songs could be heard in the groom's home. During the afternoon, all the women would gather at the home of the groom and make "Al Mould," considered a religious party with religious songs and poems. The bride would then sit among her relatives looking wonderful while they congratulated her.

Unfortunately, some of these customs have fallen by the wayside. Things such as the the furniture a bride brings with her to her new house, the wearing of the green alsebah and he aldeqaqh of the groom have suffered a cultural death these days. We can only hope the custom of Aldeqaqh reappear.

Customs and traditions are very important in our life. They reflect our original roots and our culture. Hopefully it will become a main stay that can influence this new age and its generation that needs to continue these customs and traditions.



Dawan wedding dance.

common, but now with economic constraints people tend to shorten their celebrations down to two days.

In the past, the wedding dress used was a green Sabaih, especially in Mukalla and its outskirts, considered an attractive color for the bride to wear on such a special day. However, in Al Wadi Hadramout brides could always chose among a wide selection of dress colors for the wedding party, at a time when women were not affected by new fashion trends. They never thought to imitate others in their fashion and were happy with their own styles. Yet nowadays, women have

replaced the green Sabaih with other dresses for Al Sout Alhena'a, while maintaining the white dress for the bridal night.

In those days the bride had no idea about when her engagement or wedding party day would be or she hadn't met her groom. The

lies of the bride and groom. A tent was erected in the street, on top of the roof of the house or in the biggest room of the house to animate the wedding within it. Now however, some people will hire halls in big hotels even when they erect a tent. This tent is erected and tightened with ropes at the corners of the nearest houses and carpets are strewn across the floor within the tent. The tents are used for the women's parties that include Sout Al hena'a - the party for the girls, the bridal night, Alsubeh, and for the groom participation in the Aldeqaqh event as well.

The weddings in Tarim differ from the weddings of coastal Hadramout even though there are certain similarities in both cities.

According to some old female folklore, which describes the events of the wedding in the past, the four-day wedding parties for the bride moved from her home to the neighbor's

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Men's wedding celebrations

Who said weddings are all about women? Yemen Times explores some of the fascinating traditions for Yemeni men wedding celebrations.

Men's wedding in Taiz

The first day of a wedding, called "Al-Tamsia," begins at 8:00 p.m. People from the local village, relatives, neighbors and friends gather in the groom's house. A group of drummers perform for one hour.

Attendants fire shots from the roof of the groom's house as well as from some neighboring houses before descending to commence the evening festivities with dancing and singing. Some guests dance and sing while others clap and throw money towards those performing.

The following day, drummers signify the beginning of lunchtime. After lunch, guests carry the groom in procession to a large place in the village. The groom wears on his head a green mantilla, indicating the happiness of his new life. It is acceptable if he uses another color if there is no green, but green is preferred.

The groom sits on a chair and the guests surround him. Singers start performing songs, describing the groom and his happy day. The male guests once again fire shots while the women utter trilling cries of joy from the rooftops.

The guests throw money in a shawl placed on the groom's head. The money, according to some village traditions, is for the groom where as in other villages it is for the group of drummers and singers.

The groom is then carried in pro-



Men in Sana'ani weddings wear the sword as a symbol of strength and to slash out evil, as well as flowers to represent beauty, prosperity, and love.

cession to the wedding place. Guests chew qat whilst singing and chanting. In addition, the hairdresser cuts a lock of hair from the back of the groom's neck.

At night, a group of relatives and friends accompany the groom to fetch his bride. They launch gunshots and fireworks along the way. The bride's relatives should receive them as well. When the groom enters to take his bride, a female singer performs. After giving her some money, the groom returns to the wedding location with his bride. The couple arrives to special songs being sung by friends and children from the roofs of cars.

Hadrami celebrations

In a Hadramout wedding the men have their share of the party and celebration. The Zamil (referring to a type of traditional anthems and

songs) is when all friends of the groom walk around him and joyfully rehearse poems and pay tribute to all his good qualities in their verses. The poems may be also about general life matters or family life. Gun shots may be heard during this ceremony, close relatives and friends fire in the air.

Sharh is another ritual of the wedding ceremony. The word sharh means joy and it refers to all moments of song and dance. The songs are usually performed by a local singer who plays the flute and sings local Hadrami songs while the participants dance about dressed in the local costume the Sarung or Futa (men cloth wrapped around the lower part of the body).

The most important part of the male celebration of the wedding is the Henna. The Henna or Hennè is a plant which green leaves are

dried and powdered and used as a dye. The henna is considered a symbol of good things and is used in the wedding celebration of the groom as well as for the bride. During this ceremony the groom is placed in the center and while singing particular song called "Alam henna" which translates the world of Henna, all participants go around and put some Henna on the groom as a blessing to wish him a happy marital life.

Meals during the wedding celebration are usually at lunch.

Generally includes Haris, which is meat, grain with butter and spices. At dinner time the main dish is rice and meat.

Lahj parties

Lahji weddings contain customs that reflect the lifestyle and culture of local citizens. Wedding parties include traditions related to welcoming appearances, specifying the quality and color of clothes for the bride and groom, as well as decorations and accessories. Among Yemeni marriage customs, Lahj is distinguished for its unique wedding style.

Lahji weddings contain many unique traditions related to the bride. The transparent cover placed on the bride's face is not lifted by the groom until he pays her a specified amount of money. This custom is an indication of the bride's

virginity. Additionally, the bride wears a green wedding dress, symbolizing fertility, cultivation and receiving blessings from the land in addition to the bride being blessed with children.

The hands, feet and forehead of the bride are tinged in a special way. The tinge process includes the hands, from the fingers to the upper arms. It also covers the toes to the upper part of the legs. This preparation of the bride makes her appearance pleasing to the groom and leaves a lasting impression. It is an indication of the softness, freshness and delicacy of the bride.

On the wedding day, the groom carries a sword and wears a turban, indicating his manhood and competence. This seemingly coarse demeanor provides a contrast to the bride's softness. The wedding begins with verses of the Holy Qur'an. The bride joins her groom, accompanied by dances and songs composed of poetic words signifying love, passion, happiness and beauty.

The wedding festivities reach their peak with the henna process. The ceremony begins by washing the groom with henna and ends with a henna dance the following day at dawn. The henna dance is performed in unison, accompanied by a melodious rhythm and tune that is said to date back to the time of the Torah.

Age old wedding customs of the south

Every nation has its own folklores, dances, and songs. It has also its own traditions and customs. Yemen is a part of Arab culture and has its own traditions, superstitions, and legends. Every area of the country has special music and dances, expressing the region's lifestyle and common artistic spirit. The popular dances of a community are a religious expression developed over time into an artistic work reflecting the life circumstances and morals of that community.

The southern and eastern governorates in Yemen are famous for maintaining what is called "henna" two days before a wedding party. Women sit beside each other wearing traditional dresses from their area that match the henna color. For example, in Aden and Al-Mahra, women wear shield clothes (Dera'), however, some dress in fashionable,

modern clothing due to the influence of satellite channels.

Some young women go to extremes in choosing palaces and halls for wedding parties. Sameera, a Sana'a resident, revealed that some people rent a hall at YR 600,000 for the wedding night and YR 400,000 for the washing night.

As a solution to this daunting financial problem, prominent social figures along with the ruling party resorted to holding mass marriage in order to reduce the costs of wedding parties.

It is not only Yemen that suffers from such high-cost weddings. The United States has established a fund for assisting youth interested in marriage so as to avoid a prevalence of unmarried citizens.

Umm Ibtasam shared that traditional wedding customs still exist and are quite costly. She believed that getting married in Sana'a is

much more expensive than in Aden. In addition to the customary dowry, a sum of money is given to the uncles and brothers of the bride. According to some norms, the groom must give the bride something on the night of consummation. Some present five to seven pounds of gold. Each pound is worth YR 30,000.

High costs of washing

Due to the high cost, washing ceremonies have been abandoned by most families. It is commonly known that this ceremony is connected to the wedding party the day following marriage. Guests are served a lunch consisting of rice with meat in Aden or porridge (gruel) with soup in Radfan and Abyan. In the northern parts of Yemen, salad, meat dishes, Saltah (mixed soup and fenugreek) accompany the main meal.

During this day, monetary gifts are given to the groom as support for marriage expenses. Additionally, other presents such as perfumes and antiquities are given to the bride. Guests well-known to the couple give as much money as they can afford, sometimes ranging from YR 500 to YR 2,000.

The high costs of marriage are exacerbated by the quality of clothes worn by the bride. This includes green cloth covered with the fragrance of Arabian jasmine.

Customarily, on the day of the washing ceremony, men have lunch together at 1:00 p.m., while women gather around 3:00 p.m. However, most washing ceremonies are no longer connected to the lunch meal due to increased prices. The ceremony has been exchanged for a night of dancing for women. They dance after Al-Eshaa' prayer until midnight.

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Yemeni Weddings

Dangerous customs in wedding festivities

As the Yemeni school year draws to a close, families prepare for the upcoming annual wedding season, beginning in July and lasting through Ramadan into the new year. In less than a week, hundreds of wedding parties take place throughout the cities and villages of Yemen, in celebration of the union of newly-married couples.

Yemeni weddings are both beautiful and charming, their rites and customs differing from one place to another. And yet, amidst such beauty lie a variety of unfavorable social behavior, which spoil an otherwise pleasurable occasion.

Traditionally, Yemeni wedding festivities are restricted to Sundays and Thursdays. Wedding preparations commence one week before the actual event with the arrival of relatives and friends of the groom to the groom's house. Then the countdown to the actual wedding day begins, a day that includes two periods of activity. The first period starts in the afternoon until around 6 p.m. The second period lasts from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., except Thursday night celebrations, which continue into the early morning, especially in rural areas.

On the morning of the wedding, the bride adorns herself in her special wedding garb with the help of her family after returning from a steam bath. She begins her wedding festivities from the afternoon until the evening, when relatives of the groom come to whisk her off to her new husband. All of this occurs to the tune of happy songs and what in Yemen is called "Al-Zafa."

For the groom, the wedding day starts with

hairdressing and a steam bath. His family prepares lunch for guests while he eats his own lunch and puts on his wedding clothes. The groom's wedding festivities commence with the sound of drums called "Al-Bara'a," and fireworks. The groom and guests then perform the Dhuhr and 'Asr prayers at the mosque before proceeding to the wedding hall. During the celebration, guests sing and chant.

In the evening, there is "Al-Zafa" (special songs and terza rima) followed by the presentation of monetary gifts to the groom. This tradition of giving money to the groom is meant to assist the groom in covering the expenses of his new marriage. The celebration continues until the arrival of the bride.

Positive Traditions of Yemeni Weddings:

Yemeni weddings have positive customs, including the gathering of relatives and friends under one roof, representing cooperation and solidarity among the people of the area. Additionally, the monetary gifts are a good tradition in that they provide support to the groom who undoubtedly will face new financial responsibilities. One excellent tradition is mass weddings, which involve the marriage of groups of brides and grooms, whether rich or poor, at one time.

Negative Wedding Customs:

Despite the many benefits found within Yemeni wedding festivities, there are also unfavorable customs and behavior that occur with the onset of the wedding season, particularly in rural areas. Such customs include:

Increasing of the dowry: This phenomenon is clearly a means of financial control implemented by some parents who view the marrying of their daughters as a commercial deal. The husband who is subjected to such treatment is expected to pay all that the father asks, leading many Yemeni grooms into a pit of debt for which they do not have the means to repay.

Lavishness and wasting in banquets: From expensive wedding gowns to high-cost rental halls, the race to have the most extravagant of weddings contradicts teachings of Islam, including the statement of the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention and free

him and his family from all derogatory things, that "the best wedding is that upon which the least trouble and expense is bestowed." Also, pressures to hold such lavish weddings are most devastating to the poor, who have limited income.

Gun Shooting: This is the most dangerous of Yemeni wedding customs, rendering many wedding festivities into funerals. Additionally, it is a source of worry and unwanted noise for citizens and travelers, especially the sick, elderly, and children.

Wedding Motorcades: The parading of a set number of cars, whose design and quantity are used as an indicator of the bride's status, is yet another custom contradictory to Islamic wedding etiquette.

High-pitched microphones: Use of microphones from the early morning until late hours in the night, sometimes up to an entire week is a huge problem due to the noise factor, which irritates owners of houses in neighborhoods where weddings are taking place. Additionally, hospitals have complained about the annoyance such microphone use poses to patients, robbing the sick of much-needed quiet and rest.

Magic and Jugglery: They are from the dirty phenomena, which appear throughout wedding parties, especially during the evening. Additionally, they are from amongst those acts that are deemed impermissible in Islam, yet are still practiced in Yemen, especially in rural areas.

The uncle's right: It is an amount of money the groom is forced to pay to the maternal uncles of the bride and it varies between 5-10 thousand Yemeni riyals. In some areas it is paid to the paternal uncles as a gift from the bride and her mother.

There is also a custom—different from one place to another and from one bride to another—whereby a bride requests a certain amount of money as a condition for unveiling her face. Most of the time, this creates problems and embarrassment on the part of the groom, especially if the bride demands a high amount of money. Sometimes the bride will delay consummation of the marriage until the day after receiving the money. Nowadays, this custom has become an essential part of the

marriage process in Yemen.

Women crowding the bride: This is the custom of women surrounding the bride in an attempt to prevent the groom from approaching his legal wife. The justification used for such a practice is that it prevents "shameful" behavior

from occurring between the bride and groom.

Practice of the above-mentioned customs are not only baseless Islamically, but also prove to be both dangerous and in many cases, a public nuisance, enough reason to abandon them altogether.



Weapons in Yemen are considered tools of expression and are often used to communicate anger, happiness, greeting families, and firing in the air at weddings.

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