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YT Person of the Year 2007

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SANA'A, Jan. 6 — Born in 1962 in Lahj's Qabbaita district, Ahmad Saif Hashid is the founder and owner of Al-Mustaqella newspaper. A prominent parliamentarian with a high interest in human rights issues, Hashid was selected as a member of the Parliamentary Public Freedoms and Human Rights Committee and Rapporteur of Independent MPs' Caucus.

Hashid chairs Change, an organization for defending rights and freedoms, and is a member of the Civil Community Coalition known as OMAM. He graduated from the Sana'a-based Higher Judicial Institute in 1996, and prior to that obtained a postgraduate diploma in international politics from the Faculty of Commerce and Economics in Sana'a University. He also obtained a license in law from Aden University in 1989 and a diploma in military sciences from the Aden

Military College in 1983, and recently has attended training courses on social and human rights issues.

Between October 1997 and February 2003, Hashid served as Chief Judge of the Central Area's Preliminary Court. From 1990-91, he worked as head of the Judicial Investigation Department.

Hashid was appointed chairman for the coalition of "Independents for Change" following Yemen's presidential and local council elec-



MP Ahmad Saif Hashid

tions on September 20, 2006. He was a central contributor to founding and establishing the Charitable Cooperative Society in the Qabbaita district and later became the society's secretary-general. He served as editor-in-chief of "Qabbaita Newsletter" since its establishment in December 2000 until it was shut down by the Ministry of Information in October 2004 after publishing its 49th issue.

The parliamentarian

has demonstrated a key role in organizing multiple social activities within and beyond the Qabbaita District, participated in several symposiums, discussions and workshops and has written various published and unpublished studies and essays.

"Yemen's Madmen", containing popular conversations with commoners, is one of the famous books produced by Hashid, who is also preparing a book on intellectualism, due to go to press soon.

Hashid is committed to equality in constitutional and legal issues, a fact demonstrated through his positions and advocacy of rights and freedoms. Such actions exposed the man to a series of attacks and legal violations, as well as arbitrary procedures by the authorities. In 2003, he escaped an assassination attempt after writing a news report disclosing the miserable conditions of prisons and prisoners in Yemen. The incident left his driver dead.

Continued on page 2

Sa'ada crisis worsens amid threats of violence

By: Yemen Times Staff

SA'ADA, Jan. 6 — Incidents of mysterious killings between civilians and government troops are increasing from day to day, tribal and media sources said, adding

that a serious incident took place inside the province's government complex where the governor's security guards assaulted sheikh Yaser Mujalli, a prominent tribal leader in the restive province.

The incident left eight of the sheikh's escorts dead and another seven injured. This enraged the tribal leader, brother of well-known Parliament member Othman Hussein Mujalli, who announced two days after the incident during a huge tribal rally that avenging the death of the victims will risk senior statesmen by attacking the government's vital centers.

Sa'ada tribal sheikhs interpret the killings as government policy targeting their lives. According to the sheikhs, opportunistic officials, whom they described as "war brokers", must stop shedding the blood of innocent civilians.

Tribal sources claimed that the incident was machinated by government agents against Mujalli's family. They indicated that intensive shooting from the government facilities overlooking the scene is clear-cut evidence of agency involvement in shedding Sa'ada citizens' blood.

Concluding their rally, the tribesmen vowed in an agreement to stand in solidarity with the victims' relatives, with defectors held responsible for their actions. Sa'ada sheikhs remained adherent to the first demand in the agreement, that of pressuring authorities to accelerate their prosecution of killers and those who support them, as well as form a fact-finding committee to assess the present situation.

Tribal observers expect such an incident to lead to a breakdown in relations between the government and tribesmen backing it in its war on Houthi supporters. These expectations are based on

observers' analyses of the complicated situation in Sa'ada.

Tribesmen, however, claimed that continued silence without a reaction to the government complex incident may encourage the state to escalate its alleged barbaric operations against citizens and prevent tribal sheikhs from exercising their influence within their communities. They continued that the government's insistence on implementing its military policies, contradicting the tribal agreement, may cause it to suffer heavy damages and losses in the war-torn governorate.

The governorate has experienced stability since December 16, the day of the government complex incident. The tribes of Khawlan Bani Amer and Hamdan Bin Zaid, to which Sheikh Mujalli belongs, labeled the event as "a plotted crime targeting the sheikh's sons."

Continued on page 2

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"Y" LAUNCHES ITS NETWORK TODAY

HIS EXCELLENCE PRESIDENT ALI ABDULLAH SALEH MAKES THE FIRST CALL ON THE NETWORK OF "Y", THE NEW GSM OPERATOR

Aden: President Ali Abdullah Saleh launched "Y" Company, the third GSM mobile service provider in Yemen on Monday.

The new company was officially launched through a call phone conversation between the President Aden and H.E. the Minister of Telecommunications Information Technology "Y" main Mobile Switching Center in Sana'a. The President announced the establishment of mobile services to create a competitive environment with companies offering competitive services at better rates to end-users. Saying, "We believe that

"Y" will play a large role in presenting better services in the telecommunications sector in terms of revenue. We hope these companies will benefit the country."

communications and Information Technology, Kamal Al-Jabri the Ministry is working to

"Y" Inad

telecommunications sector in Yemen, and will positively impact mobile users." He added that the total investment cost of the project is approximately 2 billion YH and that "Y" launched

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE BOOKED THEIR "Y" NUMBERS

"Y" the third GSM operator in Yemen has recently opened a number of points of service in Yemen in a progress to open service in main cities and other important areas.

Service have been opened in Sana'a, one in Taiz, Mukalla, and Ibb.

Locations of the points of service have been

Important locations have been chosen for Zubairy Street, Hadda Street, Taiz Street. In Khwa cross-roads has been chosen as the location in Taiz City, and Orater Street is the location in Aden with a new location in Shiekh Othman

In Sana'a, Sana'a is the POS location and in Ibb, has been opened.

The campaign has exceeded people wishing on the minute butlers' offices and a sign of success since launching competitive services.

By launching a services and in

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"Your Number" "Y" numbers has until the network

"Y" / PREPAID S

An unprecedented exceptional

For the first time in Yemen, Sana'a hosted a concert in Al-Fhawra Sports City on Wednesday GSM Company "Y" celebrating the announce

The invitation to the Concert was open a huge crowd exceeding 40,000 Wednesday. Everybody was obvious enthusiasm was

The concert witnessed incomparable atmosphere from the public. The artist's performance was full of joy, music and rhythm. The artist's performance was met with applause and admiration from everyone around.

Ragheb Alameh inaugurated the concert, at 8:00 pm, with a small speech in which he showed his deep love for Yemen and asked God to protect the country unity and political leadership.

"I consider Yemen my second and first country. For this reason, I am really glad to welcome you at this event, which "Y" sponsored, at the announcement of its prepaid Service, "tamam", Ragheb said at the start of his first song at the concert.

He also added: "I really wish for all of you to be always "tamam" (fine) with "Y", which allowed me to

Ragheb sang a number of hits that marked his career as a singer. He started the evening with a Yemeni song dedicated to all Yemenis, "Sirru Hobbi", which revealed his true love to Al Mehdhar (the famous Yemeni writer and composer), Yemen and the Yemeni art as a whole. He also performed various Yemeni songs with his orchestra, in an atmosphere full of joy, music and rhythm.

The artist's performance was met with applause and admiration from everyone around.

Ragheb kept on delighting his cheering audience through this unique concert

At the end of the concert, Ragheb Alameh expressed his appreciation to the Yemeni government and President Ali Abdullah Saleh for their support. He expressed his word of gratitude for the cooperation that has been the reason behind bringing HIITS-Unitel into existence, in a vital investment with a plan to invest \$ 2 million at present and another \$2 million within the next 2 years. "Al Kalai said." He also added: "We have full trust and belief in H/H President Ali Abdullah Saleh's non-stop endeavors to create a healthy atmosphere for such remarkable investments in Yemen."

Ragheb Alameh was hosted by Yemeni foreign affairs minister, Dr Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, who offered him a Yemeni gift in appreciation to his achievements in the domain of art.

The artist ended his trip with a visit to "Babb el-Yemen", which he considered to be one of the most important tourist sites. He admired the place and its historical value. He



COVER

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Mr. Al Kalai

A very informative presentation was performed by Mr. Inad Hamed, HIITS-Unitel CEO, in which he displayed the company's business plan headlines, technical and human resources capabilities and the coverage plan during the first phases of operations. Mr. Inad inaugurated his presentation by talking about the Company's Mission Statement, vision, values and objectives in details as follows:

Mission Statement:
"We are working towards service excellence to become among the best GSM operators in Yemen, aiming to reach and exceed the expectations of our customers, shareholders, vendors, dealers, employees and community alike".

- Mr. Nader Kalai, from Syriatel Mobile Telecom S.A, Chairman.
- Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Abd-Rabbo Al Kor, Vice Chairman.
- Mr. Abu Bakr Nor Eldien, representing H/H Saoud Bin Fahod Bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud.
- Mr. Mohammed Muradha Al Dandashi, Syriatel mobile Telecom S.A
- Mr. Mohammed Al Eiban, from Kuwait Finance & Investment Company.
- Mr. Loay Robbat, from

During the press conference, Mr. Nader Al Kalai revealed the future intent of all the investors in HIITS-Unitel to start other investments in Yemen in a number of different fields,

Al-Mahrah: A unique world of customs and traditions

By: Abdulrazak Al-Buraihi
For Yemen Times

Mahri women enjoy high prestige among the Mahrah community, which is what gives them a strong personality with very unique customs and traditions among most Yemeni women.

The Mahri woman has been granted the opportunity to thoroughly dominate the family, as she's the decision-maker, the supervisor of family issues and the mastermind behind daily life, even in her husband's presence. Her charisma and strong prestigious position within the family gives Mahri women the responsibility for family matters both inside and outside the home.

Located in eastern Yemen, Al-Mahrah governorate is the exception among the nation's governorates, attributed to numerous factors concerning Al-Mahrah's various characteristics that shape its own privacy. With its own unique environment and terrain, the governorate also has special customs, traditions and human activity in various domains.

Women replacing men

In Al-Mahrah governorate, it's customary for a woman to replace man when the latter is absent. It's also common that most Al-Mahrah locals are immigrants; therefore, one often finds the house free of men, but regardless, family matters go on as normal. Women efficiently manage the family's affairs inside and out, to the extent that they receive guests and their husband's relatives, serving them warmly.

Haisah Bakheet, chairwoman of the Yemeni Women's Union in Al-Mahrah, asserts that women in Al-Mahrah mostly are stronger than men, attributing this to the nature of women's work. As she points out, "Mahri women not only are housewives, but also mothers, sisters and housekeepers.

"Like Yemeni women in other governorates, they have aspirations. They desire to be men's partners in various domains, they aspire to rise to higher positions and to be as civilized as other more developed communities," she says.

Dowries are a complicated problem

Expensive bridal dowries are a daunting problem about which most Mahri parents and both male and female youths complain. Nevertheless, no solutions have been found yet regarding this rampant phenomenon. Dowries sometimes are exorbitant, skyrocketing to between YR 3 and 4 million, unlike in other governorates.

Such high dowries aren't caused by a shortage of brides, but rather because of deeply-rooted customs within Al-Mahrah's community. A bride's father is entitled to set his daughter's dowry, regardless of the groom's circumstances.

"Most Mahri women complain about the expensive dowries, for which one reason is price hikes. Youths are unable to pay YR 3-4 million for the dowry, gold and the costly open-ended hospitality," shares Husniyah Arafat, head of the Women's Development Department in Al-Mahrah.

Unfair conditions

Su'ad Abdulmalik says, "The Mahri community still has the complicated problem of finding wives with reasonable dowries, which I attribute to the fact that the community depicts Mahri women as strong individuals, thus causing dowries to increase to an unaffordable amount. This is what makes our area youths indebted, bringing them work hardships and causing them to migrate abroad to find suitable jobs in order to pay such dowries."

She further argues that the difficulty of marrying in Al-Mahrah governorate isn't limited to high dowries, but involves other social norms and wedding rituals that add unbearable burdens upon grooms. Such issues make marriage impossible.

Mahri grooms must provide and furnish a self-contained apartment, in



Nashtoon beach in Al-Mahrah

addition to organizing weeklong wedding festivities, at which sumptuous meals are served day and night for locals from the same area.

Secret qat chewing

As most residents of Al-Mahrah have no desire to chew qat, the governorate has few qat chewers and those who do chew secretly. Because it's considered shameful for women to chew qat, Mahri women are never seen or heard

Expensive bridal dowries are a daunting problem about which most Mahri parents and both male and female youths complain. Nevertheless, no solutions have been found yet regarding this rampant phenomenon. Dowries sometimes are exorbitant, skyrocketing to between YR 3 and 4 million, unlike in other governorates.

to chew qat, to the extent that they even prevent their husbands and sons from chewing inside the home! For this reason, Mahri men chew qat in women-free homes, at hotels or in public places.

In fact, if a Mahri fiancée discovers that her intended chews qat, backed by her family, she immediately breaks off their engagement, as if he had committed some uncontroversial outrage.

In an attempt to address the qat issue with some local women, when asked whether Mahri women chew it, one woman promptly responded that qat is disgraceful and prohibited for women.

While the governorate doesn't grow qat, it is available in every area, but mostly in cities. It is transported to Al-Mahrah from other governorates such as Sana'a, Rada' and Al-Dhale'.

Because qat has begun to be sold there only within the past few years, there are few qat chewers in Al-Mahrah. Notwithstanding this, some Mahri markets are designated specifically for selling qat and such markets are busy all day long with qat chewers visiting them frequently.

Calmness and simplicity of life

Al-Mahrah residents seek to lead calm and simple lives. Preferring to follow discipline and the law, they demand improved services and living standards, an additional feature of the area's locals. Although they live such

a way of life, it should be understood that this part of Yemen still has persistence and its own aspirations.

Migration is an old habit

Most customs of Al-Mahrah locals closely resemble those of Gulf countries because most of its locals are migrants living in such countries. Additionally, Mahri women have much in common with those from the Gulf, especially those in the area of Hawf, which borders Oman.

A transnational road crosses the area, connecting Yemen with the Gulf nations. Gulf residents, particularly Omanis, use this road to exchange visits with Al-Mahrah locals.

For these reasons, those who visit the governorate discover a remarkable resemblance between the appearance of Mahri women and those in the Gulf. For instance, both wear the burqa, that covers a woman's face.

Another similarity is observed when such area residents greet each other face-to-face, during which they stand close with their noses gently touching, an age-old custom still used by nomads both inside and outside of Yemen.

As a result of this strong relationship between Mahris and Gulf residents, the streets of the governorate's capital city of Al-Ghaidha and its other cities are crowded with cars from the Gulf. Some vehicles with Gulf license plates operate as taxis in the governorate, with 70 percent of Al-Mahrah's total cars being numbered.

Ancient bonds

Mahris and Omanis enjoy strong bonds of affection and a good-neighbor policy going back many years; thus, the homes of each are easily accessible to both sides.

Lying at its fingertips, Oman has offered Al-Mahrah a helping hand by implementing several infrastructure projects there. However, as the Omani-built hospital in Al-Ghaidha is able to treat only curable diseases, most patients with incurable diseases are transported three hours away to Oman.

A marvelous language

Al-Mahris have numerous customs and traditions that definitely make them special, including a marvelously unique language known as Mahri. Besides Arabic, area residents use this language to communicate with each other.

As Mahri is purported to be the oldest language on the Arabian Peninsula, historically speaking and looking at the issue from a heritage standpoint, the Mahri language is a marvel of civilization by which the area is characterized.

Moreover, archeologists, historians and linguists specialized in ancient

Yemeni languages argue that the current Mahri language is the same language spoken during the Himyarite state.

Surprisingly, numerous elderly Mahris did not attend school and therefore, are not fluent in the colloquial dialect. Instead, they speak broken Arabic. Although it's not written down like other languages, area residents hold onto their language tenaciously because they love it.

Varied customs

In interviews with Mahri locals, honesty, generosity, hospitality, good

treatment of strangers and a love of peace were observed as their particular features. In fact, in ancient times, travelers passing through Al-Mahrah needed no money or food, as locals provided them everything. Additionally, mosque extensions and attachments also were constructed primarily for guests.

It's also common for Mahris to cooperate with each other in preparing for wedding parties by serving meals and supporting the poor and needy. Further, tribes in the area attempt to speed up the alleviation of pain and sorrow.

Additionally, Mahris are decent and well-mannered to the extent that one is hard-pressed to find dishonest or guilty individuals that deviate to commit rape or violate other social or legal norms because they all fear bringing shame, vice or disgrace upon their tribe. They further maintain their social solidarity by visiting each other.

Area overview

Considered Yemen's eastern window to the Gulf, Al-Mahrah governorate borders Oman to the east and Saudi Arabia to the north. To the south, it overlooks the Arabian Sea and borders the Hadramout on the west.

The governorate's area is 67,300 square meters for its 89,000 residents, its lowest population, according to the 2004 census.

Most reside in its coastal cities, particularly Dimqut, Al-Ghaidha, Hawf, Qashn and Saihout. With its nine districts including the capital city of Al-Ghaidha, Neshtoon is its most important and historically famed port for catching and exporting fish.

Additionally, the area is famous for cultivating eucalyptus trees, as well as producing and trading incense. With 250 kilometers of coastline, it tops the other governorates in its abundance of fish and sea resources, while its numerous archeological and tourist sites, located mainly in the areas of Al-Ghaidha, Hawf, Qashn, and Saihout, contain streams and springs.

Desert and plains areas also dominate the governorate, which is hot in summer and moderate in winter.

While its infrastructure remains in its infancy, it improves annually. For example, compared to the 1980s, Al-Mahrah is now much better. Nevertheless, it still lacks a complete structure regarding all its spheres of infrastructure; however, its project-related aspirations and plans are a good omen, as everyone is working diligently to develop the Yemeni governorate and enable it to compete with the others.



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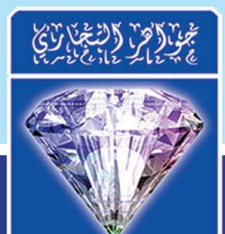
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Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,
(1951 - 1999)
Founder of Yemen Times

OUR
OPINION2007 Person
of the Year

Every year, the Yemen Times chooses an individual to receive its Person of the Year award in recognition of his or her efforts. The criteria are that the person should be successful in his or her personal life, as well as done something substantial for his or her community, even if on a small scale.

The 2007 Person of the Year is Member of Parliament Ahmed Saif Hashed. A member of Parliament's Human Rights Committee, he has established an organization called Change, which seeks to defend human rights in Yemen. He also is publisher of Al-Mustaqila newspaper and a member of a civil society coalition called Itilaf.

Hashed is one of few Yemeni advocates who were quite active throughout 2007 in defending human rights, being subjected to various abuses and harassments as a consequence.

As a lawyer and military college graduate, Hashed knows the inner workings of the system, which helps him in human rights battles against influential individuals or dictatorial authorities.

The author of much research, he currently is working on a book about the simple minded in Yemen. It is an analytical publication including interviews with everyday Yemenis.

We believe that by recognizing Hashed's efforts and achievements in human rights, we are playing a role in promoting the cause of freedoms in Yemen.

Our choice this year is an attempt to draw national and international attention to this activist who, despite being a member of Parliament, is being harassed continuously by the authorities and those individuals opposing freedom and human rights.

His mission to advocate freedoms in Yemen is in line with the Yemen Times' own mission. As we highlight his character, we would like to lobby both national and international support to assist us in this cause.

In these turbulent times, many brave men and women have left our nation, abandoned the cause or died for it. This is why we should recognize and appreciate the few who still are trying.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Jobless in abundance

By: Dr. Samia Al-Aghbari

The majority of youths and teenage boys and girls suffer idleness. They constituted an idle group that has no institution or organization to rescue them from their miserable situations. Idle and jobless people are realized in every small and large family irrespective of parents' and other family members' being educated or illiterate, poor or wealthy.

Idleness has become a prominent phenomenon in our community as jobless people are looked at by several families normally without any need for trouble. What the cause of being jobless is. Why teenage people and youths, pondered upon as pillars of the future in our country, are staying at home without any work to do. Why did these youths and teenagers waste their time and what are the consequences of wasting time? How can we rescue these youths and teenagers from the blight of being workless and help them make use of their time in a profitable and useful manner?

Of the most important factors that lead youths and teenagers in our country to be stranded idle inside their homes without any job are the means of upbringing in the family climate, as most of the Yemeni families never care for acclimatizing their kids with organizing and making use of their times at an early age. Families are perceived to be carefree toward their children and don't care for modifying their behaviors and taking them to the right way.

Families' being indifferent toward modifying their kids' behavior is one of the primary reasons behind the phenomenon of idleness among youths while the school's negative role helps exacerbate the phenomenon. Most of the primary and secondary schools don't play an integral educational role to increase student's awareness about exploiting their times, nor do these schools care for discovering talented and more able kids in order to encourage them and develop their skills.

Although the Yemeni government, represented by the agencies, corporations and ministries, concerned with teenagers and youths from both sexes, organize summer camps and cultural and sporting activities, most of the youths and teenagers refrain from participating in these activities, as they have not enough money or their parents prevent them from doing so.

Lack of awareness among families about helping their kids to make use of their times is one of the main factors behind the phenomenon. As a result, many teenagers and youths spend their time sleeping until noon everyday, particularly during their summer vacation. They stay up overnight before the television screens and computers, and therefore add an extra burden on their parents and families. These youths never make use of their days. They remain dependent on their parents to provide them with livelihood as if they are residing in five-star hotels.

I wish I know that these youths value the various services, including food, dresses and other daily expenses, which their parents offer them. Sometimes, we see that parents give their idle sons money for qat and cigarette, which is why most of these youths and teenagers, particularly the males, grow into tyrants exercising power on their fathers, moths and sisters.

Teenagers and youths become idle from productive and lucrative works, empty-minded and disabled.

They do not become capable of thinking properly and logically, nor are they eligible run their families' affairs. Many youths and teenagers don't feel ashamed when they ask their mothers or sisters to give them pocket money for qat and cigarette. In event their mothers or sisters refuse to give them any money, they threaten to resort to violence against them and prevent them from going out their homes. And, if their fathers refuse to give them pocket money, they resort to steal away any money belonging to their parents or sisters. Finding no money for qat and cigarette, many youths and teenagers prefer to flee their homes and sleep with their peers, thereby forcing their parents to search for them and ask them to return home on condition of providing with pocket money. In this case, parents find themselves compelled to agree and meet any demands listed by their kids.

Families nationwide are advised to give top priority to resolving the phenomenon of joblessness among youths, and it is impossible for kids to get rid of idleness as long as parents and heads of households spend much of their time doing nothing.

Organizing time and respecting work, be it physical or mental, is the basic means for educating our kids and teaching them how to be more enthusiastic for exploiting their times and opportunities. Schools and other educational institutions are expected to play a complementary role to that of families in this respect. Discovering and developing teenagers' talents and skills in any major is due to contribute to ending the phenomenon of joblessness and make teenagers engaged in profitable and joyful works.

Source: Al-Thawra State-run Daily.

Handicapped authority
in the Square of Liberty

By: Abdu Saif Al-Qasbi

The statements, written by Usama Ghalib, Chief Editor of Al-Nass Weekly on the last page of the paper

indicating that God has exempted the weak, handicapped, ailing, blind and lame people from jihad, implied an applicable connotation to government of the General People Congress. However, the ruling party and its government don't exempt the handicapped from taking to streets for the sake of Mr. President and backing its most recent initiative, aimed at replacing the parliamentary system by a presidential one.

The editor's statements have a wider echo in the sense of sarcasm and irony among journalists, who attended a sit-in organized by Women Journalists Without Chains more than two weeks ago. That day was Tuesday. But, the event coincided with handicapped people going to the Square of Liberty before journalists did, thereby joining a demonstration backing the most recent initiative made by President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

I personally believe that the demonstration of the handicapped is something normal, and there is nothing

strange in the GPC government's imposition of jihad on the handicapped to struggle for the sake of Mr. President. The Almighty did exempt the handicapped from going to jihad for his sake, but the ruling party, as apposed to the Almighty's will, forces the handicapped, as well as the dead to vote for its favor in any election.

I bet on the authenticity of my words, particularly as my colleagues did see that almost all those who joined a demonstration in support of Mr. President's initiative are handicapped. Via my observations, along with other colleagues, we found that one of the demonstrators saying to a friend, who was sitting on the wheelchair, in a manner combining between sarcasm and irony, "Lets back Mr. President's initiative." Another demonstrator responded with a smile implying that he pretends to be handicapped, however, he enjoys good health.

Had there been clashes and rioting during the demonstration exposing the physically-handicapped people to danger, all would have jumped from their wheelchairs and fled like the deer.

Sitting on the wheelchair, a third demonstrator asked his neighboring friend, "How much will the

SILVER LINING

Post-Ahmer challenges

I understand it is not the end of life.

It is, however, certain the death of Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmer, speaker of parliament and chief of Hashid, Yemen's biggest tribe, will generate some challenges at different levels. His death will affect the regime of President Saleh for Al-Ahmer used to play an instrumental role in shaping up the relationship between the tribal fabric and state.

Due to his popularity and influence among the tribes across the country, al-Ahmer used to offer solutions to the problems here and there and are sometimes of serious threat to Saleh's regime. He was a great support to the man despite his rejection that a military man takes over power in 1978. He had to accept Saleh as a president following Saudi pressure. He used his strong relationship with the Gulf countries, mainly Saudi Arabia in cementing gaps and sorting out differences with the regime of Saleh every now and then, particularly before the two countries signed border treaty in 2000.

He played a pivotal role in attaining this agreement with the Saudis and orchestrated efforts to normalize relationship with Kuwait following Yemen's government support to the regime of Saddam during his invasion to Kuwait. Al-Ahmer was the only politician who signed the Oath and Agreement Accord following the political crisis in 1993 on condition that former vice president Ali Salem al-Beidh returns to Sana'a from Amman and not to Aden. He stood by Saleh during the 1994 civil war and mobilized public support to the fight against the socialists. There are other occasions that show he is a big loss to Saleh's regime.

I understand also that his tribe Hashid will miss his wisdom, sobriety, insight, devotion and loyalty. The man was a gigantic fighter for preserving the tribal mores and their influence in the life of the Yemeni people at large. He served long years in the parliamentary work. However, he used to run the parliament in the morning and goes home in the afternoon to sort out problems between tribesmen according to the tribal system. His role and the role of the tribe in the state was marginalized during the office of President Ibrahim al-Hamdi who was assassinated in 1977. Yet, his influence expanded during the reign of Saleh, unleashing the dominance of the tribe over state institutions.

Therefore, al-Ahmer was an instrumental figure in maintaining the unity and togetherness of his tribe and its presence at the power center. In fact, he was one of the key reasons that facilitated the continuity of the tribal system in the country and pushed for its strong presence in the life of the people. His popularity was reflected in the big funeral in which hundred thousands of people crowded to bid him farewell. His elder son Sadeq has been already acknowledged as a new leader of the tribe. However, does he have the charisma of his father and influence to attain the loyalty of his people as well as preserve its unity and power?

The most important issue is the relationship between his sons and the president. His elder son is not in bad terms with the president like his brothers Hamid and Hussein who strongly opposed Saleh during 2006 presidential elections. The two people have been very vocal in lashing out at Saleh and his administration to the extent of demanding a public uprising against his regime. Will Saleh be able to tame his relationship with the young motivated and influential persons who have the ambition and nerve for power, resulting in a compromise that ensures their influence and power both at the tribal and state levels? Otherwise, will they continue their challenge to the man and cripple his tactics in transferring power to his son? This is why the post-Ahmer era poses serious challenges standing ahead Saleh's regime in 2008 which is already pregnant with pending challenges including the uprising in the south and the deadlocked dialogue between the ruling party and the opposition coalition over constitutional amendments and other issues in the offing.

Happy New Year.

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

government pay us for joining the demonstration since the early morning up until now?"

We also noticed that two handicapped girls were walking with regular steps and at the same time smiling. This behavior confirms that both girls have been trained at one of the women police camps on how to behave as if they are handicapped, however, their laughter implies that they are actors and not handicapped.

Some of the buses, owned by the Handicapped Association, arrived at the demonstration scene without any passengers aboard while other coaches were filled with girls, who appeared to have been forced by the authorities to leave their schools and join the march. These

girls preferred to stay inside the coaches because they can not master the art of behaving as handicapped.

Speakers at the handicap demonstration were trembling while addressing participants. Instead of calling the demonstration venue "Square of Liberty" as chanted by their friends, they used to call it "Square of Liberty" as named by journalists.

In conclusion, I hoped that the woman journalist Tawakul Karaman selected any day other than Tuesday for sit-ins or protests organized by its organization, Women Journalists Without Chains.

Source: Al-Nass Weekly.

SKETCHED OPINION



How to discover
Weapons of Mass
Destruction

By: Samer

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Yemen Press Review



Al-Thawri Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Yemeni Socialist Party
Thursday, January 3, 2008

Top Stories

- YSP mourns Ba Shammakh's death, condemns Bhuto's assassination
- Sana'a University teaching staff demands security officers be replaced
- Government updates military campaign in Shara'ab district of Taiz, citizens horrified
- Arab and Muslim nations lose Yemen's wise man, Sheikh Al-Ahmar
- Islamic leaders and organizations mourn demise of Sheikh Al-Ahmar
- YSP leader: Absence of political will made ruling party unready for dialogue

Dr. Mohammed Saleh Ali, Chairman of Yemeni Socialist Party's Political Circle declared that absence of the political will on the part of ruling General People Congress made this party unready for the dialogue, as well as unconvinced of any fruits expected to be reached by such a dialogue, the YSP-affiliated weekly reported in one of its front page articles. "We have never seen any serious and unified political will for ruling party to be reflected in its positions of the dialogue. As a result, we found no qualified GPC members to dialogue with, considering GPC a national partner with credibility and enough will to manage balanced and serious dialogue with the aim of addressing all the national issues presented to the dialogue table," the weekly quoted Ali as

saying.

The YSP leader added that GPC officials must be brave enough to take brave decisions regarding the persisting political and social issues. He urged the ruling party to cease insulting and humiliating the dialogue, which functions as an effective tool for managing differences between political opponents in Yemen, mainly when the issues presented to the dialogue table are very important and of high concern to all the national parties. There are various issues presented to the dialogue table for discussion such as the constitutional amendments related with electoral suffrages.

According to Ali, any dialogue has criteria and morals that must not submit to the ruling party's will and desire in a way helping it select any agreement terms to abide by and ignore others. He concluded that such ruling party's policies make the dialogue lose its significance and vitality.



Al-Wahdawi Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)
Tuesday, January 1, 2008

Top Stories

- Over one million people attend funeral services of Parliament Speaker
- JMP: Yemen lost a great personality that contributed much to defending Revolution
- Four people reportedly killed in an arm market blast
- Indian universities begin to take procedures preventing Yemeni students

from attending classes over intuition fees held-up

- JMP laments loss of great leader
- Sana'a Airport authorities attack pilgrims' recipients

Happiness has turned into rage on the part of those anxiously waiting to receive their relative pilgrims at the Sana'a International Airport as the airport officers attacked them several and beat them with sticks and jiggles, the NUPO's mouthpiece reported in a front page story. It quoted eyewitnesses as saying that Central Security personnel barbarically beat persons waiting for their relative pilgrims and pointed their pistols at them at 2 a.m. because of their protests against favoritism exercised by police officers who allowed four recipients to wait for their relatives inside the arrival room but prevented others from entering the room.

The paper went on to say that the victims complained that the security officers at the airport tried more than one time to enrage them and take them implicitly to quarrel, using ugly expressions and badmouthing, as well as directing sticks at their heads. Another eyewitness also revealed that the police officers insulted a Yemeni Jewish citizen, who was lining up among the recipients and drove him away from the airport's gate as he attempted to inquire them about the time of the flight's arrival.

According to the weekly, the Jewish citizen was subjected to badmouthing and slandering by the gate officer, who said, "A Jew with his girdle came. Underdog... move away," pointing the stick at his face. Unless the Jewish was wise enough to leave silently without any reaction, he would certainly quarrel and clash with the stupid officers. The eyewitnesses expressed concern

over the intimidation of an 8-year-old child by police. Horrified by the police's behavior, the child ran away toward his mother who was standing at the gate of the Arrival Hall.



26 September.net, run by the Yemeni Army's Moral Guidance Department
Saturday, January 5, 2008

Top Stories

- President Saleh discusses with assistants and advisors many issues of concern to the nation
- Higher Education Ministry to begin implementing National Strategy for Childhood and Youth
- Minister of Expatriates' Affairs: Unrest in Kenya has no influence on Yemeni community members
- Consultative Meeting between Yemen and international donors scheduled for coming February

The website reported that the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation began the preparations to host the second consultative meeting of international donors to Yemen in Sana'a next February. It quoted well-informed sources as saying that during the meeting, senior Yemeni government officials and donors will discuss the implementation of the international donor's pledges that they made during and after the conference of international donors, which took place in London last year.

The second consultative meeting will also discuss the implementation of the third five-year plan for economic and social development and their

financial commitments, in addition to reviewing the steps taken by the Yemeni government in the field of financial and administrative reforms.

The sources said that Yemen and donors will review a detailed report on the level of progress in the allocation of the donor's pledges to Yemen, which was held in London in November 2006, as well as after the conference, with a view to adopt a number of steps that contribute to speeding up the other financial pledges. Yemen hosted the first consultative meeting between the Yemeni government and donors in June 2007.



Al-Methaq Weekly, Mouthpiece of the General People Congress (Ruling Party)
Monday, December 31, 2007

Top Stories:

- President Saleh receives condolences over demise of Parliament Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar
- Hundreds of thousands of Yemeni people pay homage to deceased Speaker
- Government allocates YR 614 billion for 2008 investment program
- President Saleh and his Syrian counterpart discuss international and regional developments
- Yemen Sons' League backs constituting election commission from judges
- Presidential plane transports corpse of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar
- Prime Minister stresses Tenders Committee's responsibility and role in fighting corruption

The ruling party's mouthpiece reported that Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Mujawar stressed on Sunday the national responsibility and power delegated to the Tenders Committee's members and chairman to help them play an effective role in enhancing government's procedures for fighting corruption. Mujawar confirmed his government's backing and support for the committee and its efforts, aimed at applying the relevant law and ensuring transparency and real competition in all the government tenders.

During its meeting with Tenders Committee's chairman and members in Sana'a Sunday, Mujawar said that law and order must be the basic reference for the committee in doing all the duties required from it. He was quoted as saying that the committee should maximize use of such a reference while performing its national duty, as well as toughly confront any misconduct aimed at violating the concerned laws and independence of the committee.

The Prime Minister highlighted significance of the periodic change due to be made by the Tender committee and its affiliates in order to enhance integrity and transparency in their business. He indicated the oversight role to be exerted by the committee and its staff in precisely reviewing work of the affiliate subcommittees throughout the different stages of tender approval. In addition, the meeting discussed the committee's moves toward reform as part of the comprehensive reform agenda, plus the necessity of transparency and competition in applications for government tenders. It also discussed other aspects of relevance to approval of project proposals in various development and service areas.

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Reproductive health services idle in rural areas

A recent report by the government's National Population Council criticizes the lack of reproductive health services in rural Yemeni areas.

By: Yemen Times Staff

Despite an expansion of health services, studies show that reproductive health coverage in Yemen is barely 68 percent.

One key factor responsible for such suboptimal performance is the concentration of reproductive coverage in urban areas rather than in rural areas, where more than 71 percent of Yemenis reside.

A second factor undermining reproductive health coverage in Yemen is insufficient and incompetent mobile health clinics and teams.

Launched in an effort to offer maternity care and family planning services in 10 Yemeni governorates, initiatives have been inadequate and have failed to yield the desired results.

Due to lack of adequate facilities and resources, mobile health clinics have been able to offer coverage only to easily-accessible areas, thereby excluding rugged terrain. Therefore, such health initiatives have proven to be provisional and hence can't be considered an alternative to primary health services.

It's well known that available obstetrical care significantly reduces both maternal and infant mortality rates; however, in the absence of such vital services, pregnant women are 15 times at risk of death during labor.

Unfortunately, half of Yemeni women, particularly those in rural areas, receive no parental health care; i.e., 30.8 percent of those living in urban centers and 61.7 percent in rural areas.

According to the 2003 National Family Health Survey, most maternal deaths in Yemen occur in rural women and account for 80 percent of all deaths among Yemeni women, while the percentage of women with no access to prenatal care is estimated at 70 percent.

These figures may be attributed to the fact that approximately 84 percent of all Yemeni births occur at home without skilled medical supervision.

As most deliveries occur at home, those done in the absence of skilled birthing attendants account for 82.2 percent in rural areas and 59.5 percent in urban areas.

Additionally, postnatal care is extremely low, accounting for only 12.6 percent, as most Yemeni women neither seek nor receive such care. Percentages are even higher for rural women.

In line with the above, the 2003 Family Health Survey indicated that the increase in home deliveries mainly is attributed to the following: women's desire to give birth at home, the unavailability of obstetric care, the high cost of obstetric services and health facilities' mistreatment of pregnant women.

Regarding maternal mortality, hemorrhaging was the main cause of death in Yemen women, accounting for 39 percent of total deaths, while obstructed labor involved an estimated 23 percent.

To prevent such casualties, it's important that prenatal care be made available in order to diagnose complicated cases early and refer them to specialists. Even more important is the availability of specialists and trained midwives capable of treating and dealing with obstetrical complications by providing emergency obstetrical services in such serious cases. There's nothing of this sort in Yemen's obstetrical facilities.

Government health facilities essentially are responsible for providing reproductive health services. Health centers can provide basic emergency obstetrical services, whereas larger facilities like hospitals offer patients comprehensive emergency obstetrical services.

Other reproductive health providers include non-governmental organizations and the private sector. However, the



Only 18 percent of births occur under the assistance of skilled birthing attendants.

YT photo

problem is that the role of private health organizations – such as the Yemen Organization for Family Health Care – remains rather limited, as their work focuses more on family planning services rather than emergency obstetrical services.

During the 1990s, private health facilities witnessed great expansion as a result of government health reform policies being initiated and espoused at that time; however, due to absence of supervision and monitoring of such private health services, information is lacking regarding the level and type of services offered there.

In the absence of strategic planning and effective coordination between the public and private health sectors, the latter concentrated in cities, specializing in more complicated services and in high financial revenues such as surgical operations.

While being a tough competitor to the

public sector, such action exacerbated Yemen's problem by concentrating health facilities in urban areas and thereby depriving rural areas of such services.

Assessment of obstetrical services

Obstetric care is very limited and poor in quality, based on surveys regarding the availability of such services conducted in five Yemeni governorates with a total population of approximately 6.9 million.

The surveyed governorates have only 11 health facilities offering comprehensive emergency obstetrical care and three providing basic emergency obstetrical care, whereas according to international standards, they should have at least 14 facilities for comprehensive emergency care and 56 for basic care.

There also was extreme scarcity of maternal and neonatal (newborn infant) health care in the governorates surveyed.

Additionally, only 18 percent of births

occur under the assistance of skilled birthing attendants and less than 10 percent of women with obstetrical compli-

cations receive emergency obstetrical care, while the rate of Caesarean sections is barely 0.6 percent, although it supposedly involves one in every five to 15 births.

Most hospitals in those areas surveyed don't have an ambulance or any means of referring those women with obstetrical complications to specialized health facilities; instead, patients' families mostly are responsible for arranging their own transportation in such emergency cases.

Limited access to health care is made even harder and more complicated by Yemeni citizens' dire economic circumstances, especially those living in rural areas.

Other factors influence the demand for and use of reproductive health services by Yemeni women and families; for example, there are economic factors, including the high costs of treatment and medication.

According to another study conducted in five governorates, a large proportion of health officials and local council representatives only heard about the decree, with few receiving actual copies of it. The same is true of the public, as most women and adolescents frequenting health centers had no idea about the decree.

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Job Duties:

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- b. Generates daily work schedule. Includes attending daily planning meetings with functional Superintendents and Foremen, and other departments as required, to review and plan for maintenance work order requests.
- c. Administers the maintenance management computer system (MMS). Includes entering data and generating reports and historical data for analyzing performance statistics and trends. Oversees the Administrative Clerk in entering the daily timesheet data into MMS. Generates time-keeping and man-hour reports.
- d. Generates weekly and monthly reports to management. Reports, such as Maintenance Volume and Efficiency Report, are distributed to Operations Manager and other departments.
- e. Ensures that maintenance work progress is updated and on schedule. Includes updating the MMS with job status information obtained from Foremen. Advises supervisor of projects that are off-track.
- f. Carries out other similar or related duties such as creating and maintaining spreadsheets to produce statistics/charts for specific maintenance activities.

Minimum Requirements:

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Waste in Yemeni construction projects

By: Dr. Basil Sultan
Sana'a University
Faculty of Engineering, Civil
Engineering Dept.
bsultan@suye.ac

The construction industry is one of the most important components in any developing nation's economic development, being a major contributor to the national economy and providing employment opportunities. For this reason, construction projects should be an important priority in Yemen's national development.

Key statistics on Yemen and its construction industry reveal that while the industry employed approximately 6.6 percent of the nation's total workforce in 2000, the value added by such construction was only 4.2 percent.

As a developing nation, some serious problems within Yemen's construction industry are inefficiency in using materials, unfair competition, limited funding, planning uncertainties, unclear practices, lack of management and supervision, a shortage of high levels of skilled labor and lack of human resources development.

Over the past three decades, Yemen's construction industry has experienced chronic problems such as low productivity, increased waste and insufficient quality. Waste can significantly affect the performance of construction projects. Construction performance also may affect productivity across all economic sectors.

Previous research conducted by this author has concerned the high levels of construction waste and costs within Yemen's construction industry. Industry practitioners and engineers routinely report numerous wasteful activities in the construction process, the majority of which consume capital, time and effort without adding value to the client or the project. Likewise, waste significantly can affect business

performance and the productivity of contracting firms.

Despite this, no research has been conducted in Yemen on the incidence of waste within the construction industry. If any was done, such research would be concerned only with on-site waste materials. Further, no attempts have been made to identify, evaluate or quantify the frequency or amount of construction waste in Yemen.

Construction waste

Project managers and engineers typically describe waste as physical rather than its true meaning. What the Yemeni construction industry now needs is a better understanding of that concept, as well as identifying such waste variables and their causes. These waste factors may assist project managers and engineers in discovering alternative ways to increase their projects' performance.

Waste can include mistakes, working nonsequentially, redundant activity or movement, premature or delayed inputs and products or services not meeting customer needs. According to the new philosophy regarding production, waste should be understood as any inefficiency resulting in the use of equipment, materials, labor or capital in larger quantities than those considered necessary for construction.

The term non-value adding activity is used to differentiate on-site physical waste from other waste occurring during construction, as waste involves several available definitions.

Waste includes both material losses, as well as unnecessary work that generates additional costs, but adds no value to the product. Moreover, some researchers maintain that manufacturing and construction waste include



Dr. Basil Sultan

time delays, quality costs, lack of safety, redone work, unnecessary transportation, long distances, improper choice of management, methods or equipment and poor construction.

For these reasons, waste should be defined as any loss produced by activities that generate direct or indirect costs, but add no value to the product, according to the client's viewpoint.

In some developing countries, construction projects experience waste concerning wait time, idle time and travel time. Employing an excessive number of unskilled laborers or more laborers than necessary, especially unqualified laborers, is another waste-related problem.

Other developing nations identify lack of materials or equipment, repaired or redone work and supervision delays as factors affecting productivity within the construction industry. A previous study conducted by this author affirmed that construction supervision is one of the main areas of waste in Yemeni construction projects.

Variables related to wasteful activities identified by a review of the literature are those that contribute to a reduction in the value of construction productivity, while waste-causing factors are those that produce or generate waste.

The most significant waste variables in Yemen are:

- on-site waste of raw materials
- schedule delays
- repairs to structural work
- repairs to framework
- repairs to finishing work
- delays in procuring and delivering materials

Furthermore, Yemen's most significant waste-causing factors are:



Over the past three decades, Yemen's construction industry has experienced chronic problems such as low productivity, increased waste and insufficient quality.

- lack of supervision
- unclear blue prints and specifications
- poor design
- design changes
- poor or lack of contractual documentation
- poor or lack of planning and scheduling
- materials mishandling
- incompetent steel reinforcement fabrication
- slow tradesmen and stone craftsmen
- inappropriate construction methods
- slow decision making
- lack of traders' skill
- delays of materials delivery to the site
- payment delays and disputes

Given the construction industry's current lack of project schedules, workers tend to take construction time

for granted. Schedule delays can be one of the most important variables affecting Yemeni construction projects, with such delays in project completion always resulting in costly disputes and hostile relationships among all involved parties.

Delays can be a major factor in high construction costs. The main factors causing delays are slow or ineffective tradesmen, poor planning and scheduling, delayed payment, design changes and slow decision making.

Because repair can be defined as any activity that must be redone or altered, it includes variations occurring at any time within any construction activity. Lack of skilled workers, unclear plan sketches and specifications and lack of supervision all can lead to repairing or redoing structural or finishing works.

The main reason for Yemen's lack of skilled laborers is that they are self-employed, often being rural farmers.

Construction managers and engineers in Yemen often fail to identify or address waste within the construction process. One reason such waste isn't recognized adequately is the existence of unclear standards and practices, weak project documentation, inadequate planning in a project's early stages and most of all, lack of appropriate tools to measure such waste.

To conclude, all construction project participants should direct urgent national attention toward these waste issues. Hopefully, this will lead to minimizing waste and increasing productivity in Yemen's construction activities.

Contractors should be more aware of waste and its causes, using local materials and natural resources as much and as efficiently as possible in order to minimize the negative impacts of waste and non-value adding activities, while reducing the costs of such waste.

Request for Expressions of Interest

Training members of Modernization TF and External training members of the Senior Management of the Ministry of Education Yemen.
Basic Education Development Project
IDA Credits & Multi Donors, Trust Funds.

The objective of the proposed technical assistance is to equip trainees (Internal Training in-country for 13 members of the Modernization Task Force) to provide leadership and direction to the modernization of the Ministry of Education (MoE), to participate in and understand the results of organizational analysis, to participate in communications activities representing the modernization process to internal and external stakeholders and to be able to prepare progress report on modernization initiatives in the MoE.

In addition, the proposed technical assistance would also equip trainees (External Training – Oversees for 38 members of senior management of the MoE) to promote reform in their sectors and departments by building well-motivated and focused teams; using evidence based analytical techniques in decision-making; and encouraging wide stakeholder participation in policy formation. The key objective of the training is to accomplish a transformation in participants attitudes form a position that tends towards defensive reliance on their existing knowledge base to one where they have the confidence to explore new ideas, handle uncertainty and manage conflict constructively. This transformation is a more important outcome than a specific set of knowledge or skills from the proposed training opportunity.

This request for **Expressions of Interest** follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in the Development Business and Dg Market dated of Feb 2, 2005. The Ministry of Education (MOE), Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) and Multi-Donors towards the cost of the Basic Education Development Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this to payments under the contract for the above-mentioned consulting service.

The Project Administration Unit now invites eligible Consulting Firms to indicate their interest in providing the service for both trainings. Interested Consulting Firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services profiles, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.).

The selection of the Consulting Firms will be in accordance with the procedure set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: "Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, May 2004" Interested consultants may obtain further information during working days Sat.-Wed. From 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon at the address below to which the expression of interest must be delivered by January 14, 2008.

Basic Education Development Project
60 m Southern Rd. - Bait Meyad

Tel: 00967-01-619160, Fax: 00967-01- 619219 or to

Email: The project Director: a.al-arashi@y.net.ye

Scholarships for Yemeni Young Postgraduate Students in Islamic Jerusalem Studies (2008/2009)

Islamic Research Academy (ISRA) is pleased to announce the allocation of one of its scholarships in Islamic Jerusalem Studies for Young Yemeni Postgraduate Student who wish to study full-time for an M.Litt. in Islamic Jerusalem Studies at Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies in Dundee. The scholarship is only for one year beginning from September 2008. Winner of the scholarship will undertake the taught full-time M.Litt. course in Islamic Jerusalem Studies at Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies. This prestigious scholarship scheme is a serious effort on the part of ISRA to prepare a team of scholars in this new field of inquiry, and a great human investment to prepare an academic team of young scholars as specialists in Islamic Jerusalem Studies.

The full scholarship will cover the full student tuition fee and will also include a fixed monthly sum to cover living expenses (£500). Applicants for the scholarships will normally be required to hold at least a second upper Honours degree (2.1) in an appropriate discipline and the scholarships would particularly suit recent graduates who can show potentials to excel.

Criteria:

1. Candidates will normally be required to hold at least a second upper Honours degree (2.1) in an appropriate discipline.
2. Any applicant whose first language is not English is required to have an IELTS score of 6.5 or above (including a score of 6 in the writing section) or equivalent (e.g. TOFEL 580)
3. The candidate must be able to demonstrate evidence of interest in Islamic Jerusalem Studies. This can be shown by submitting three copies of any relevant academic works including published or unpublished papers, books, manuscripts, monographs, etc.
4. As the scholarships would particularly suit young recent graduates, applicants should be no more than 30 years old (ie: born after the year 1977)

Applications can be made by submitting (non returnable):

- A letter to the Secretary-General of the Islamic Research Academy explaining why the candidate should receive the scholarship.
- Al-Maktoum Institute/University of Aberdeen application Form for postgraduate studies (completed and signed).
- Copies of degrees certificates and transcripts.
- Evidence of interest in the field.
- Written references from two academic referees
- Three copies of the candidate's Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- A copy of the candidate's birth certificate
- Proof of English language proficiency, i.e. IELTS certificate.

The deadline for applications is 15 May 2008.

In Yemen, all application should be submitted to:

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Centre
University of Science and Technology
P.O. Box: 13064
Sana'a – Yemen
Tel: 00967 1 536581
Fax: 00967 1 536582

All submissions will be referred to the Scholarships Committee at the Islamic Research Academy who will select the award winners. The Committee has the right to hold back the scholarships in the event that there is no suitable candidate(s). The decision of the committee is final, with no review procedures. Successful candidates will be expected to sign an agreement with the sponsor and start studying the full-time taught Masters course in September 2006; subject to them receiving an unconditional offer of acceptant from the University of Aberdeen to study at Al-Maktoum Institute.



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An academic institution for cross cultural experience

By: Philipp Schweers
For Yemen Times

Because of the need to extend dialogue between Middle East and the rest of the world, the first independent institution for modern Middle Eastern Studies in the region has been established this weekend. After decades of experience in teaching Arabic to foreign students, Yemeni entrepreneur Sabri Saleem worked with various international academic scholars, Yemeni officials and businessmen to create the Yemen College of Middle Eastern Studies (YCMES).

"While there is no other independent academic institution in whole Arab world dealing with Middle Eastern issues, I found Mr. Saleem's plan fascinating and I recognize this college as a chance to expand the ties and the understanding between Yemen and the rest of the world," Dr. Shelagh Weir of University of London and Board-Member at YCMES explained.

With the help of Dr. Steven C. Caton of Harvard University, an curriculum for the one-year Program of Contemporary Middle Eastern Studies has been designed using American and European standards of teaching, and will receive its inaugural class in the fall of this year. Unique to the Middle East, this program will offer courses on the history, politics, culture and economics of the region.

"This college will be a pioneer in modern Middle Eastern Studies and can diminish the gap between the cultures," the chairman of the Board Dr. al-Iryani, political Advisor to the President and Former Prime Minister of Yemen, summarized confidently.

Course topics range from religion, gender, development, politics, anthropology, economics, geography, history, literature, arts and science. They are additionally offered each term to reflect what the College considers to be important. A set of more specialized courses is also offered each term, representing a wide range of topics that will vary depending on faculty specialization, as well as student interest.

The faculty is comprised of the world's most distinguished regional specialists, most of whom hold professional appointments in leading universities. Assistant Dean for academic affairs, Professor Caton from Harvard University, has helped with the course structure and standards, and is on the board of advisors.

The YCMES is thought to be a unique institution for higher education in the region because it is founded with the intention of bringing together people from all over the world for advanced study in Yemen. Interested individuals from abroad will get the opportunity to study an intensive program of contemporary Middle Eastern Studies with included Arabic lessons, and Yemenis will receive the opportunity to learn foreign languages at this new institution. Saleem says the institute aims at bridging cultural gaps, and creating a cross cultural academic institution in Yemen.

While the study of the region's pre-history and pre-modern history is often well administered at European and U.S. universities, the study of the contemporary Middle East is often underrepresented at these institutions. To offset this imbalance, the College's curriculum focuses on the study of the contemporary Middle East, with historical courses offered to students who feel the need for such background.



Two of the Yemeni College for Middle Eastern Studies buildings.

As it is, the director of the institution had already established the Yemeni Language Center in 1989, which educated thousands of non-native speakers in Arabic. In addition to learning Arabic, the students learned about Yemeni and Arab culture, and became change cultural ambassadors in their countries.

YLC attracted and motivated more and more international students to study in Sana'a, which has allowed the Center to expand over its almost 20 year history. The fact that not many Yemenis speak English, made the country an ideal location for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. Most past students are very satisfied with more than just the Program. Jessica Tibbets, 22-year-old American student at YLC summarized the atmosphere in Yemen to the point: "The people here are so friendly and hospitable, and really help me to apply the Arabic I have learned in the classroom, as well as teach me other things not covered in my books. I have been to lunches and dinners with families, and iftars during Ramadan, where I felt not like a foreigner, but like a distant cousin. I really feel a part of the larger community here, which has been indispensable to my Arabic and understanding of Yemeni culture."

However, there are a lot of challenges in the future for YCMES, such as foreign operated universities which have much more financial resources on the one hand, and on the other hand the world's negative perception of Yemen as an unstable country, among other misconceptions.

One of the previous American students at the language center, Sarah, thinks that people in Yemen are generally very nice; she did not hesitate to venture throughout the markets with friends and teachers. "I try to talk to as

many people as I can to improve on my language skills. Sadly, I don't have many women friends since they are a little bit more shy and conservative," she said.

Many students like don't think the Yemen is a dangerous country. She has gone to many places including Manakha, Kamaran Island, Khawkaban.

"That's why it is so important in continuing and advancing what we have started. When they are here, our students are learning our language and our culture. But when they are returning to their home countries, they are ambassadors of Yemen," Saleem argues with confidence based on past experience and hope for the future of YCMES.

After more than a year of extensive negotiations, the founding meeting of the Board of Advisors took place last weekend amidst excitement and anticipation for a future of understanding and exchange between the Arab world and the West.

Ms. Jamila Ali Rajaa, Advisor to the Foreign Ministry and on the Board of YCMES,

described her thoughts after two days of discussion: "This academic institution carries many potentials for Yemen. I am very glad that we succeeded in laying the foundation for such a college which is unique in the whole region. There are many challenges on our way and we have to start small to make sure that it will work. But step by step while bringing together Yemeni and foreign scholars, it can be the academic bridge between our cultures and may foster the relations and partnerships between Yemeni and Western academics. Our long-term goal is to establish a non-profit university with excellent standards and I am confident that we are on a good way."



Yemen College of Middle Eastern Studies Board at the inauguration ceremony. The board includes a number of high-level professionals both Yemenis and foreigners.



Students enjoying the sun at the institute's backyard. Sana'a enjoys a moderate climate throughout the year, which is quite a pleasant change for many foreign students.



One of the recreational trips organized by the administration for students to hill station Manakha four hours drive from Sana'a.



Students at the college canteen.

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Zaid Ali Al-Mushiki, a defiant knight in satirical and political poetry

Prepared by: Eyad N. Al-Samman

Zaid Ali Al-Mushiki was a Yemeni jurist, poet, critic, politician and revolutionist. Born in 1910 in Hajjah governorate's Shaharah city, where he did his primary studies, at age 15, Al-Mushiki moved around to several villages and cities, including Al-Dhafeer, Hajjah and Al-Dhalei to study the Qur'an and prophetic traditions.

During his adolescence, Al-Mushiki moved to Dhamar city – where his lineage is traced back to – attending Al-Shamsiah School, where he continued studying jurisprudence and Arabic language sciences.

At the end of the 1920s, Al-Mushiki enrolled in the House of Sciences in Sana'a, eventually obtaining a higher academic degree called "Al-Ghayah."

Because of his academic intelligence and his fame for being articulate and polite among his colleagues, Imam Yahya entrusted him with instructing his sons. Thus, Al-Mushiki spent part of his life teaching, at the same time frequenting the Great Mosque Library in Sana'a to read the books and references there.

Al-Mushiki subsequently moved to Taiz governorate when he apparent Imam Ahmed appointed him governor of several districts there and then ruler of the imam's residence in Taiz.

Due to the dire economic, social, cultural and other situations Yemen was experiencing under imamate reign, Al-Mushiki involved himself in political activities, criticizing such situations satirically in his poetry and prose.

This caused Imam Yahya to threaten Al-Mushiki and other free Yemenis with death. Consequently, some of them, including Al-Mushiki, fled to South Yemen in 1944, staying in the city of Aden, which still was under British colonization.

Al-Mushiki remained in Aden for nearly a year, during which he wholeheartedly and enthusiastically devoted himself to reading and acquiring knowledge at Queen Victoria Public Library.

During this time, he contributed positively to numerous revolutionary and nationalist activities, including establishing with his peers the Free Yemeni Movement in 1944 and being elected its vice president.

His political activities further included calls regarding the necessity of national unity and revolution against imamate tyranny in North Yemen and British colonization in the south.

Because of his defiant opposition against Imam Yahya, in 1944, the latter ordered Al-Mushiki's house in Dhamar demolished and his other properties confiscated.

Opposition by the Free Yemenis in Aden increased against Imam Yahya and his son. Fearing such "modernists," as he dubbed them, who were calling for political change, Imam Yahya sent a delegate [meaning one individual or should this be a delegation?] to negotiate with the new movement, as well as submit his official objection to the British mandate in Aden.

Because they suffered greatly and due to other internal disagreements within the movement, the Free Yemenis agreed to the imam's requests and other enticements to return to North Yemen.

Resettling in Taiz in 1946, Al-Mushiki continued his political



Zaid Ali Al-Mushiki

activities, participating with Abdullah Al-Wazeer and Hussein Al-Kibsi – two other Free Yemenis – in issuing and endorsing their well-known religious fatwa, a legal opinion, which allowed any Yemeni to kill Imam Yahya, as they considered him a tyrant and a conspirator in starving and humiliating the Yemeni people.

Al-Mushiki's was among many voices calling for a constitution ensuring consultation, freedom and equality. He helped draft a new constitution known as the Holy National Pact and assisted in the Arab League's authorization of it.

While Al-Mushiki's literary works in poetry, prose and critique were diverse, most were confiscated and ruined by the actions of Imam Yahya and his heir apparent, Ahmed. His house was demolished a second time in 1948 and all of his works confiscated by guards.

Al-Mushiki began his literary career as a poet, composing poems for various religious and social occasions. His poetry included significant aspects of his revolutionary and thoughts of struggle, as characterized by their truthfulness, defiance, simplicity and group expression.

Publishing some of his prose writings himself in Al-Hikmah Al-Yamaniah (The Yemeni Wisdom) magazine and Al-Bareed Al-Adabi (The Literary Post) newspaper, some of his other prose works were published during his sojourn in Aden.

As a critic, Al-Mushiki published a critique of Arab poet Abu Tayyib Ahmad Ibn Al-Hussein Al-Mutanabbi in The Literary Post newspaper and it was one of the most important critiques he ever penned.

While his diverse body of work hasn't been collected and published, the most prominent book about his life, which contains some of his works, is 1984's "Zaid Al-Mushiki: A Poet and Martyr," published by the Yemeni Center for Study and Research.

The outbreak of the first revolution against Yemen's imamate on February 17, 1948 ended Imam Yahya's rule by killing him. Following the failed March 1948 Constitutional Revolution and Imam Ahmed's sudden return to Sana'a, Al-Mushiki was arrested and banished to Hajjah city, where he was imprisoned in the horrible Al-Qahirah, or Castle, Prison.

Within the first few days of April 1948, Al-Mushiki was beaten and tortured and then beheaded by guards at Hajjah's Castle Prison. However, his life was witness to his great role in and the wonderful place he occupied amid the galaxy of Yemen's other heroic nationalists and revolutionists.

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Crime rate declines by 43% due weapons ban

By: Hamed Thabet

According to recent statistics, incidents of crime have decreased by an average of 43% in Yemen's urban areas. The decrease is explained as a result of implementing a government ban on carrying weapons. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Qowski, the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, confirmed that, "As a result of disarmament, cities are safer for people to live in, especially encouraging and opening better opportunities for investment in Yemen."

According to Ahmed Hae'l, a public relations assistant in the Ministry of Interior, the main cities have experienced a 95% reduction in firearms. However, he stated, "villages and small towns are still armed and not yet controlled."

Responsible sources in the Ministry of Interior assured that as of Tuesday, 2,741 firearms were seized within city limits, with a further 59,347 pieces seized at check points between cities.

Hae'l confirmed that more than sixty-two thousand firearms have been seized so far, including handguns, machine guns and sometimes anti-aircraft guns. He elaborated that all seized firearms were delivered to the judiciary, which will make a ruling on their disposal.

Most of the firearms seized were not in cities, but at check points; many people couldn't successfully smuggle weapons bought at arms markets into cities.

The government is also attacking the sources of the problem, according to Al-Qowski, who stated, "Small arms markets are closed and many other markets are in the process of shutting down. If we want to solve the firearms problem we have to start from the source, which is arms and ammunition markets."

Hae'l said that the government is not confiscating weapons for its own use or to ban them forever, but is implementing a safer and better weapons policy, pointing to previous crimes resulting from unrestricted armament in the wrong hands. Moreover, it asserts that its main goal is to create strict rules in order to control problems caused by an abuse of weapons.

The campaign includes everyone



Carrying arms was an everyday habit of Yemeni people. However, with the weapons' ban, which started last August, arms in main cities are reported to have reduced by 95%.

without any exceptions. According to Hae'l, nearly all the officials and sheikhs obeyed the law and had no other recourse except to hand over the weapons. 99% of officials and sheikhs allegedly did so voluntarily.

Al-Qowski noted that although in the past armed people in cities showed a lack of respect for the government and its officials, they obeyed and handed over their firearms sometimes by force. Since August 23, 2007, government forces have worked hard to limit this phenomenon as much as possible. Moreover, Al-Qowski assured with satisfaction that these challenges require both "the tenacity of a career military man, and the diplomacy and sensitivity of a seasoned politician."

The disarmament plan consists of three stages, with the first stage taking three months, while the second and third steps to continue until September 2008. The plan is recognized under article 40, which bans weapons.

Al-Qowski explained that this military program has in turn been complemented by another operation in which the government spent about 2 billion YR in order to purchase heavy arms from tribesmen such as shoulder-fired surface to air missiles and rocket prop-

elled grenades.

The Yemeni army is waging a large-scale campaign against anyone who carries weapons. There are many places and sites where weapons are seized, for example check points between cities, in order to ensure that no weapon will get inside the city.

However, villages and small towns are still armed. According to Hae'l, "There are many armed villages which cannot be controlled, and of course, supervising each village is a difficult job. Also, the Ministry of the Interior doesn't currently have any strategy for disarming these areas."

Firearms are spread throughout many cities, being most concentrated in Shabwa, followed by Sada'a, governorates near Sana'a, Taiz, Al-Hodeidah and lastly Aden. All firearms are seized without exception.

Hae'l added, "We have to begin from some point, and the first step that the government took was in the main cities. Nevertheless, after all cities are cleared of firearms, we will shift to villages and small towns in order to cleanse Yemen of this phenomenon."

There is a bylaw that officials and sheikhs are provided by armed bodyguards, the decision of which rests on the government. In the past, they could have many armed bodyguards with him, whereas now they are provided with only a few, who are required to carry government licenses. Also, soldiers can carry weapons only when wearing military uniforms.

The government's main aim is creating a healthy atmosphere for investment in Yemen and also to provide a safe living environment. It claims that this can only be achieved by decreasing the crime rate, which will not come about without disarmament and control of weapons. On the other hand, the mass media played a large role in that field, strongly advocating disarmament.

A study done by the Ministry of Interior noted that a loss of more than \$18 billion was incurred from firearms

usage over the last 20 years. On the other hand, statistics released by the Ministry of Interior said that the crime rate in 2006 had increased to 35,000 from a previous 24,024.

There are an estimated 60 million weapons in Yemen, opposed to an estimated population of 20 million, according to official reports, a ratio of three firearms for every citizen.

Foreign tourists avoid visiting historical places in Yemen like Marib (which dates back more than 3,000 years) because of past attacks, including explosions. However, many residents in Marib have kept 40 thousand of their weapons in their houses in order to encourage tourism. At the same time, Abud Allah Hayder, a Marib sheikh, confirmed, "The disarmament campaign is a very important step in the lengthy process of cleaning Yemen of firearms."

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Villages and small towns are still armed and not yet controlled.

((يا أيها النفس المطمئنة، ارجعي إلى ربك راضية مرضية فادخلي في عبادي وادخلي جنتي))
صدق الله العظيم

بقلوب مؤمنة بقضاء الله وقدره تلقينا نبأ وفاة المغفور له

بإذن الله تعالى

الشيخ / محفوظ سالم شماخ

وبهذا المصاب الجليل نتقدم بأحر التعازي وأصدق المواساة

القلبية إلى

كافة أولاده وأفراد أسرته

وجميع آل شماخ

سائلين المولى عز وجل أن يتغمد الفقيد بواسع الرحمة

والغفران

وأن يلهم أهله وذويه ومحبيه الصبر والسلوان

وإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

المعزون:

أ/ وليد عبدالعزيز السقاف / أ/ هيفاء عبدالعزيز السقاف

أ/ ريدان عبدالعزيز السقاف / أ/ نادية عبدالعزيز السقاف

أ/ خير الدين محمد النصور

وكافة موظفي مؤسسة يمن تايمز للصحافة والطباعة والنشر

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