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# YEMEN TIMES

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## As Hashid tribesmen gather to back government Sa'ada tribal leaders suggest truce

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, July 13 — Bloody confrontations between the Yemeni army and Houthi loyalists continue in several districts, most notably in Mirran, Mahdha, Al-Jamima, Saqain, Al-Humaidan and Al-Khazaen, with both sides resorting to attack-and-retreat tactics, tribal sources from the restive governorate said Sunday, adding that tribal leaders in the governorate have proposed a truce between the two warring sides.

Houthi gunmen deployed in Mirran district released a statement claiming their complete control of Al-Qaeed strategic military position, once used by Yemeni army personnel, whom

Houthis have besieged for nearly two months.

In a previous statement, Houthis maintained that their gunmen are showing fierce resistance in the face of advancing military troops, further ensuring the safety of roads connecting the villages of Houthi loyalists.

According to the same tribal sources, the Yemeni army has continued its intense offensives upon strategic Houthi positions and other villages in Mirran and Saqain districts, employing fighter jets and heavy weaponry in an unprecedented manner since the war first broke out in June 2004.

In Mahdha area near the south entrance to Sa'ada city, Houthis took over several strategic mountaintop positions once used by military and security troops, seizing military equipment and ordnance. No casualties have



As truce efforts continue, war ravages Sa'ada.

been reported on either side. On a side note, unconfirmed reports reveal that army personnel deployed in Bani Muadh on Thursday struck the Ghawya area home of Abdulmalik Al-Houthi's official spokesman, Sheikh Saleh Habra. Luckily, neither Habra nor his family members were inside the house at the time.

"In Amran governorate's Harf Sifyan district, the army launched heavy air strikes against the villages of Houthi loyalists this past weekend,"

local sources from the governorate report, adding that the Yemeni army is being backed by members of the Hashid tribe.

In Bani Hushaish, located east of the capital city of Sana'a, the army announced for the second time that it had seized total control of Houthi resistance pockets in the area. The government also announced the establishment of a "Popular Army" comprised of 25,000 recruits, most of who are from the Hashid tribe.

Concerns about Popular Army

Various sources agree that the composition of the new Popular Army has raised concern among military troops, who consider it an insult against them, implying that the government is accusing them of being unable to do their job.

Army brigades in Sa'ada face difficulty dealing with members of the

Popular Army and Salafis standing at their side because Popular Army members consider looting of citizens' property as their first objective.

Political analysts warn against forming a Popular Army to back the government in its fight against Houthis in Sa'ada, commenting, "What the government today calls 'a popular army' is similar to 'Al-Akafa Army' during the

reign of Imam Yahya, who ruled Yemen before the Sept. 26, 1962 Revolution."

They express concern that members of this so-called Popular Army may become militias fighting against the state and whose commanders will become war-brokers in the various governorates and districts.

Continued on page 2

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## A young girl is caught between a family break-up and early marriage

By: Almgiddad Mojalli and  
Wojoud Mejalli

SANA'A, June 12 — A 12-year-old girl accused her father of kidnapping her and forcing her to marry her 31-year-old cousin in court yesterday in an ongoing court case that combines both a custody struggle and an early marriage.

The accusation follows the girl's request for a divorce, which Sana'a judge Mohammed Al-Qadhi denied granting her last Monday.

Reem Anees Al-Numairi, 12, told the court that her father had kidnapped her and forced to marry her cousin Hafith-Allah Al-Numairi in the same day.

Reem's parents divorced approximately two months ago, and she had been living with her mother up until the time of her alleged kidnapping.

"My little brother called me to come down the stairs of the building I live in and I saw my dad there," said Reem in her testimony. "The first thing I remember is my father holding my arm tightly, asking me to not say a word and that we were going to my grandfather's house."

Reem came to the court with her mother and her lawyer, Shada Nasser, wearing the veil, which she took off during the hearing. Reem cried while she gave her testimony.

"I was at the house at 11 a.m. and I realized that I was married at 3 p.m. that day," said Reem. "Everything was arranged even before I knew what was really going on." Reem also said that her father threatened her frequently throughout the ordeal, raising his Jambia (traditional Yemeni dagger) whenever she would speak when the judge was writing the marriage contract.

"I tried to kill myself twice and I will kill myself if I have to go back to either my husband or father," she sobbed.

According to Reem's mother, Aisha Alawi Al-Numairi, Reem's husband took her to his village in Rada' (250 km to the southwest of Sana'a) where she would not stop crying and trying to escape.

"My daughter called me days after she was kidnapped and told me that her father married her to her cousin," said Aisha Al-Numairi, adding that Reem's new husband took her back to her father after a while because he clearly saw that Reem would not accept living with him. Aisha Al-Numairi claimed that after Reem's husband returned her, her father Anees imprisoned Reem in



Reem as she got out the courthouse on Monday.

the cellar of their home and tortured her. She said that when Anees Al-Numairi's neighbors heard a female voice shouting from inside the home, they called Reem's mother, who brought the police with her. At the police station, both parents asked for permission to take Reem to their respective homes. Eventually, the police decided to send her to Al-Amal Center in Sana'a, which shelters young women and girls in times of crisis.

The public prosecutor said he will question both Reem's father and husband.

Judge Al-Qadhi denied Reem's request for divorce last Monday. "As long as the girl doesn't want to live with her husband, I suggest she either stays with her father or her mother and when she reaches the age of 15, when she can make the decision to either stay with her husband or to ask for a divorce," the judge said.

According to Yemeni law, girls can be married at the age of 15, or whenever her guardians deem her capable of handling sexual intercourse.

Reem's lawyer, Shada Nasser, was unhappy with the judge's decision and decided to lodge a complaint with Yemeni Human Rights Minister Huda Al-Ban, in which she accused Reem's father and husband of forcing her into marriage.

"A girl's agreement to the marriage is an essential according to religion and law," said Nasser. Reem vehemently denies that she agreed to the marriage.

However, Reem's older brother sided with his father and cousin, now Reem's husband. "Reem was willing to marry her cousin," he said. "Two of my older sisters got married at the age of eight and have no troubles with their husbands." Khalid Sultan, the attorney representing Anees and Hafith-Allah Al-Numairi said that Reem's mother Aisha was completely in favor of this marriage and approved of it. He added that Aisha Al-Numairi even attended the wedding and that he had eyewitness to prove. Sultan claims that Aisha Al-Numairi filed this case because she wanted more alimony, not because of Reem's marriage.

## Four people die of dengue fever in one week

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, July 13 — Member of Parliament Mohammed Al-Assali affirmed on Saturday that four individuals infected with dengue fever all died within a week in Raymah and Hodeidah governorates.

Sultan Al-Maqtari, manager of Hodeidah governorate's Epidemic Recording Office, states that the office has discovered 12 cases of those infected with dengue fever since the beginning of May and that another 112 individuals suspected of carrying the infection were taken to the central laboratory to be checked for the disease.

Three of the victims, a mother and daughter and another woman, were from Raymah governorate, while the fourth victim was a 4-year-old girl from Hodeidah governorate.

Al-Maqtari noted that his office had conducted anti-mosquito spraying in Dair Al-Atta and Al-Rahmah villages, in addition to giving residents the required preventive medicines. He added that the team told residents about the necessity of draining swamps and eliminating stagnant open waters, which attract mosquitoes.

MP Ahmed Al-Dhubaibi urged Yemen's Ministry of Health and Population to assist citizens in Raymah governorate quickly, adding that a large number of people in Al-Jabien district had symptoms similar to those

of dengue fever.

Al-Assali, who represents the Health Committee in Parliament, pondered the official silence toward this increase in dengue fever victims, also urging the Ministry of Health and Population and concerned authorities to intervene quickly to end citizens' suffering and preventable deaths.

He noted that such an increase in victims of dengue fever reflects the declining health situation and poor health services that do a disservice to Yemen's poor, who are the majority of its population.

Earlier this month, 180 new cases of suspected dengue fever were reported in five governorates, 115 of which were confirmed to be dengue fever sufferers.

According to a Health Ministry report, the total number of dengue fever cases so far this year now is approaching 2,100. The report notes that the disease, found in only five governorates last year — Shabwa, Hodeidah, Abyan, Hadramout and Lahj — has been discovered in 13 governorates this year.

The ministry report states that the number of confirmed cases in Hadramout increased from 64 last week to 87 this week, while in Shabwa, such cases increased from 35 to 51, in addition to one new case in Abyan, making four cases in that governorate so far.

According to the report, Hodeidah and Lahj are witnessing fewer cases due to awareness campaigns and insecticide spraying.

The report further mentions that the main reason for the disease's spread is polluted water in open tanks and containers where mosquitoes gather. It notes that the main way to prevent the disease in these districts is to provide safe water sources.

However, according to the World Health Organization, some of these districts do have safe water sources, but they are pumped irregularly, which causes citizens to store water in tanks and open containers.

Ahmed Awadh, who heads WHO's dengue fever center, told the U.N.'s IRIN news service that the disease has claimed five lives so far because doctors were unaware of it and therefore treated the patients as if it was a mere fever.

Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne infection causing a severe flu-like illness and sometimes a potentially lethal complication called dengue hemorrhagic fever. According to WHO, there's no specific treatment for dengue fever; however, appropriate medical care can save sufferers' lives.

The organization also notes that two-fifths of the world's population is at risk of getting the disease and that the only way to combat it is by combating the mosquitoes that carry it.

## Six people injured in gas factory explosion

By: Yemen Times Staff

Sana'a, July 13 — The Ministry of Interior confirmed that six people were injured in a gas factory explosion Sunday morning in the northeastern part of Sana'a city.

"The incident resulted in six injured employees, two of whom have serious injuries and are in the intensive care department," said a source from the Ministry of the Interior.

The sources stated that the explosion

happened when contact between gas tanks started a fire while employees were discharging the remaining gas from the tanks. "The contact between tanks started sparks which led to the explosion," said Hassan Dahesh, an officer in the Civil Defense Administration. He said that the explosion was an accident and any denied that any terrorist act was behind the incident.

The owner of the factory, Hamoud Al-Mufazer, reaffirmed that the incident

was an accident and said he does not accuse any organization or person for the explosion. Al-Mufazer mentioned that between 2,500 and 3,000 gas tanks have become unusable due to the explosion.

According to Ali Aubaid, the accounts manager of the factory, the factory is uninsured. The factory discharges and refills about 500 gas tanks daily and there are around 200 employees working there, without counting the group of administrators.

## Lawsuit fighting increased taxes could benefit Yemeni consumers

By: Wojoud Hassan  
For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, July 8 — Yemen's Supreme Circuit Court will hold another hearing this Tuesday regarding the sales tax law and its modifications, which could help lower the prices of basic necessities for all Yemenis.

The law, which is being recommended by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, will allow the government to tax Yemeni manufacturers twice for the goods they produce: first when they manufacture them and then again when they sell their products wholesale to a distributor.

These taxes could cause manufacturers to sell goods at higher wholesale prices, which in turn forces retailers to sell them to consumers at higher retail prices.

In the first lawsuit of its kind in Yemen, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Association is suing President Ali Abdullah Saleh and executive members of his Cabinet, alleging that the sales tax law is unconstitutional.

Others, including the prime minister, the ministers of finance and legal affairs, the speaker of Parliament and the head of the Taxation Department, also are named in the suit.

"When the government or any segment of its authority is accused, the Legal Affairs Ministry is then responsible for their representation in court," explains Abdullah Mohammed Al-Ansi,

the Ministry of Legal Affairs attorney representing the defendants.

He further notes that because a legislative authority issued the allegedly unconstitutional laws, which are operational, they cannot be suspended or invalidated unless the Yemeni Parliament decides to do so.

The capital city's Chamber Association filed its case in 2005 over the unconstitutionality of several articles in the 2001 sales tax law. Some articles have been amended, but others remain unchanged.

The association demands either canceling or amending the sales tax law in order to decrease its burden on Yemeni businesses.

"When this lawsuit first began, Parliament changed many of the articles, canceling some because they obviously contradicted the Yemeni Constitution," says Hassan Ali Mejalli, a Sana'a University Faculty of Law professor representing the Chamber of Commerce.

"Chamber of Commerce members initiated this lawsuit in April 2005 after realizing that there was no other way to stop implementing these wrong articles except to seek legal protection," Mejalli explains.

He adds, "We're seeking to change more unconstitutional articles in order to have better and stronger laws to protect Yemeni economics and businessmen, as well as to protect citizens themselves from violations against their constitutional rights."

More than 40 percent of Yemenis live below the poverty line on less than \$2 per day and illiteracy is estimated at 50 percent. Average annual individual income is \$450 while unemployment was 37 percent in 2003, according to World Bank statistics.

"Ordinary Yemenis worry that implementing this tax will increase the financial burden upon them when they already can't afford to buy basic necessities," notes Member of Parliament Abdulrahman Fadl of the Islah party. "What will happen to them when such a law is implemented?"

Jamal Al-Mutarib, a senior member in the Chamber Association, points out that although five of the tax law's articles have been modified since the lawsuit began, many articles still worry the organization because "They simply violate traders' rights and lead to economic crises in the country," he says, adding, "I'm afraid that people aren't aware of how serious this case is."

He adds, "Taxation is done to achieve social justice, but it's not done for that purpose here. This law will encourage tax evasion, already estimated at 56 percent due to commodities smuggling, which the tax authority is unable to control."

"World Bank reforms haven't improved the economic situation; instead, they just leave behind a lot of taxes that people can't pay," Al-Mutarib concludes, further warning that, "This sales tax will reduce citizens' purchasing power."

## Four girls drown in Al-Dhale' while fetching water

By: Fuad Mus'ed  
For the Yemen Times

AL-DHALE', July 13 — Four girls died last Thursday in a small dam located in Al-Azariq district southwest of Al-Dhale' governorate. According to district residents, the four girls were taken to the hospital in Al-Dhale' city where they died shortly afterwards.

Local sources in the area said the girls — Jamila Qayed, Khadijah Hassan, Bushra Hassan and Firdous Sufian, all between the ages of 11 and 13 — fell into the small dam while trying to fetch water from the small dam, which was built by an area resident. One of the girls began drowning and when the others tried to save her, they also drowned as a result of their attempt.

Al-Azariq district already has witnessed similar events, as eight other girls have drowned in various small dam in the past. A few weeks ago, the

same fate befell three other girls while they were fetching water from a deep-water well in the area.

With some 45,000 residents, the district suffered drought for many years. Despite residents' continuing appeals to the government to help them, the situation continues. The government recently dug 12 more wells, but residents allege that they found no water in any except one.

According to Ibrahim Ali Naji, a teacher in Al-Azariq district, the government recently constructed several small dams and small dam, but they haven't helped because they were created without planning or prior studies regarding their benefits to locals.

"For example, the government built a dam in Al-Nakhilah district. While it's the largest dam in the area, it has affected the quantity of water in all of the other dams. As a result, residents were obliged to open it in order to supply the

other dams with water," Naji explains.

One district council member says the council discussed the water shortage and decided to establish several water projects to end residents' suffering. However, the financial budget allocated for these projects "wasn't accredited by the government as it usually is with all other projects in the area," the member noted, adding, "The government demanded the budget be provided by the district's local revenues, which cannot cover even the minimum level of needs." The governorate's only hospital, Al-Dhale' Public Hospital, is congested with patients, most of whom are from Al-Azariq district. Doctors say the main causes of diseases and epidemics spreading throughout that area, particularly among children, relate to the contaminated water residents are obliged to drink due to the drought and lack of government projects to provide them potable water.

## Continued from page 1

### Sa'ada tribal leaders suggest truce

**Initiative to end confrontations**  
Tribal leaders and prominent social figures are meeting to agree on a national initiative to end these most recent ongoing armed confrontations between government troops and Houthi supporters, which now have entered their fourth month.

Tribal sources note that tribal chiefs in both Sa'ada and Amran governorates still are studying the initiative with members of their tribes in an effort to end the destructive war through dialogue. Submitted by residents of the affected areas to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the initiative stip-

ulates a peaceful solution to the crisis in light of the ceasefire agreement both conflicting sides signed this past February in the Qatari capital of Doha.

Another condition for both sides to abide by after the war ceases is delegating national peacekeeping forces to maintain security and stability in the war-affected areas.

According to the initiative, these national peacekeepers should oversee how both parties are abiding by the Doha-brokered peace deal, as well as help the Qatari mediation committee or its representative end the crisis. It adds that the peacekeepers must play a notable role in reconstructing war-affected areas.

Stipulating strong commitment to the Doha-brokered deal, the initiative suggests a presidential pardon freeing all detained Houthi loyalists in exchange for the release of any army personnel or pro-government tribesmen held captive by Houthis.

The initiative further conditions that the national peacekeepers must work according to orders from President Saleh and that military leaders shouldn't intervene in their duties.

It also blames unnamed foreign forces for targeting Yemen's security and unity, alleging that the absence of courageous political decisions to restore trust among Yemenis is responsible for foreign interference in Yemen's internal affairs.



In brief

**SANAA'**  
220 wanted fugitives detained in Yemen in 2007

The security forces detained during 2007, 220 wanted fugitives on terrorism, organized crimes and drugs charges, official statistics said.

The GPC-run almotamar.net reported the statistics had noted that the security forces recovered 812 cars out of 1173 stolen cars as well.

They also deported 1390 illegal foreign immigrants and granted visas for 32,222 immigrants.

The statistics said the security, moreover, detained 27,970 displaced people and the coastguards arrested 1,418 people on charges linked to trafficking, infiltration and environment pollution.

Noteworthy, the Yemeni security forces tightened security measures on all fronts and this led to down the rates of all crime kinds compared to the high rates in the prior year.

They launched many campaigns that aimed to shut down weapons stores and detain involved people in terror acts.

**TAIZ**  
Corruption is one of modernism secretions, says Yemeni official

The head of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption (SNACC) Ahmed al-Ansi said on Wednesday that corruption is one of the outcomes of development and progress in

the modern world, which led to many secretions, particularly in human principles.

During his participation in a symposium on "the role of society in the fight against corruption" organized in Taiz by the al-Saeed Foundation for Sciences and Culture, the Yemeni official affirmed the important of the SNACC's role as a national anti-corruption body.

Al-Ansi pointed out that the newly created body had made tangible achievements, referring many cases to the public prosecutors and restoring more than YR 2.5 billion from one of the official bodies as well as adopting a resolution to prevent the mandates regarding tenders and auctions that are considered fertile environment for corruption.

**MUKALLA**  
UAE TIC announces keenness to invest in Hadhramout

The United Arab Emirates Trade International Company (TIC) announced its desire to invest in Yemen with partnership of 10 Gulf companies in different fields.

Governor of Hadramout Salem al-Khanbashi was briefed during his meeting on Tuesday by the company's representative Omar Obaied on the company's keenness to establish many investment projects in Hadhramout including tourism, trade, health and electricity.

Al-Khanbashi welcomed the UAE and

Gulf investments in Yemen, confirming that these investment would get all the facilities and encouragement accordance with Yemeni Investment Law.

He made pointed out to the investment opportunities in the governorate, considering the increase of Gulf investments in Yemen as a fruit of the reforms have been done by the government to improve investment environment.

**ADEN**  
AFESD delegation inspects projects in Aden

Governor of Aden Adnan al-Jafari discussed on Tuesday with a delegation of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), who are visiting Yemen currently, and briefed them on the projects funded by AFESD.

During the meeting, they reviewed a number of topics related to projects funded by AFESD and the possibility of implementing other development projects including the project of marine channel in Arish region in Aden province.

For their part, AFESD delegation expressed willingness of Arab fund to implement the projects which have technical studies.

**HODEIDAH**  
Hodeidah ports launches new navigation line

The Port of Hodeidah launched on Tuesday a new navigation line (HMM)

for container ships.

In a statement to Saba, General Director of Containers Station in Hodeidah Port Mohammed al-Saies said that the new navigation line is characterized by large shipping lines.

Meanwhile a new navigation line received the first ship of containers from a company specialized in transporting containers in Dubai.

**LAHJ**  
Turkish investment delegation inspects agriculture sector in Lahj

The joint meeting of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Lahj discussed here on Wednesday with the Turkish investment delegation investment opportunities in the area of agriculture in the province.

During the meeting, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Hussein al-Wardi affirmed the importance of providing data base for various investment activities in the sector of agriculture, highlighting that the chamber provided suitable environment for twenty investment projects in several fields.

Meanwhile, the Turkish delegation visited al-Husaini garden and a number of agricultural nurseries and expressed their admiration for what they have seen of ways of irrigation and modern system of agriculture, affirming willingness to invest in the governorate and provide agricultural machinery.

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Their News

Yemeni cultural night in Malaysia



Rashed Ahmed Shagea reported from Pinang, Malaysia that the Yemeni students in Inti College, Pinang Island, 5 hours north of Kuala Lumpur participated in an unusual international night earlier this month.

Although they are still young (undergraduate), they were the best ambassadors of Yemen. They participated effectively in all components of the event such as Yemeni food, dance, costumes and even architecture.

The Yemeni Mafraj was also present with the sound of Yemeni music, the smell of Bakhoor and the accompanying Yemeni coffee that was delivered to everybody.

The Yemeni Kabsah was the best dish in the event and everybody was asking about the recipe. All nationalities agreed that Yemeni were the stars in every thing.

At the end Yemen got the first prize. The photos explain some of the truth.

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# Yemeni immigrant life in Saudi Arabia

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

**R**iyadh, capital of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is a vast city with a large foreign community.

Al-Batha is the old city of Riyadh, famed for its markets filled with Saudi, Bengali, Pakistani and Yemeni laborers. Also in this area, one can see Saudi men with their own specialized vehicles working as drivers alongside poorer Saudi women selling cold drinks, clothing, accessories and incense.

In Al-Batha, one also sees Yemeni street vendors selling items such as fruit, clothing, accessories and more. Because they entered the country without visas, some of these Yemeni vendors working in the heart of Riyadh don't have residency permits.

Some 700,000 Yemenis are registered in Saudi Arabia, aside from those who entered the country illegally. The majority are laborers and storeowners.

Most Yemeni immigrants in Saudi are men who came either alone or with friends in search of work. They live in groups of about four or five in a one-room apartment or a building designated for singles, with the groups sometimes sharing meals to save money.

While some live with their families, the majority left their families behind in Yemen while they spend years attempting to earn a living in the kingdom, working from 9 a.m. until 11:30 p.m.

Arriving home at midnight, they often play cards or chess until 3 a.m. in an effort to ease their self-imposed exile from their families, as some leave their families for up to three years.



Saudis and Yemenis gathering for a meeting in Riyadh.

However, situations and work opportunities for Yemenis in Saudi Arabia differ from those of the past. In the 1990s, Saudis turned to Asian immigrants for cheap labor that Yemenis used to provide, at the same time strengthening immigration laws for border countries like Yemen.

During the 1980s, Yemeni immigrants in the kingdom were treated as Saudis and given high wages. However, following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the First Gulf War in 1990, Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia made Yemeni immigration much more difficult, possibly due to Yemen's support of Iraq in the war, among other reasons.

During this time, a large chunk of

the 1.5 million-strong Yemeni community returned home and Saudis replaced Yemenis with imported laborers from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, who would work for lower wages.

Although most Yemeni laborers still working in Saudi aren't paid well, they say they're content and that their lives are much better than they were in their home country.

#### How do they view their home country?

While all of these Yemeni immigrants love their home country and had hoped to remain there, they were forced to leave to find work due to Yemen's economic deterioration and price increases.

Some prefer to remain as long as possible in Saudi Arabia because they fear an extended economic downturn in their home country.

"When I came to Riyadh in the early 1970s, Sana'a was better in terms of construction and work," observes businessman Haza'a Mujahed, who has a gold store and an electronics store in Al-Batha, "but now there's no comparison between the two."

Although he likes his country and wished to remain there, the situation in Yemen is unsuitable for his businesses. "I used to travel home every two years. Every time I travel to Yemen, I see deterioration in everything, even in people's conduct," Mujahed says.

"Because of the problems I've faced regarding my land [in Yemen], I decided to stay in [Saudi], building a house for my children, who told me to do so." He adds, "I feel very happy in this country and I like it very much because everything in it is good."

Due to working in Saudi Arabia, Mujahed was able to establish a Qur'anic school in his village of Same'a in Taiz, paying nominal salaries to those working there. Every year, he also sends zakat, or charity, to the poor in his hometown.

"I love my country and I want to live in it," says Mujahed, who has been in Saudi Arabia for 36 years, "but the deteriorating economic situation and livelihood has forced me to remain here."

Mujahed brought his family to Riyadh eight years ago and three years ago, he brought his two married daughters and their husbands, whom he later employed in his stores. Both of his daughters' husbands hold university

degrees, but were unable to find jobs in Yemen.

Abdulhafour Abdullah, 30, works in a gold store for SR 2,000 (approximately \$500) per month and also runs a small accessories store with one of his relatives, where he earns another SR 2,000 per month.

As he recalls, "When I came to Riyadh for the first time, I thought, 'How poor and how simple we are!' When you compare Riyadh to Sana'a, you'll find that Sana'a is a small village compared to the modern, giant capital of Riyadh."

Tanzil Abdulwahed, 37, works in a store that pays him SR 3,000 per month, which is equivalent to around \$750. He says he hasn't traveled to Yemen in three years due to the economically depressed climate there. "I wonder how large poor families can afford the food price hikes," he said.

Accessories distributor Abdu Naji prefers to remain in Saudi as long as he can in order to amass more money. "The situation in our home country compels us to stay here as long as we can to make money and send to our children in Yemen," he explains.

The majority of the Yemeni community living in Saudi Arabia is sad about Yemen's economic and social situation. Bitterness is evident in their voices when they speak about the conditions that forced them to leave their country.

They admit that Yemen is much better than Saudi Arabia in terms of weather because Yemen is a green country with a good climate and excellent weather, while Saudi is a desert nation with a tough climate, very hot in the summer and very cold in the winter,

with a constant dusty atmosphere.

#### Their problems

Most legal Yemeni immigrants are hassled by Saudi authorities, but they encounter a different set of problems.

For example, some Yemeni immigrants purchased Saudi visas for SR 15,000 but when they arrived, they didn't find work or stay long enough time in order to get work. Others who found low-paying jobs couldn't afford to live there and send money back to their families in Yemen.

Having obtained a visa from his relative for less than SR 15,000, Abdulhaqq Thabit now works as a sales agent in an electronics store for SR 1,500 per month, but he still struggles financially daily.

"This salary isn't enough for me because I have to live on it here while at the same time sending a large portion of it to my family in Sana'a," he explains, noting that if he doesn't find something with a better salary, he'd prefer to return to Yemen.

#### How do they evaluate the Yemeni community and its embassy in Saudi?

While most laborers have no links to the Yemeni Embassy, those who do deal with it speak negatively of it.

Concerning the Yemeni community in Saudi, the immigrants say having a group of their compatriots nearby hasn't helped them that much.

"The Yemeni immigrants living here established a fund to take care of those families whose supporters have died or are imprisoned, but we received no help from the leaders of the Yemeni community here," Mujahed points out.

## Wedding Customs in Socotra include circumcision

By: Sultan Qutran  
For the Yemen Times

**I**n Socotra, it's not only the weather that changes during the windy season of June to September – people's lives change too. You rarely find a man on Socotra during this season, as they start their annual migration to the province of Hadramout, to which the island of Socotra belongs. This period of migration during the windy season was inherited from ancestors and Socotra residents are still keen to abide by it.

After the four months end, celebrations and wedding ceremonies are held by Socotran families to celebrate their return back home. Houses are cleaned and women dress in their most beautiful clothes for the reception of the returning migrants on the other bank of the island, where wind doesn't affect planes' landings.

While marriage customs and traditions in Yemen vary from one city to another, there is something specific about weddings in the Socotran community that differs from that of other regions.

#### Proposal ceremony

A groom's father, in the company of a small group of people, goes to the bride's father home to propose marriage. Once the proposal day is decided, the groom's relatives bring the engagement ring and agree that the engagement period should not last more than 10 days. Next, they decide on the dowry, which costs island inhabitants around YR 50,000 to YR 100,000, usually in the form of clothing and jewelry. Some choose to perform the proposal and wedding ceremonies all in one day to get the whole process concluded quickly.

#### Wedding Ritual for men

The main difference in weddings on Socotra for men is the circumcision process the bridegroom conducts before his marriage. This is one of the most prevalent wedding rituals on Socotra. Two weeks or a month before marriage, the groom who is about to be married is circumcised in front of small gathering of people near his house. If the man screams or moves out of pain during the operation, it is considered shameful for him, as his future wife will not feel proud of his patience and courage. Therefore, the man who is going to be circumcised puts henna into his hair in the eve of the circumcision so that his



hair stays fixed and doesn't move. After the circumcision, the man walks on foot to his house with circumcision blood dripping.

The rural wedding rituals differ from the coastal weddings in that the guests give a gift of sheep to the groom and have lunch at his house. Then they congratulate the bridegroom by tapping the groom repeatedly on his shoulder or by shaking hands and putting their noses against the groom's.

After lunch, the guests start reciting poetry until the afternoon prayers. After prayers, they resume showing off the rich heritage of their poems, which closely resemble traditional Hadrami music, and expressions that describe the environment and life of Socotra's people. By the sunrise the next day, the groom makes his excuses and leaves. The guests then feast on rice and meat, while congratulating the absent groom. In the coastal and urban areas, however, the groom's relatives and neighbors serve lunch to the guests and take their gifts: meat, rice, sheep, and oil. No sooner is lunch finished than the drum's sound is heard, along with words sung in Socotra language by the percussionist: "Hawoo, waway Hawawy – Nofohere

Shaher Men Kablow, Nafak Sher Men Kablow." These words tell the groom that he has married on a blessed day. Then comes another phrase, "Taher Harzman Deadfanah" which means that the old days have now passed. Other words are said and more poems are delivered while the groom is dressed in his formal wedding clothes.

After the groom has dressed, the guests leave the groom to prepare for the bride's arrival. The groom's mother, sisters and sometimes his other female relatives get ready to fetch the bride in a parade of five cars. The women celebrate with her until she arrives at the groom's house. The groom enters the room and gives her a sum of money or a piece of jewelry, which he does in order for the bride to permit him to see her face. After one week, both couples go to the bride's home and the groom is supposed to give his mother-in-law a sum of money, a nice dress or a similar type of present.

#### Wedding rituals for women

After she gets engaged, the bride-to-be stops going out. Instead, she stays at home to prepare for her wedding day. She dresses in fine clothes and puts on

makeup to get ready for the celebration day. On the day of the wedding, she has a bridal shower with female family and friends where lunch is served. Eventually, girls and women come to

congratulate her then they dance and sing together until the groom's relatives come to take the bride, making joyful sounds until she arrives at the groom's house. The wedding ceremony is almost

finished by now, except for few words uttered by the groom: "Who A'athanik Mosh Men Albeb," which means that the groom loves the bride with all of his heart.

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## Khaled Fattah to Yemen Times:

“Yemeni tribes are ancient  
closer to the people than

**N**adia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Khaled Fattah, a doctoral researcher specializing in state and society relations in the Arab Middle East and a tutor of international relations, foreign policy and history of the Middle East at the University of St. Andrews in the United Kingdom.

In addition to his academic background in international relations, Khaled Fattah holds several degrees in the fields of the politics of development strategies, intercultural studies and cross-cultural psychology. Below, he elaborates on the relationship between Islam and democracy and the future of the tribe in Yemeni political life.

**Why did you choose “contextual determinants of political modernization in tribal communities” as your doctoral thesis?**

By all conventional measurements of modernization and development – from education and communication to bureaucracy and urbanization – Arab societies have been undergoing an impressive socioeconomic transformation.

However, there’s a gap between this transformation and the political consequences of modernization. In other words, the Arab Middle East exhibits a sharp contrast between its societal and political progress.

My doctoral thesis attempts to discover why such a gap exists in those Arab republics with significant tribal populations. My choice of a contextual approach is based on my conviction that contextualization transcends the simplistic and essentialist narratives unfortunately constituting a popular framework for many Western academic works and journalistic reports about the Arab Middle East in the hysterical post-Sept. 11 world.

The choice of tribal political communities is made for several reasons, the first of which is that in such communities, the dilemma of state formation in the Arab world is very prominent. Second, within these communities are obvious contradictions between tribal and state attachments.

Third, in the aftermath of the atrocities of Sept. 11, a plethora of journalistic reports, policy and strategic papers highlight an intimate relationship between tribalism, authoritarianism and terrorism.

A hostile attitude toward tribalism in the region intensified even more

following the disastrous failure of the United States’ geopolitical project in Iraq.

In my thesis, I question this misconception regarding the link between militant Islamism and tribalism in the region and I attempt to furnish a better understanding of the role of tribalism in shaping the process of political modernization.

In a nutshell, my research is an attempt to critically reexamine the current popular interpretation of political modernization in tribal Arab republics.

**Why is Yemen one of the countries you’re researching and what are the particularities of the Yemeni community that aren’t present in any other community, in your opinion?**

For me as a researcher with an interest in exploring state-society relations in the Arab Middle East, there scarcely could be a more appropriate part of the region in which to study the influence of the tribe in shaping the process of political modernization and the mode of governance than the Republic of Yemen.

Tribes in this republic remain dominant systems of cultural meaning and the imprint of tribal values is evident in the state’s political structure and decision-making process.

The important role of tribes and the strength of tribalism in Yemen are so evident in the political structure and the decision-making process to the extent that its president even admits that the Yemeni state “is part of the tribes.”

He further notes that Yemenis are a collection of tribes and that the nation’s cities and countryside areas are all tribes. He adds that all of the



Khaled Fattah

state’s official and popular apparatuses “are formed from tribes and tribesmen.”

Such presidential statements not only are a strong political assertion of tribal political culture, but also an indication of how the balance of power

pluralism and a degree of freedom of expression not found in the Arabian Peninsula or even in some Arab republics.

Finally, united Yemen is an excellent case study of the war variable and regional factors in state formation and

tribal, regional, local) with a single state authority that’s democratic, secular and national. Such an authority should rationalize its authority in a manner that asserts its internal and external sovereignty.

Second is developing specialized, autonomous, elaborate and disciplined structures capable of performing the state’s new differentiated functions. The third change involves developing new political institutions (e.g., political parties) to carry out the task of stimulating and organizing political participation and the practice of democracy.

However, in Yemen, it has become evident that the launch of modernization in the 1960s has aggravated pre-national identities such as tribalism and intensified state-society conflicts over allocating economic goods.

Furthermore, state-led reconstruction of tribalism and manipulation of the tribe continue to be a prominent feature in contemporary Yemeni politics.

After years of academic engagement with Yemen’s sociopolitical life, I realize that one useful way to grasp Yemen’s case is to appreciate Ibn Khaldoun’s views regarding the impact of the physical location of tribes on determining the degree of governance from the core.

*The important role of tribes and the strength of tribalism in Yemen are so evident in the political structure and the decision-making process to the extent that its president even admits that the Yemeni state “is part of the tribes.”*

between the state and the tribe in Yemen sometimes strongly tips toward the latter.

The tribe’s continuous prominent political role in shaping Yemen’s modern sociopolitical life is indeed a unique formula within the Middle East laboratory of state-society relations.

It’s worth remembering that Yemen is one of only four countries in the world – alongside Egypt, Persia and China – that can claim three millennia of more or less continuous culture. In such an ancient society governed by a newly-established and externally-imposed modern state system is an obvious tense relationship between its ancient tribal and modern national identities.

In addition to what I’ve already mentioned are various aspects making unified Yemen a unique specimen within the Arab political aquarium. To begin with, it is the only Arab nation born out of the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Second, united Yemen is a unique fusion of completely opposing political orientations between the only Marxist Arab state ever to exist and the most tribal and conservative Arab state.

Third, compared to other Arab states, Yemen scores extremely low on every development index. However, at the democracy level, it allows party

de-formation in the Middle East. Yemen not only is an enigma to anthropologists of the Middle East, but to political scientists as well.

**You reflect on the classical modernization theory in the sense that in order for developing nations to move forward, they must leave behind their traditional structures and systems. However, Yemen has taken its traditional structures with it into the future, so how do you explain this?**

Classical modernization theory positions primordial attachments such as tribalism in direct conflict with civil loyalties and stresses their incompatibility with full participation in a modern nation-state. The theory assumes that such attachments are unpragmatic pre-national identifications soon replaced by class consciousness and citizenship awareness.

In modernization theory, the political manifestations and consequences of modernization, similar to socio-cultural and economic ones, are explained within a hegemonic discourse whose terms have been dictated largely by the Western academy.

According to the theory, one can identify three main changes at the heart of the political modernization process, the first of which is replacing traditional authorities (e.g., religious,

Khaldoun appears in the argument that ancient Middle Eastern forms of social identification, such as tribalism, persist in peripheral areas beyond state control or in rural areas where the state practices indirect governance through tribal authorities.

Another valid Khaldounian view regards the dynamic yet opposing equilibrium between tribal nomads (*Bedu*) and settlers (*hadar*). Because tribes are difficult to tax and they constitute a physical threat to the *hadar*, central governments regard them with suspicion. Throughout Middle Eastern history, the *Bedu-hadar* relationship has always been characterized by mutual mistrust, but at the same time, by mutual need.

Classical modernization theory fails to explain Yemen’s case simply because Yemen doesn’t display a simple two-stage progression from a traditional tribal-based system to a modern political community. For instance, the Yemeni state doesn’t displace existing tribal society nor does it halt exercising power along traditional lines.

In this sense, Yemen represents a case of synthesis between political modernity and ancient tribal Arab values and structures; therefore, it’s a typical case of hybrid modernization. In Yemen, tradition and modernity aren’t opposites!

**Who rules Yemen – the state, the tribe or both together, and how?**

This question reminds me of the old Yemeni saying that says “Ruling Yemen is like riding a lion!” This is indeed a central question that many observers of Yemen have attempted to answer by evaluating Yemen’s state-building process in order to determine whether the Yemeni state is strong enough to rule over the tribes.

Most available findings indicate that on the basis of the understanding that a state is a common set of institutions capable of distributing goods and providing services, enforcing decisions, maintaining law and order and extracting taxes within its internationally recognized territory, the Yemeni state is the weakest in the Middle East.

This means that state institutions in Yemen are unable to fully penetrate and regulate the tribes. However, this doesn’t mean the Yemeni state is just a tribe with a flag, as some wrongly argue; rather, tribal banners in Yemen fly next to the national flag.

Turning to the tribes in Yemen, we should be aware that the distinction between tribal and non-tribal in no significant way corresponds to nomads

*The tribe’s continuous prominent political role in shaping Yemen’s modern sociopolitical life is indeed a unique formula within the Middle East laboratory of state-society relations.*

According to him, living in desert regions and inaccessible mountain areas has helped tribes acquire the skill of escaping their obligations to the state, especially when the central government is weak. Khaldoun’s term for those areas under formal state control is “lands of treasury,” and for those peripheral areas dominated by tribes, “lands of dissidence.”

Today’s academic agreement with

and settlers. Yemeni tribes do not move; in fact, the majority of tribal populations in Yemen are farmers.

Yemen’s tribal reality amplifies the mistake some Western academics make in treating the tribe as a far much simpler unit than the state and as an entity occupying a lower rung on the evolutionary ladder of political life.

This wrong evolutionary approach has been rejected, since it’s clear that





# “Not reliable safety networks than the state system”

tribes and the state in Yemen, as in other parts of the Middle East, lead to the formation and sustaining of each other. As a result, many recent scholarly works have begun to transcend the traditional state-tribe dichotomy by criticizing the notion of the state as an autonomous political actor.

According to these new works, the state is simply a political field upon which many actors, including tribes, compete for resources and influence. In light of this, one can argue that the politicization of Yemeni tribes isn't an attempt by the tribes to overthrow the state and replace it with tribal order; rather, it's an attempt to extract maximum political concessions and economic benefits from the state.

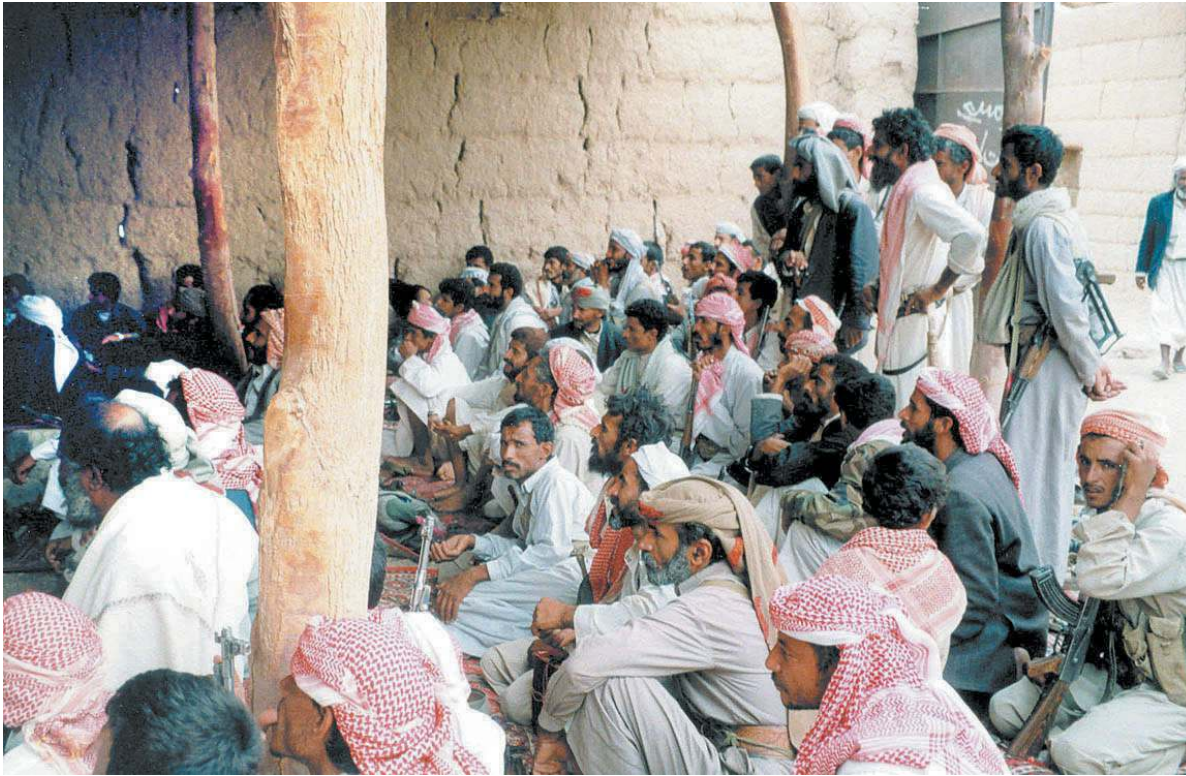
Historically, the powerful political position of today's Yemeni tribes has its roots in the Saudi and Egyptian military and financial support of the Yemeni tribes during the nation's civil war in the 1960s. Following the toppling of Northern Yemen's President Abdullah Al-Salaal in the aftermath of the 1967 withdrawal of Egyptian troops, tribal infiltration of state institutions began to expand, peaking during the regime of Abdul Rahman Al-Eryani (1967-1974).

Regime after regime in North Yemen did what the imams did – namely, rally the tribes. In other words, as one Yemeni academic put it, Yemenis succeeded in getting rid of the imam, but not the imamate mentality.

Today, Yemeni tribes not only have become a very powerful political entity, but also the most important mediating national institution mainly because since the first day of its birth, tribes strongly penetrated the North Yemeni state.

An observer of Yemen reflects on the impact of such penetration, arguing that today's Yemeni state behaves like a tribe, while the tribe behaves like a state.

In my opinion, many signs indicate that the Yemeni state slowly is gaining strength, particularly in the security sector, but it's not yet in a position allowing it to exercise supreme political authority over its tribes. Rather, today's Yemen is ruled by a state still in the making that compensates its



Tribes gathering.

The decentralization dilemma I had in mind relates to those seasonal but loudly advertised central government-designed projects imposed upon citizens living outside the capital city. Such projects are doomed to fail if locals don't feel any ownership about them.

Experiences in other parts of the developing world have shown that successful decentralization projects were implemented in local communities where central government officials reassigned roles at the local, regional and central levels, removed obstacles to self-help, encouraged the empowerment of women, introduced a clear concept of accountability, prevented local elites from abusing their power and allowed local solutions to emerge in response to common problems.

Unfortunately, Yemen still has a long way to go on the road to democratic decentralization of governance. But it must be said that, like their fellow humans everywhere across the globe, Yemenis will support decentral-

ization of governance when it responds to their immediate needs and brings them tangible and direct socio-economic benefits.

Robert Dahl, who employed the metaphor of a reservoir. As long as the reservoir remains at a certain level, political stability can be maintained; however, if it falls below the required level, it is endangered.

Yemen's harsh political reality reveals that without tribal support, no regime can acquire legitimacy, thus, the level of political stability falls sharply. It may be of interest to know that there are three main sources of legitimacy for all regimes and governments worldwide, the first of which is the so-called charismatic authority, which grants legitimacy based on a political leader's charisma. Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser is a good example of this type of legitimacy.

A second source is traditional authority. The monarchal systems in Jordan, Morocco and the Arabian Peninsula derive their legitimacy primarily from this second source.

Finally, there is rational/legal authority, which provides governments a type of legitimacy based on a well-known and highly respected set of laws and principals. To say the least, this third source of legitimacy isn't really popular in the Arab Middle East.

Looking at Yemen in the post-imamate era reveals that neither charisma nor traditional authority supply political legitimacy; instead, Yemen's political regimes, particularly the current regime, derive their legitimacy by relying on an extensive web of tribal, military and commercial complexities.

Thus, Yemen's future political life depends on the particular source of legitimacy and the path of modernization and human development that Yemen's political elites will choose.

#### Is democracy an Islamic concept?

Much ink has been used to discuss the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Briefly, we can divide the vast and varied spectrum of literature that has addressed this issue into two main traditions, the first of which presumes a serious conflict between Islam and democracy.

According to this tradition, Islamic values contain something inherently undemocratic that makes it impossible for Islamic societies to develop Western culture's dualism of church and state, spiritual and temporal authority.

The second tradition argues that there are ample grounds for skepticism regarding the claim that democracy conflicts with Islam. To support this argument, advocates of this tradition often point to the Islamic concepts of *shoura* (consultation), *ijtihad* (independent interpretive judgment) and *ijma* (consensus) and how such concepts are very compatible with democracy.

*Today, Yemeni tribes not only have become a very powerful political entity, but also the most important mediating national institution mainly because since the first day of its birth, tribes strongly penetrated the North Yemeni state.*

However, there's a fundamental problem in the nature of much of the debate between these two traditions – namely, the contrasting of the norms, values and core assumptions of Arab/Muslim societies with the values, principals and practices of Western democracy.

This approach misses the point that the key to understanding the Arab/Muslim world's transition to democracy lies in the type and context of state-society relations in the region, not in the type and context of Muslim societal norms, values and assumptions.

It's not Islam that makes the Arab Middle East resistant to the waves of democracy and the winds of sociopolitical change; rather, it's the region's authoritarian regimes that don't allow room for dissent and fail to provide the majority of Arab citizens dignity and social justice.

It's the acute shortage of the state's devolution of power to social actors and the politics of patronage and disempowerment that should be blamed, not Islam. The level of democracy isn't determined by the type of religion but rather by the degree of autonomy the state grants to society.

The debate about the link between Islam and democracy also can be crit-

icized for downplaying or totally ignoring facts concerning other religions, for example, in Israel, where religion and state are not separate.

Introducing Christian values in Africa and Latin America did not bring democracy, political stability and human development to the peoples in those places. Regardless of religion, race, language or ethnicity, democracy is foreign to no part of the world and Arab/Muslim societies are no exceptions.

**How do you view the ideological division of Yemeni society in terms of those affiliated to tribes and those more civilized or modernized communities where the tribal structure has diminished? How do you describe the interaction between tribal and civil communities in Yemen?**

In every society on earth are tendencies toward change and those toward preserving tradition. The latter tendency often blames modernity for all social ills and problems, while the former accuses tradition of being the reason for backwardness and stagnation.

For this reason, the existing friction between tradition and modernity in Yemen should be examined through a global rather than a local prism.

What differentiates Yemen's case is the fact that, unlike in many parts of the world, the forces of modernity remain very weak in the face of strong tribal traditions. In my view, such weakness is attributed to the marginalization of modernizing forces in

of party pluralism, why can Yemeni tribes do without political parties, but the political parties can't do without the tribes?

**You've said in some of your articles that a tribe sometimes serves as a buffer to protect citizens from the state. What do you mean by that?**

A panoramic view of the landscape of state-society relations in the Arab Middle East reflects that the degree of state despotism in Yemen is far less than in the rest of the region.

In the absence of a strong civil society and rule of law, the power of Yemeni tribes versus the state creates a type of balance between the central authority and society. In other words, the Yemeni state thinks twice before acting against an individual with a strong tribal backing.

In an interview I conducted with a prominent Yemeni scholar, he told me about a meeting he had with exiled moderate Tunisian Islamist, Rashid Al-Ganoushi, during which Al-Ganoushi said, "I wish I had a tribe because if I'd had one, I wouldn't have been exiled!"

**What do you hope your research proves and how would you like decision makers to use your findings?**

I hope to prove that the essential starting point in studying the process of political modernization in tribal Arab republics should be an appreciation of the inherent tensions in nation-building and state formation in newly established modern states governing ancient tribal-based societies.

Therefore, analyzing political modernization in such nations should be done in light of the fact that tribalism is an alternate structure more available to those societies recently incorporated into the Western-dominated world economy, politics and culture.

Political tribalism in the Arab Middle East is the outcome of the fact that the state and the tribe have articulated with each other within complex and multifaceted external/internal contexts.

Political modernization – and thus democracy – must learn extremely well the languages and histories of those nations it visits. The disastrous failure of the U.S. project in Iraq is illustrative of the fatal consequences of cultural ignorance and historical amnesia.

What we hear in today's Iraq is not the marching of modernization and democracy, but rather the marching of U.S. troops, and the cries of innocent Iraqi civilians.

By presenting Yemen's case within its cultural, economic and political contexts, I hope to refute the current influential essentialist vision regarding modernization and democracy in the tribal republics of the Middle East.

I'd also like to present Western readers and researchers indigenous views by Arab academics, politicians and activists. One finding of my research that I'd like Western political decision makers and international organizations to consider when dealing with modernization and democratization in the Arab Middle East is that Arab/Islamic culture isn't an impediment to transition to democracy, but rather, Western preconditions of modernization are out of context in places like Yemen because such preconditions don't coincide with the shared set of social meanings, regional/international interventions and domestic economic conditions there.

*Yemenis will support decentralization of governance when it responds to their immediate needs and brings them tangible and direct socio-economic benefits.*

limited power by co-opting tribal leaders.

**In one of your articles on decentralization, you wrote, "The existing dilemma of local governance in Yemen will get worse as long as the policies of central government are not driven by demand from local citizens." Can you explain this further?**

Decentralization is much more than transferring fiscal and administrative responsibilities from central to local levels of governance. Above all, decentralization is about empowering local populations to control those conditions, plans and actions that affect their daily lives and aspirations.

ization of governance when it responds to their immediate needs and brings them tangible and direct socio-economic benefits.

**What do you mean by "the state uses the tribal system to legitimize its existence?" Does this mean that in the long run, Yemen won't be able to exist without tribes?**

Legitimacy is strongly linked to the concept of consent, meaning that every regime or political authority needs its citizens' acceptance in order to survive and be able to widen its sphere of influence.

One of the best metaphors to explain political legitimacy is one used by prominent political scientist



## Words of Wisdom



The problem is the helplessness people feel. Most people feel they have lost control, and even a sense of direction. They drift along with the current. They feel uncomfortable with the flow as they believe there is no one in charge.

This is because the Yemeni individual is used to an autocratic system in which things are predetermined and people are given exact roles to play.

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



## OUR OPINION

## Is there a difference between the concepts of family planning and birth control?

Now that we are celebrating the World Population Day, many activities and awareness sessions are taking place around the republic advocating for family planning. The idea is to educate Yemenis to plan a better future for their families through spacing births and avoiding early and late pregnancies.

The use of contraceptives is advocated for this, and the good news is that they are becoming more popular, especially among young couples who realize the challenges of sustaining a family.

However, there remains a stigma attached to the concept of "Tahdeed Al-Nasl," which roughly translates to "birth control." This concept means defining the number of children you will have forever, for example, if a family decided to have four children, and then uses tubal ligation or vasectomy to indefinitely limit childbirth in the family.

Though most Yemenis do not accept this concept, they are inadvertently doing the same thing by planning a family. Women who prefer not to have any children after the age of 35 or 40 years old, continue to use contraceptives until they hit menopause. By doing this, they increase their risk of having late pregnancies. When this happens (and it often does), they continue with the pregnancy despite the risks it may have for both the mother and the child. They explain that it was "God's will."

The difference is that when you use family planning, you are simply giving yourself time to breathe between pregnancies and to create a healthier environment for the mother and the children. Still, family planning this way could still lead to having many children, especially if the wife gets married at an early age. This is why the fertility rate in Yemen is among the highest in the world.

Yemenis believe they are serving God by having many children and obeying the Prophet's (pbuh) instructions. Some have also explained to me that limiting the number of children is a negative concept promoted by the West where there are decreasing birth rates. According to them, the West is afraid of our growing population and so it tries to impose birth control on us. This way we reduce the number of children and stop threatening world demographics, especially regarding Muslim immigrants in the West.

I also heard that in some families, they would rather have a temporary method of birth control than a permanent one in case one of the children dies and they want a replacement, or in case they change their minds after some years. Men refuse to get a vasectomy (although it can be reversed) because they think it somehow hurts their manhood. For women, they fear having their "tubes tied" because they fear their husbands might want another child after some time and hence would yield to taking a second wife for this purpose.

What I have realized is that family planning in Yemen is controlled by religious and social trends more than a health point of view. Obviously men dominate the issue and are the ultimate decision makers despite the fact that it is the women who have to bear the consequences.

The missing link is common sense. I am not advocating for a law that says everyone must have only three children - look at the problems in China - I am saying that Yemenis or at least the educated ones should try and put two and two together and realize that they should do what is best for their own families regardless of what the sheikh says.

After all, time has proven that the sheikh gets most of his information wrong, and most religious preachers, at least in Yemen, are unreliable sources even when it comes to what the religion stipulates about this issue.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

## Mandela eventually dropped from U.S. terror list

By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaheh

The U.S. democratic member of the House of Representatives Barbara Lee eventually managed to drop name of the former South African leader Nilsson Mandela, also a former opinion prisoner and Noble Prize winner, from the U.S. terror list. The issue necessitates a deep contemplation on the hard struggle demonstrated by the former South African Leader.

In order to verify the hundreds or most probably thousands of names contained in this devilish list, which has been used as a sword over the heads of innocent people, as well as those who defend their nations' rights and protect them from the American dominance, we need to add one fact to this issue so that we can

clearly disclose the permanent and close collaboration between the U.S. Administration and British government. Both regimes demonstrate this kind of collaboration to confront people's dreams for freedom, independence and liberation from slavery and racial discrimination.

Some readers may view this subject as if it arouses laughter and irony. They may believe that it is ironical to retain name of a great leader in the terror list, particularly after his country was liberated and got rid of discrimination.

South Africa has provided the most ideal example of democracy in the black continent while Mandela was its first president. For me and many people who employ well their mental capacities, this subject doesn't only arouse laughter and sarcasm, but rather it discloses how the foolish

superpower stains and fabricates facts.

This subject also reveals how the foolish superpower harms the human dignity, as well as how it does continue its gloomy vision toward liberation movements and leaders in different parts of the world under the guise of baseless pretexts with the malicious intention of intimidating strugglers and silencing free voices advocating legal resistance by natives against occupiers of their homelands.

I still don't know about President George W Bush's reactions toward what happened. I could not have guessed how he would have reacted to advocacy by the Democratic member of the House of Representatives urging that Mandela's name should be dropped from the terror list that contains names of thousands of

great strugglers, leaders, scholars and activists.

Names contained in this list are far away from terrorism since they are highly interested in seeking justice and liberties, and enhancing democracy and human rights, two of the issues, which the U.S. Administration claims to support.

I hope this will be a chance for democrats and liberals in the United States to review the terror list in question, as well as hold an international conference to burn this list in order to protect the U.S. reputation and help rescue the nice slogans raised by the current U.S. Administration in support of democracy and human rights.

## Good step necessary for correcting inexcusable error

The struggler Nilsson Mandela spent 30 years in prisons of the British occupation in defense of his

homeland. The man also had shown strong rejection of racial discrimination. The United States, which raised the slogans of liberty, democracy and human rights, should have stood up with the African leader and his people instead of accusing him of having connections with terrorism, and subsequently adding his name to the terror list.

I think that the American people are happy with what has happened, thereby repeating what was said by the Democratic Member of the House of Representatives Barbara Lee, who contributed much to efforts of eventually dropping Mandela's name from the terror list. She is very glad to take such an important step for correcting an inexcusable error.

Source: Al-Thawra State-run Daily.

## Who controls the Yemeni mind?

By: Adel Al-Shujaa

The observer of these days' symposiums and workshops, particularly the ones concentrating on the present and future of Yemen, finds that the number of participants at each of these events doesn't exceed the range of dozens.

On the contrary, anybody walking in the Ring Road of Sana'a, near Sana'a University, will be shocked to find that hundreds of youths are crowdedly massing before a shop playing a cassette for a preacher giving an excessive description of inferno and its miserable conditions. Their number is many times larger than the number of participants attending cultural and intellectual symposiums.

Does this mean that carpets have been taken from under the feet of educated people and intellectuals? People have drawn their attention from those who call for applying logic and reasonability in their everyday activities.

We don't know until which time this country will remain under the umbrella of ignorance and lack of active mentalities amid the unprecedented outbreak of information and spread of globalization. No notable role is being played by educated people and university professors, who should represent the strong mental faculties in their nation.

Also, media doesn't play a good role even in publishing scandals of those irresponsible mosque preachers, who exploit people's religious sentiments to mislead them.

When an educated man doesn't play the role required from him in this regard, this means he gives a greater opportunity to those irresponsible preachers, who deceive people under the guise of religious preaching and guidance, particularly as they face no difficulty doing so. I personally claim that educated individuals are responsible for misguidance of innocent citizens as a result of being emotionally affected by exaggerative preachers.

Apparently, mosque preachers claim that Muslims' indifference toward their religion is the primary reason for all the calamities and setbacks experienced across the Islamic nations. They further say that it is impossible for Muslims to defeat Israel until their numbers in mosques at dawn prayers equals their numbers during Friday

prayers, adding that Muslims will not enjoy stability until they go in streets with the Holy Book in their hands.

## Myths and fables pervades our environment

Myths and fables have become more pervasive in our environments until we started to hear unbelievable things about those (a group of preachers) who want to establish a body for virtue protection. They held a symposium at the Sana'a-based Eman University under "The Patronage of God for the Sake of Strengthening Faith." God has become the sponsor of their symposiums. Consequently, any findings that would have been reached during the symposium should have been approved by God, who is their symposium's

sponsor. As the educated elite have no effective role in this regard, those irresponsible preachers seized the opportunity to control minds of Yemeni people, and their calls are often welcomed, most notably by youths who bear in mind that these preachers control their future directions. Some of these youth have shown willingness to harm themselves in suicide bombings and terrorist operations based on a false belief that they defend Islam.

These irresponsible preachers constitute a potential danger due to plague Yemen's future since they exploit poverty, bad living conditions and kindness of Yemeni people to control their minds, as well as the way they think.

Source: Algomhoriyah.net

## Yemen and World Population Day

By: Saif Ahmad

World Population Day is an annual event, observed on July 11, which seeks to raise awareness of global population issues. The event was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Program in 1989. It was inspired by the public interest in Five Billion Day on July 11, 1987, approximately the date on which the world's population reached five billion people.

The world population on the 20th anniversary of Five Billion Day, July 11, 2007, was estimated to have been 6,727,551,263. In 1968, world leaders proclaimed that individuals have a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and timing of their children. Forty years later, modern contraception remains out of reach for hundreds of millions of women, men and young people.

## Yemen's population growth

Yemen was predicted to rank sixth globally in 2006 in population growth rate, stated a United Nations Population Fund representative in Yemen. The international organization holds the view that Yemen is characterized by one of the highest fertility rate in the world with 6.8 births per woman. "Nearly half of the Yemenis are younger than 15 years, which is a reflection of the high population growth rate," according

to a recent report released by UNFPA.

The report focused on the international migration, particularly female migration and there was a call for action to improve the situation of the 95 million women migrants over the world.

This year's World Population Day reaffirms the right of people to plan their families. It encourages activities, events and information that will help make this right real - especially for those who often have the hardest time getting the information and services they need to plan their families, such as marginalized populations and young people.

When people can plan their families, they can plan their lives. They can plan to beat poverty. They can plan on healthier mothers and children. They can plan to gain equality for women. Plan to support World Population Day this year! Plan to beat poverty. Plan to gain equality. Plan to beat maternal death Supporting Adolescents and Youth

More than 1.5 billion people are between the ages of 10 and 25. This largest-ever generation of adolescents is approaching adulthood in a world their elders could not have imagined. Globalization, the AIDS pandemic, electronic communications and a changing climate have irrevocably shifted the landscape.

The scenario is mixed. As young people share ideas, values, music and symbols through mass media and electronic technology, a global

youth culture has emerged. Many are organizing and networking themselves in both formal and informal ways.

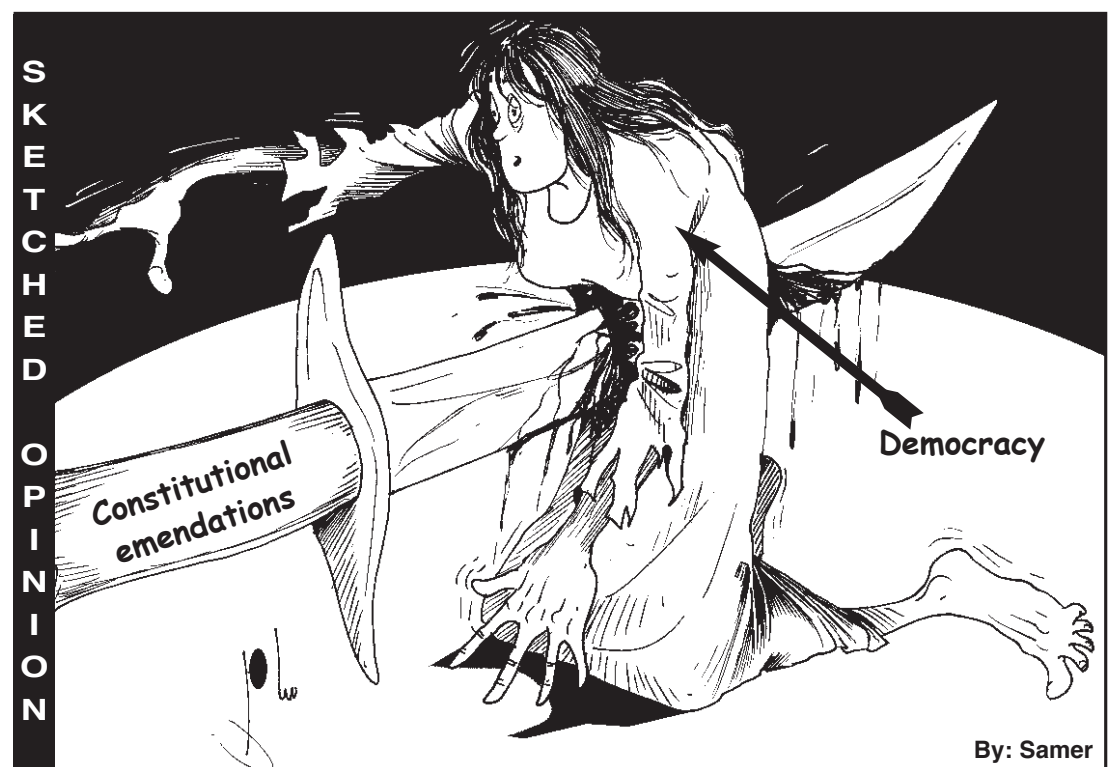
But more than half of young people live in poverty, on less than \$2 per day. Often they lack access to the technology and information. Many also face social inequality, poor schools, gender discrimination, unemployment and inadequate health systems. They deserve better. And investing in them is an investment in the future leaders of families, communities and nations.

UNFPA promotes and protects the rights of young people. It envisions a world in which girls and boys have optimal opportunities to develop their full potential, to freely express themselves and have their views respected, and to live free of poverty, discrimination and violence.

## The Fund works across sectors and with many partners to:

Empower adolescents and youth with skills to achieve their dreams, think critically, and express

themselves freely. Promote health, including by giving them access to sexual and reproductive health information, education, commodities and services. Connect young people to livelihood and employment programs. Uphold the rights of young people, especially girls and marginalized groups, to grow up healthy and safe to receive a fair share of social investments. Encourage young people's leadership and participation in decisions that affect them, including the development plans of their societies.



By: Samer

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# Yemen Press Review



Al-Wahdawi.net, affiliated with the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)  
Wednesday, July 9, 2008

## Top Stories

- JMP leader criticizes official terrorism against citizens, holds authority accountable for any negative consequences
- NUPO Assistant Secretary-General: citizens' arrest incriminates the right to express oneself freely
- American newspaper: Saleh ruled Yemen via fomenting conflicts between the various tribes
- Security authorities intimidated by journalists, block roads leading to Supreme Judicial Council

Protesters, who responded to a call by civic society organizations to protest in front of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) over manipulation of a court verdict issued against the reputed journalist and Editor-in-Chief of the Shoura Weekly Abdulkarim Al-Khaiwani, were surprised by such irresponsible and arbitrary security procedures, the website reported in its lead story.

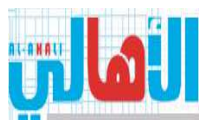
It added that security authorities intensified the number of troops deployed in the Justice Street and other sub-roads in the area, thereby blocking all the reads leading to SJC in order to prevent protesters from approaching the highest judicial body in Yemen.

After some of the protesters took photos for the excessive deployment of security personnel in the area, the police tried to confiscate the protesters' cameras. They prevented Aljazeera Satellite Channel cameraman from taking any

photos for the scene.

As a result, protesters moved toward Yemeni Journalists' Syndicate where they announced their demands with regard to investigating the way the court verdict issued against Al-Khaiwani was manipulated and releasing the victim, who has been jailed for several times over his critical writing.

Civic society organizations viewed such exceptional procedures against protesters as contravening the Constitution and effective laws, adding that they reflect the inhuman way the government treats its citizens. These organizations strongly denounced such security reactions against civil functions, ensured by Constitution of the Republic of Yemen.



Al-Ahali Comprehensive Independent Weekly  
Tuesday, July 8, 2008

## Top Stories

- Constitutional amendments add more ten years for Saleh to stay in power
- Ruling and opposition parties' dialogue fails to address fundamental issues
- Authority resorts to constituting popular army to fight Houthis
- U.S. Ambassador calls for neutrally composing Yemen's SCER

U.S. Ambassador to Yemen Steven Seche stressed the necessity of appointing members of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER) and composing this commission in a fair and neutral way, the weekly reported on its front page.

It went on to say that the U.S. Envoy said during a symposium organized by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) on political funding that "Yemen should create a strong network for exercising oversight over public funds." He also emphasized the necessity of the various government agencies working neutrally in order to ensure free and fair elections in Yemen. "Money has a negative effect on the electoral process," Seche commented.

In the same sphere, Resident Representative of National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Yemen explained nature of the democratic problem in Yemen, saying that "The winner wins everything and the loser loses everything." He maintained that power in Yemen is the source of scepter and portfolio.

The NDI Representative gave an example for a British ruler during his dealings with one of the Sultans in South Yemen during the British occupation of this part, saying that the former asked the latter, "How do you administer affairs of your territory?" The sultan then answered that he levies taxes on the weak people in order to buy things for the strong ones.

This example was provided to clarify what the international expert means by his talk about the scepter and control of power, a policy once adopted by Sultans in South Yemen while the portfolio, according to him, is what lasts, as well as maintains order and long-term rule.

According to NDI representative, the one who possesses the economic factor already has more than one vote, confirming that abandoning the political field unlevelled may force the opposition parties to seek justifications for their rejection of the legitimacy of Yemen's political regime.



Al-Sahwa Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Islah Party  
Thursday, July 10, 2008

## Top Stories

- Leading Yemeni journalists describe court verdict against comedian Al-Qarni ni as 'political'
- JMP Parliamentary block insists on investigating Taiz police for attacking MP
- Interior Minister confirms to Parliament that wanted terror suspects arrested via telecom centers
- U.S. Administration refuses naming Houthis as 'terrorists' due to inadequate evidence

The United States has expressed its concern over worsening human situation in Sa'ada as a result of ongoing fighting in the restive governorate, the weekly reported, adding that American officials in Sana'a urged both conflicting sides to let food, fuel and other necessities reach affected civilians.

According to the weekly, an American official affirmed the authenticity of reports saying that the U.S. refused to designate Al-Houthis among terrorist movements, pointing out that such designation is a complicated process requiring adequate evidence that an individual or a group is involved in terrorist acts.

As for the Yemen-U.S. relations crisis, the U.S. official said that his administration still believes that Jamal Al-Badawi, the mastermind of the 2000 bombing of USS Cole which killed 17 American sailors and Jaber Elbanah, a Yemeni-American convicted of planning attacks on oil installa-

tions in Yemen, should be handed over to its judiciary.

On a side note, the weekly quoted the Associated Press as reporting that U.S. and Yemen remain at odds over a proposal to release more than one-third of the detainees from Guantanamo Bay, even as the Bush administration wrestles with the future of the military prison.

About 100 of the approximately 270 prisoners remaining at Guantanamo Bay are Yemeni nationals. A U.S. delegation visited the capital city of Sana'a last week to discuss the possible transfer of a few detainees to Yemen. Yemeni officials hoped to negotiate the release of all but the most dangerous prisoners.

The negotiations with Yemen hinge on what will happen to the detainees once they are returned to Yemen. The Bush administration wants to be sure that dangerous prisoners are not freed and that prisoners are held in humane conditions. Yemen proposes charging some detainees in its court system and supervising others as part of a "rehabilitation program."



26September.net, affiliated with Yemeni Army  
Thursday, July 10, 2008

## Top Stories

- Prime Minister: Government succeeded in stopping rising prices, compared to international hikes
- Women police arrest several Houthi rebels
- Supreme National Anti-Corruption Authority achieved tangible successes within short time period, says

Chairman  
- NPC ratifies results of Fourth National Population Policy Conference

National Population Council (NPC) approved during its meeting on Wednesday the executive plan for the outcomes of the Fourth National Population Policy Conference (NPPC) for 2008 - 2010, the website reported on its lead story.

It added that the meeting, headed by Premier Ali Mujawar, who is also Chair of the NPC, reviewed the plan's activities that will directly intervene to achieve the national goals for population at the various levels with more emphasis on the necessary factors to control Yemen's rapid population growth rate, as well as create a desirable balance between development resources and population growth rate.

According to the website, the plan concentrates on widening the coverage of the reproductive health services, reinforcing the partnership among the state's bodies, civil society organizations and private sector in this regard, and rising public awareness about various population-related issues.

The council approved the executive plan of the national strategy for information, enlightenment and population contact until 2010 with the aim of increasing awareness and enhancing the related bodies' activities in order to accomplish goals of the national policy of population in order to produce good indicators about population status.

The council also emphasized that each relevant body must include the plan within its annual budget. It agreed on convening the annual meeting of National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) and the International Conference on Population and Development in Yemen in 2009.

## The Qur'an as therapy

By: Hisham Adem

**B**onn, Germany - Along with his students at the University of Haifa, the clinical psychologist Ofer Grosbard compiled a collection of advice from Qur'anic verses for bringing up children. Journalist Hisham Adem talked to the Israeli lecturer about the practical pedagogy of the Holy Book.

### How did you come up with the idea for "Qur'anic"?

Ofer Grosbard: The project was an idea and initiative of one of my Bedouin students, Bushra. Last year, a group of 15 Bedouin graduate students studying educational counselling attended my course in Developmental Psychology. One day, Bushra came up to me and said, "What you are teaching us is not going to be of help to us."

Bushra said that when she becomes an educational counsellor, a parent may come to her and say, "A demon has

entered my child" or something similar. "Do you think that what you have taught us here will be of any use to me then?"

"What would he helpful to you?" I asked her.

She replied, "The Qur'an." She said that, in the appropriate context, the quotation of a verse from the Qur'an has enormous impact on Muslims.

I brought a copy of the Qur'an to our next lesson. I divided the chapters among the students and asked them to locate the educational and therapeutic verses. There are many of these verses in the Qur'an, exhorting individuals to take responsibility, learn the truth, respect others, etc. I also asked them to write a brief story from everyday life for each verse to illustrate how a parent or teacher can utilise the verse to convey a message to their child. Together we collected more than 300 stories, and I added a simple, brief educational-psychological explanation to each one. That was how Quranet came into being.

### How exactly does Quranet work?

The user selects a particular issue from the list of contents and receives the relevant Qur'anic verse. He or she can then study a brief description of an everyday event illustrating how the verse can be utilised to convey a message. The session concludes with a brief educational-psychological explanation of the process.

### What are the main goals of Quranet?

Quranet transforms the Qur'an into a unique educational tool for parents and teachers, making the beneficial power of the Qur'an widely accessible. Moreover, Quranet reveals the beauty of the Qur'an and its respect for human dignity, providing a resounding response to those who exploit the Qur'an to justify terrorism.

### What exactly does it mean to use the Qur'an as an "educational tool", particularly in terms of fighting radical Muslim extremism?

I am a Jew, and although I taught my students psychology, they taught me about

the Qur'an, which I had not known before. They showed me its beauty and the way it deals so well with human relations. The essence of the Qur'an is actually human relations and human dignity - the opposite of terrorism. We used it to show parents and teachers what love means in the Qur'an.

### Did you cooperate with Islamic theologians?

Although we worked on the material, we did not cooperate with sheikhs or imams. We are only educators, and I would like to emphasise this as strongly as I can. The students do not pretend to be interpreters of the Qur'an. They simply want to bring the Qur'an to the child and the family. A father who reads the Qur'an to his son is not automatically an interpreter of the Qur'an. Quoting a phrase from the Qur'an to a child - that one should tell the truth, for example - doesn't make you an interpreter of the Qur'an.

I emphasise this because we received many responses from the Arab world that talked about conspiracy and our presump-

tion to interpret the Qur'an without actually reading the material - because the book is in Hebrew, and they only saw the website. After we finished our work, we presented it to well-known sheikhs in Israel, England and India and got wonderful feedback.

The project has caused apprehension among Muslim circles inside and outside Israel. They consider it Israeli propaganda and a means of manipulating the Qur'an to suit the interests of Israel.

First of all, the initiative came from Bedouin students, who did most of the work under my guidance, and it did not have any connection to the State of Israel. I know that in non-democratic countries it may be difficult for people to believe that not everything is political and dictated by the government.

It is true that the State of Israel is proud of this project, which presents the beauty of the Qur'an. Why not? Muslims also believe that the Qur'an was given to all humanity. Is it forbidden that I, as a Jew, for example, study it? I would like to encourage everyone who feels that

way to read the material and make an honest judgment. Then they will have the right answer. This project is a product of love, not conspiracy.

### Do you think your project will be able to establish a bridge between the Muslim world and the West?

For Muslims, the Qur'an is a bridge between the Muslim and the western way of thinking. Non-Muslims may discover the beauty of the Qur'an. That's actually what happened to me. The Qur'an built a beautiful bridge of love between me and my students. They showed me the beauty of their culture, something I will never forget.

Hisham Adem is a freelance journalist. This article is distributed by the Common Ground News Service (CGNews) and can be accessed at [www.commongroundnews.org](http://www.commongroundnews.org). Source: *Qantara.de*, 27 June 2008, [www.qantara.de](http://www.qantara.de). Copyright permission is granted for publication.

## Pak nuclear reactors & the terrorists

By: Tanveer Jafri

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**I**n the last days, a big military operation was started by the Pak army against the Talibani activists in Peshawar, the capital of North West boundary state of Pakistan & its nearby Khyber region. In this operation, worked in Bora town, near the boundary of Afghanistan, Pakistan military used heavy weapons like tanks & air-attacks. America understands that this North tribal territory of Pakistan is a secret & safe asylum of the Talibani extremists. This is the area where extremist tribal leader Baitullah Mahsood has a strong hold. It is taken that there is reasonable atmosphere in the favour of the terrorists in this territory.

The strong hold of Baitullah Mahsood, in this area can be easily guessed when sometime back this Mahsood, with his big group of Talibani fighters captured hundreds of armed Pakistan soldiers with their con-

veyances. He is the same wanted Mahsood who is wanted in many cases of murders & kidnapping. There is also a doubt that he was co-associate in the plot of killing of former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto. Last days, media unveiled horrible face of the Talibani terrorism.

The extremists gathered thousands of people on Pak-Afghan border. Then in a day-light, two persons with tied hands & feet & covered face were presented there. The terrorists told the gathering that these two persons are Afghan citizens. They showed courage to spy for America & to send secret information about tribal area to America.

After that dozens of terrorists shot at them to spread fear among people present there. To do such a terrific activity by a few persons & people present there remained only spectators make all understand, the power of the Talibans & the extremists is increasing.

In Afghanistan, President Hamid Karzai has been aimed at but fortunately he got escaped. A minister in

Afghanistan has been killed. Benazir Bhutto was too killed by the terrorists. Both Parvez Musharraf & Nawaz Sharif have faced dangerous attacks. These incidents are proof of work of these dare devils.

Obviously, the extremists are encouraged to the extent that they don't care about the high security even. Last days, it was clear from the Operation Red Mosque in Pakistan that the terrorists don't hide themselves behind the hills or in the caves but they have entered the cities & taken shelter, with their modern, dangerous & very sophisticated weapons, in pious places like Red Mosque.

Here it is natural for the world to think that how far are the nuclear reactors of Pakistan from the terrorists. The increasing activities & their day by day increasing power may not enable the terrorists to have control over the nuclear reactors of Pakistan. And God forbid if it is so, what will happen to this peace loving world?

It is known that in Pakistan at present

four nuclear reactors are in work. In it, there are Chashma Nuclear Reactor (I) & Chashma Nuclear Reactor (II) & three reactors of 100 MW. These reactors are situated at a place named Kundia in Punjab State of Pakistan whereas Kanoop Nuclear Reactor is situated in Karachi of Sindh. The capacity of Kanoop Nuclear Reactor is 125 MW. Except this, there is one more nuclear reactor that is Khushab Reactor.

Khushab Reactor that has capacity of 50 to 70 MW fulfils the needs of Pakistan army & it is Plutonium based Reactor. It doesn't come under the purview of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Khushab Nuclear Reactor is that reactor where there was a powerful blast in first week of April this year & as a result of it two persons were killed. The reactor which is situated in Punjab State has capacity to produce nuclear arms. Khushab Nuclear Reactor that runs with heavy water is known that it has capacity to produce Plutonium for manufacture of Nuclear Bomb.

America is also having a deep look at the Khushab Nuclear Reactor. One American institute named institute for Science & International Security, is of the view that Khushab Nuclear Reactor is a very sensitive reactor that has the capacity to produce Plutonium.

According to this institution, Khushab Reactor can produce every year the mass of Plutonium which can enable to produce 30 to 50 nuclear arms every year. This American institution keeps an eye on the nuclear programmes of the many countries of the world. A report regarding nuclear activities of Iran, North Korea & India has been published by this institution. Pakistan doesn't reject the report issued by the institute for Science & International Security but it says that the American Institute has exaggerated the facts.

It is a matter of worry that Pakistan is not only becoming a shelter place for the terrorists but the political circumstances are also providing strength to these extreme powers, also Parvez

Musharraf, who dared to stand face to face against the extremists & terrorists is feeling helpless & trying to save its position of Presidency. Whereas on the other side, the extreme powers that are opponents of Musharraf are trying to harm him. Now when a hard general like Musharraf wasn't cared by the terrorists & his every action against terrorism was obstructed then how can the present supporters of democracy check the increasing interference of the Talibani thought & the terrorists?

It is natural to worry about the control of nuclear reactors situated in Pakistan. Despite the Pakistan army is saying that all the nuclear reactors of Pakistan are safe & are under its complete control. But the people of the world can't ignore the fact where the extremist fighters kidnapped hundreds of Pak soldiers & kept them under detention. Now such incidents may be called the increasing courage of the extremists or decreasing will of the Pak army. But both these circumstances are such where Pak atomic reactors are not considered safe.



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- 3- Submitting a copy of the insurance card valid for 2008 year (the insurance cards are only requested from those companies which have assets in Yemen and have the right to benefit from the revenues given by the general corporation for social insurance in Yemen).
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BALLY ECCO





# Parents of cerebral palsy patients fight planned suspension of treatment

By: Almigdad Mojalli  
Almigdads8@yahoo.com

**D**ozens of families with children suffering from cerebral palsy held a sit-in and filed a complaint last Saturday with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, which plans to suspend its funding for Al-Amal Center for an unspecified period.

Al-Amal works specifically with those children suffering from cerebral palsy. The center currently assists 176 cerebral palsy patients.

In response, Labor and Social Affairs Minister Amat Al-Razaq Hummad ordered an investigation into the complaint. Hummad urged the patients' families to be patient with the ministry, as it has a limited budget for cerebral palsy treatment.

Patients' families say their children's medical conditions have gotten better with the constant physical therapy. Basic therapy sessions for the one child cost the ministry approximately \$200



Gait-training therapy for cerebral palsy patients.

per a month, while intensive therapy sessions, which include methods involving such things as a TheraSuit, which uses electrodes to help the children master motor skills, can run \$1500 per a month.

Um Rayan Abdullah stated that her son has been receiving intensive physical therapy for two years now and he has progressed a lot. "When I brought him to the center for the first time, he couldn't sit or move any part of his

body," she said. "But now with constant therapy, he can sit and move his legs and hands," she added happily.

The father of patient Fahd Al-Oqbi pointed out that his son received basic therapy for five months and began intensive therapy one month ago. "My son's neck was hanging when I brought him to the center for the first time, but now he can control the movement of his neck and move his body parts," he said.

According to Al-Amal Center, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is trying to decrease the center's activities and intends to eventually stop providing funding altogether.

"The Fund for Handicapped Patronage and Qualification, which is directly responsible for providing supplies, has decided to stop funding the physical therapies," notes the center's manager, Arwa Thabet, adding, "Someone said it's because of the budget."

#### What is cerebral palsy?

The United Cerebral Palsy, or UCP, organization describes the condition as

"a group of chronic conditions affecting body movement and muscle coordination. It is caused by damage to one or more specific areas of the brain, usually occurring during fetal development."

Cerebral palsy is incurable but non-communicable, and children born with it do have the ability to improve their motor skills over time. According to the UCP, those with cerebral palsy often have muscle spasms, problems with their eyesight, hearing or speech, seizures and sometimes mental retardation.

According to Thabet, there are two types of therapy, the first of which involves pills, such as antispasmodics, which help CP patients control their seizures or movement spasms.

The second type of therapy is physical and occupational, focusing on training the children to control their large and small motor skills through gait-training machines, among other techniques. Thabet points out that the TheraSuit is considered a new type of physical treatment for CP, noting that Yemen received it well before any of the

Gulf countries brought it to their shores.

"I have 11 Egyptian employees, each of whom is paid at least \$1,000," Thabet explains. "If the Fund for Handicapped Patronage and Qualification decides to stop funding our center completely, I'll be forced to dismiss at least half of them because the financial burden will be too great."

Thabet adds that the center also receives approximately \$2,000 every six months from the World Health Organization.

Former Minister of Health and Population, Najeeb Ghanem, says more than 100,000 Yemeni children have cerebral palsy. "Most of these children belong to poor communities, so their disabilities create an additional burden for their families; therefore, they are considered the poorest among the poor," he explains.

According to statistics from the Central Apparatus for Oversight and Accountability, more than a million children in Yemen are mentally and physically disabled, approximately 100,000 of whom have cerebral palsy.

## Shabeezah, a traditional source of nutrition for infants

By: Almigdad Mojalli

**D**espite the numerous kinds of baby food that fill store aisles and that are known to have nutritional value, some Yemenis still prefer to feed their children shabeezah, a traditional infant

meal that may be even better for their children. Shabeezah is a made up of different kinds of grains like white corn, red corn, wheat, barley and sometimes even lentils. The flour is then mixed with water and a little salt or sugar to make it palatable for the infant and to entice it to accept the porridge.

Shabeezah is usually given to the

infant at when it is around six months old and when parents want to teach it to eat whole foods and gradually wean it off of breast milk or formula. Shabeezah provides the infant with the same level of nutrition and also helps the infant to learn how to eat solids. Shabeezah is often a more accessible source of nutrition for poor families

who are unable to afford the high price of powdered milk or baby formula.

Some mothers prefer shabeezah to artificial milk as shabeezah is natural and free from preservative substances. "In my opinion, shabeezah is much better than artificial substances as it consists of many natural grains and it is offered to the infant fresh. I always

depend on shabeezah to feed my infants more than artificial milk," said Eman Ahmed, 42, a mother of four children. "Shabeezah has high nutritional value and is considered the best food for the infant particularly after weaning as it contains vitamins, proteins, and little fat," said Dr. Adel Al-Samie, a pediatrician in the Ministry of Health and

Population. "It is better than the artificial milk, though they have different nutritional values," he added.

Dr. Abdulrahman Ishaq, also a pediatrician, stated that shabeezah is an agricultural source of infant nutrition while artificial milk is an animal source. For this reason, each one has different nutritional values.

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# Yemeni women spend their leisure time in a private world of their own

By: Mariam Saleh  
For the Yemen Times

For Yemeni women, leisure time has become a daily activity restricted to spending time chewing qat together.

Leisure time has significant meaning for women's lives and the marginalization they face in Yemeni society, which leads them to spend time in their own gatherings, which include weddings and childbirth ceremonies, banquets and both public and private gatherings during which women discuss their social life.

Such gatherings reflect the prevailing social relationships in Yemen, the most outstanding of which is the separation of women and men at their respective activities. For this report, we met many women who talked about their leisure time and the tricks they sometimes do at such events.

## Exchanging experiences

Housewife Samah Al-Shara'abi notes that there are three groups of Yemeni women interested in spending their leisure time in gatherings: housewives who are illiterate or have only limited education, educated women and those who are simply informative.

At such sessions, women often drift away from discussing important and beneficial issues; however, some Yemeni women still give a positive value to such sessions, represented in their opinions of establishing and maintaining social relationships.

Such gatherings also are considered a means to exchange experiences about social and economic topics, as well as recipes and business.

## Crowded sessions

One female university student from Sana'a says leisure time sessions, which start from 3 p.m. until about 6 p.m., are an important feature of daily life in Sana'a. At these gatherings, only old women wear the traditional sitara cloth, while young women prefer wearing the new styles of sharshaf and abaya (women's clothing worn when outside).

The student says that in the past, leisure time gatherings were restricted



Leisure time has significant meaning for women's lives and the marginalization they face in Yemeni society.

to married women only, as such sessions would be held for certain occasions such as weddings and childbirth ceremonies, adding that women qat chewers were rare at these events. However, nowadays, single girls and teens also attend these sessions and chew qat.

Such gatherings typically are crowded, particularly in cities. Private gatherings also have spread recently, attended by both married and young women and even little girls in order to chew qat regularly. The number of women at these sessions can be as many as 15, all of whom know each other well.

Not only do these gatherings cost money for qat, the women also spend a lot of money on clothes and jewelry that they wear to these sessions because they want to show their friends – at both private and public sessions – that they have nice clothes and gold.

## Men's views

Men complain a lot about women spending their leisure time outside the home because it creates problems at home due to their absence. For example, Khalid Al-Amin says he's obliged to care for the children when his wife goes out to attend al-qailah (a qat chew) with her friends.

"It may be important for women to go out for entertainment and spend their leisure time, but not every day. Two or three days a week is enough," he says, pointing out that when his wife goes

out, he finds it difficult to take care of the children and do the housework instead of his wife.

Al-Amin also believes such leisurely gatherings for women are negative because women do nothing beneficial; rather, they gossip about others while leaving their children at home subjected to many risks, such as electrical wires and gas lines, aside from fighting with each other.

A'isa Al-Khalidi reveals that Hodeidah men refuse to care for the children when their mothers are out for leisure time, which they call nashrah, because the men themselves are busy chewing qat with their friends. As a result, women are obliged to take their children with them to their leisure gatherings, thereby creating a lot of fuss at the host's house.

"Just imagine how the situation is at the host's house as a result of the children constantly playing and quarrelling," Al-Khalidi wondered.

"Women's gatherings often involve smoking shisha and cigarettes, which pose many health problems for children," he notes, adding, "Such women – some of whom are even educated – don't appreciate their responsibilities because they're focused on having a nice time with their peers and pay little attention to their children."

Salem Al-Hutbi maintains that he spends most of his money on qat for his wife, who usually attends qat gatherings with her friends, while he himself does-

n't chew qat.

"Because I never chew, I don't know anything about the various qualities of qat or even their names," he explains, "However, I have to go to the market every day to buy qat for my wife, who never misses a single qat session in all of the neighborhoods she knows."

Sociologist and Aden University researcher Mohammed Al-Mutawakkil believes women's leisure gatherings have both advantages and disadvantages, depending on the context of the session.

"Some women leave their children at home every day to attend these gatherings. Some seize upon these events to sell various products, while others attend simply to show off the jewelry and splendid clothing that their husbands buy them," Al-Mutawakkil explains, noting that such gatherings can be made beneficial through certain activities.

For instance, "Some educated women could attend these sessions to educate other women about certain issues. They also could deliver religious lectures and lessons to teach women their rights and duties, as well as how to participate in political life, as stipulated in the [Yemeni] Constitution, especially given that many women have either a limited education or are illiterate and therefore, are in need of such information."

Al-Mutawakkil adds that Yemeni women also could seize upon these gatherings in order to become educated on how to improve their income and how to be more socially active. He concludes that Yemen's educated women are to be blamed because they are capable of raising their fellow women's awareness and making such leisure time gatherings a source of education, as well as entertainment.

## Jokes and playful tricks

On the other hand, women's leisure gatherings also are a time for fun, laughing and sometimes embarrassing tricks. Um Mahmoud recounted an event that occurred while she was at a gathering with her neighborhood friends.

"I was talking with my friend at the session when a 'man' suddenly opened

the door and entered the room where the women were sitting. All of the women were embarrassed and tried to escape, lest this 'man' might see them because when women are away from men, they uncover their faces and hair and remove the usually black abayas they wear outside," she explained.

Um Mahmoud continued, "During this mess, the women broke many things in the sitting room during their attempted escape from this 'man.' In the end, we discovered that the one who created this embarrassing and fearful situation wasn't a man at all, but the host's daughter, who wanted to play a trick on us!"

Psychologist Samia Al-Jundi says women play such tricks, considering them a vent through which they can escape life's pressures and difficulties they face either at home or at work.

"Men tend to talk with each other during qat sessions about a variety of topics. They have their own atmosphere and so do women, who have their own ways of entertaining and spending time together. Women like to create humor through tricks in order to laugh and

enjoy the time," Al-Jundi explains.

However, she says such pranks shouldn't exceed their limits or be repeated at every session because some older women have diseases such as heart problems and can't tolerate such pranks.

## Mixed gatherings

Nowadays, such leisure time gatherings aren't only restricted to women. Among the social changes in Yemeni society, a new form of leisure session has surfaced that's a mixture of the two sexes – men and women – gathering in the same room, particularly in Sana'a. Those attending these sessions tend toward modernization, which the rest of the world is experiencing.

Still, such gatherings are for only some Yemenis, possibly because it's against societal norms and traditions. Most attendees of these sessions are educated, including social activists and sometimes Arab and foreign personalities, who are invited to attend the session and discuss certain issues. Such sessions sometimes also include a singer or some other addition.

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The Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Yemen is seeking to recruit for its offices in Sana'a qualified personnel to fill the position of:

#### Project Assistant

Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Chargé d'Affaires a.i., the incumbent shall perform the following main responsibilities:

- Assistance to programme managers for social sectors and food security/fisheries (incl. interpretation/translation where needed and secretarial support).
- Undertake and organize field missions to EC-funded projects throughout Yemen.
- Act as focal point for Monitoring and Evaluation matters.
- Provide support to Head of Section in donor coordination, alignment & harmonisation tasks.
- Ensure periodical updating of the EU donor matrix.
- Assist in procurement procedures (in line with EC guidelines) for EC-funded projects
- Any other activities related to the Operations Section

#### Qualifications and skills required:-

- Post-secondary education attested by a diploma, or secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to post-secondary education and appropriate professional experience of three years.
- Proven on-the-job experience of minimum 3 years in related fields
- Excellent command of English and Arabic (oral and written); knowledge of a 2nd EU language is considered an advantage
- Excellent computer skills
- Ability to work in a multi-cultural team; high sense of responsibility and initiative; resourceful, results-oriented
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Interested candidates are requested to send an application letter together with detailed curriculum vitae to:-

Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Yemen  
Attn: Mr. Michele Cervone d'Urso, Chargé d'Affaires a.i.  
Email: [delegation-yemen@ec.europa.eu](mailto:delegation-yemen@ec.europa.eu) or fax: 01 440 887

Applications should be received at the latest by Monday 21 July 2008.



### EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

The Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Yemen is seeking to recruit for its offices in Sana'a qualified personnel to fill the position of:

#### Project Officer (Press, Information and Communication)

Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Chargé d'Affaires a.i., the incumbent shall perform the following main responsibilities:

- Act as interpreter/translator for the Chargé d'Affaires a.i., visiting missions and other staff where required
- Prepare daily press reviews and contribute to morning briefings for Headquarters
- Assist in management of the Information/Communication budget
- Organize information and communication activities (e.g. press conference, events, Europe Week, project visits) for the Delegation
- Maintain good contacts with various media in Yemen
- Provide advice to EC projects on visibility matters (as per EC guidelines)
- Assist in organising cultural activities
- Other tasks related to the Operations Section as requested by Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

#### Qualifications and skills required:-

- Post-secondary education attested by a diploma, or secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to post-secondary education and appropriate professional experience of three years.
- Proven on-the-job experience of minimum 3 years in related fields
- Excellent command of English and Arabic (oral and written); knowledge of a 2nd EU language is considered an advantage
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## ANNOUNCEMENT OF SALE BY AUCTION HADDAH LANDS

Kuwaiti Real Estate Investment Group (Kuwaiti closed shareholding company) declares selling of Haddah lands described below by a closed auction that will be held on Monday dated 18/08/2008 at Sheraton Sana'a Hotel at 10:00 am.

### Description of Lands

#### 1 - Land # 1

Land # 1 is located in the Political Zone on the main street of Haddah, bordered by sub-streets from the north, south and west. This land is surrounded from all sides and the estimated area is approximately 9,858 square meters (equivalent to 220 lebna). This area is qualified for all investment choices.

#### 2 - Land # 2

Land # 2 is located in the same area of land # 1, bordered by the backstreet of land # 1 to the east, a sub-street to the south, a neighbour to the west, and a neighbour to the north, with an estimated area of about 2446 square meters (equivalent to 55.4 lebna).

Auction shall begin at a basic price of USD 10,000,000 (US dollars ten millions).

Individuals who wish to participate in this closed auction must:

- Purchase the terms of reference as well as descriptions of lands in the amount of USD 1,000 (US Dollars one thousand) which is irrecoverable.
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