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Britain cancels previous travel warnings for Yemen

By: Aqeel Al-Halali
For The Yemen Times

SANA'A, Aug. 24 – Britain's Foreign & Commonwealth Office has canceled previous a circulation warning its citizens against traveling to Yemen, further announcing that it has removed the warning from the list of countries to which travel is banned for its citizens.

The U.K. had warned its citizens this past April against "unnecessary travel" to Yemen following armed attacks targeting U.S. interests within the capital city of Sana'a.

British web site www.wanderlist.com reports that Britain's Foreign & Commonwealth Office has canceled "the circulation it issued to its citizens warning them not

to travel to Yemen," noting that the circulation had sought to warn against travel to Yemen, "with the exception of only very necessary travel."

The site also reports that the warning now is considered invalid and Britons may travel to Yemen "at present, with the exception of five Yemeni governorates, namely, Sa'ada, Marib, Al-Jawf, Shabwa and Hadramout." Britain previously declared in 1999 that security measures in Yemen are "strong enough."

Mark Lederman, head of security operations for Wild for Winters tour company, which organizes tours from Ethiopia and Djibouti to Yemen via the Red Sea, says, "It's encouraging that the Foreign & Commonwealth Office makes decisions reflecting what's actually going on and has decided that



A tourist takes photo of old Sana'a. Yemen complements Britain's decision to cancel its previous travel warning, saying that this decision comes during the tourist season in Yemen.

[Yemen] is secure and fit to be a tourist destination like other countries in today's world."

Likewise, the U.S. State Department allowed its nonessential staff and their families to return to Sana'a this month after ordering them to leave Yemen this past March. This comes two weeks after France's Foreign Affairs Ministry warned its citizens against traveling to Yemen, a warning that Yemeni Foreign Affairs Minister Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi considered unjustified.

Yemen's Tourism Minister Nabil Al-Faqih complemented Britain's decision to cancel its previous travel warning, "particularly given that this decision comes during the tourist season in Yemen," adding that such a move "will decrease the tense warnings that have targeted Yemen recently."

Al-Faqih believes that the British circulation canceling its travel warnings for Yemen will "enhance Yemen's initiative to show the world a clear picture of Yemen." He noted that security measures Yemen recently has taken "have had positive effects," referring to the recent security deployment in all Yemeni governorates seeking to clear them of armed groups or cells targeting tourists in Yemen.

The tourism minister further appreciated the role of Yemen's Foreign Affairs Ministry in decreasing the tension of warnings against travel to Yemen, in addition to the Tourism Promotion Council, as well as travel and tourism companies, which benefit from their relationships with European nations to help show the world the real image of Yemen.

Amid legal violations in war-ravaged Sa'ada, Refugees suffering severe starvation, lack of basic services

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Aug. 24 — The majority of Sa'ada residents who fled their homes due to fighting between Yemeni government troops and Houthi gunmen are suffering starvation and lack of basic services, tribal sources from the war-torn governorate said Sunday.

They noted that except for a few sporadic individual violations, the governorate's security situation is calm, adding that many refugees now have returned to their homes.

Other refugees whose homes and farmlands were destroyed during the fighting have been forced to remain in tents and caves, where they experience both want and starvation and fear unknown consequences because they aren't receiving sufficient aid, foodstuffs or medicine and they lack blankets to shield them from dust and cold.

Various organizations claiming to media outlets that they are providing aid to these refugees know nothing about the delivery of aid they've allocate for them. They only know about aid that has reached those refugees living in tents near the highway or the provincial capital.

Concerning reconstruction projects

the government has alluded to, the same tribal sources maintain that the government committees designated to assess the war's damages are making slow progress in Haidan district, Sa'ada governorate's worst hit area.

The sources add that the committees have encountered numerous difficulties

while performing their duties, noting that some 33 reconstruction engineers ceased assessing war-related damages in protest against the Yemeni government for not paying them.

One government committee concerned with damage assessment and compensation previously stated to media



Dozens of citizens whose relatives are being detained for their alleged connection with the Sa'ada fighting protested in front of the attorney general's office in Sana'a

outlets that, "Many displaced residents in Haidan and Saqain districts are experiencing harsh living conditions because relief agencies and charitable organizations are concentrating on those refugees living in tents in the suburbs around the provincial capital."

The majority of displaced residents are sheltering in remote areas far from Sa'ada city, where they are experiencing a marked shortage in basic services.

Detainees' relatives protest

Dozens of citizens whose relatives are being detained for their alleged connection with the Sa'ada fighting protested in front of the attorney general's office in Sana'a on Saturday. Their protest was part of a series of peaceful actions sponsored by several civil society organizations that are standing in solidarity with the detainees' relatives.

Continued on page 2

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Economists warn of impact from Somali pirating acts on Yemeni economy

By Aqeel Al-Halali
For the Yemen Times

ADEN, Aug. 22 — Yemeni economists warned that the Somali pirating acts that target international marine ships and commercial tankers in the international waters of the African Horn and Gulf of Aden will have a negative effect on the Yemeni economy, demanding that security measures should be taken to maintain "the national economic security."

The Anti-Pirating Center of the International Navigation Office announced last Friday that Somali pirates seized a German cargo ship across from the Somali coast. This event came a day after two Japanese and Iranian ships were subjected to a pirating operation by armed Somalis.

Khalid Taha Mustafa, vice-president of the Yemeni Commercial and Industrial Chambers Union, told Al-Seyasseyah state-run newspaper that the continuation of pirating acts in the international navigation route in the Africa Horn and Gulf of Aden will have a negative impact on international cargo companies as these companies will raise the cost of insurance they pay for their ships.

Mustafa pointed out that the high cost of insurance that companies pay for their commercial ships will lead to an increase in the price of items, noting that citizens in Yemen will shoulder the burden. He suggested that the Yemeni government and the international community should secure the route of international navigation, "combating pirating in order to ensure economic settlement of the commercial items".



The Japanese oil cargo ship which have been subjected to a pirating operation by armed Somalis.

Since last Thursday, four commercial ships were subjected to pirating acts in the African Horn and Gulf of Aden, which are considered a main marine passage connecting the Asia and Europe continents.

The Malaysian International Navigation Transportation Company established yesterday a team to combat pirating attacks after one of its ships was subjected to pirating last Tuesday in the international waters of the Aden Gulf. The ship was on its way to the Polish Roterdem harbor from Domai city in Indonesia.

The Misk Transportation Company said that the Tanker "N. T. Ponja Milati Duwa" with its crew consisting of 29 Malaysians and 10 Filipinos, was attacked in the Aden Gulf area located between Yemen and Somalia.

Misk Transportation Company is a wing specialized in the sea cargo for the Malaysian Patroness Oil and Gas Company. In a press release published by media outlets, the company said,

"We demand the United Nations to take immediate steps to deal with the situation that is increasingly being aggravated". The release pointed out that the company sent another ship to track down the tanker "which is believed to be heading toward the Somali waters".

A Thailand company declared last week that Somali pirates seized its wood cargo ship near the Yemeni coast while the ship was heading to Aden port. Somali pirates are still in possession of a cargo ship belonging to Japan, which they hijacked this past July.

A source from the Yemeni Coast Guards told the Yemen Times that Yemen is not responsible for the hijacking events that occur outside of the Yemeni territorial waters. He considered that the Yemeni Coast Guard Authority has only the capability to protect the Yemeni coasts, which extend for more than 2200 kilometers.

Paris, which has a military base in Djibouti and marine forces spreading throughout the Indian Ocean, offered

this past February to support the Yemeni marine forces "to stop the process of trafficking African refugees and drugs to Yemeni lands without approaching Yemeni territorial waters."

The same source, preferring to remain anonymous, maintained that the Yemeni government is coordinating with the American and French marine forces based in the international waters "to maintain the security of the international sea aviation route in the Aden Gulf and prevent hijacking incidents committed by Somali pirates."

This past April, the Yemeni Coast Guards foiled an attempted hijacking against a Japanese oil tanker in Aden Gulf. The African Horn area and Aden Gulf are considered the most high-risk areas among international sea aviation areas due to the civil wars in Somalia that have been ongoing since 1991 in addition to the weak role of the current transitional government in Somalia.

Earlier this August, pirates set free two Germany tourists who were taken hostage in an area north of Somalia after their yacht was subjected to a pirating operation this past June.

Since the beginning of this year, the African Horn and Aden Gulf regions have witnessed the hijacking of 30 ships, tankers and yachts according to the Yemen Times Statistics. In 2007, Aden Gulf witnessed 25 hijacking operations. Somali pirates gain a lot of wealth through their pirating acts.

The International Security Council has allowed recently naval fighting ships to enter the Somali territorial waters to combat pirating acts that target the international sea aviation in the African Horn and Aden gulf regions.

Saudi erects steel fence to prevent smuggling

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For The Yemen Times

SANA'A, Aug. 22 — The Saudi Border Guards Authority has announced the completion of a steel fence to prevent Yemenis from infiltrating Saudi Arabia and protect Saudi villages adjacent to the Yemeni border from smuggling.

Saudi's Okadh newspaper reported that by erecting this fence around Saudi villages, the Saudi Border Guards leadership is seeking to prevent smuggling and infiltration activities that occur in the region, particularly at night.

The leader of Jazan district's Saudi Border Guards maintains that the authority installed the steel fence to prevent smugglers from entering the villages of Al-Khawjarah, Mabkharah and Al-Hizb.

The newspaper noted that these villages have witnessed extensive smuggling operations, particularly flour smuggling, which has created a crisis in that region, where the price of a bag of flour currently sells for 70 Saudi Riyals (YR 3,735).

Yemen-Saudi border checkpoints are a source of concern for Saudi security authorities as dozens of Yemenis illegally enter Saudi Arabia in search of work, in addition to thieves and weapons smugglers.

Security sources from the Saudi-Yemen border note that the number of poor Yemenis entering Saudi Arabia illegally has increased notably during the past few days due to poor people seeking to beg in Saudi Arabia during Ramadan.

The same sources report that thousands of poor Yemenis infiltrate Saudi Arabia either on foot or on the vehicles of Yemeni and Saudi smuggling brokers.

Among the poor are women and children seeking work or begging, especially during Ramadan, in order to cover their families' needs for an entire year.

This newly erected fence comes at a time when the phenomenon of child trafficking and illegal immigration into Saudi Arabia has aggravated, despite the Yemeni government's efforts to end such practices, in cooperation with charitable organizations, because many poor Yemenis, particularly women and children, are intimidated and sexually harassed by smugglers.

They also face numerous hazards while attempting to escape Saudi police, who chase them down within Saudi Arabia.

Attempted infiltrations have increased among Yemenis living in governorates near the Saudi border, particularly where they can enter Saudi Arabia on foot, for example, via Hajjah governorate's Haradth pass.

Illegal entries in regions near Al-Buq'a district south of Sa'ada are facilitated by brokers, who use their vehicles to traffic Yemenis across the border. Both Saudi and Yemeni border guards often aid such smugglers.

The Yemeni-Saudi border demarcation committee recently completed marking 863 main and sub-points extending for 1,300 kilometers along the border between the two countries.

JMP accuses ruling party of creating crises, cheating democracy

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Aug. 24 — Yemeni Socialist Party leader Ali Al-Sarari alleges that the ruling General People's Congress Party is creating numerous obstacles to any serious efforts to develop democracy in Yemen, adding that the party is moving the nation toward totalitarianism.

Speaking by phone, Al-Sarari maintained that the ruling party isn't fulfilling the promises and obligations it signed with its political partners. According to him, the GPC's decision to approve the current Election Law and reject the proposed amendments suggested by the JMP destroys the principles of a multi-party system, harms national unity and helps worsen Yemen's political congestion.

Regarding the release of political prisoners detained for their alleged connections to protests in southern Yemen, the senior YSP leader noted, "The JMP released a statement last Tuesday demanding that such political detainees be released before voting on the Election Law amendments.

"When President [Ali Abdullah] Saleh ordered the relevant government authorities to free political detainees, we maintained that his directives should be executed before forming the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum. Regretfully, the ruling party wasn't serious about doing so."

Last week's JMP statement further accused the GPC of plotting to conduct unfair elections and commit violations and discrepancies during it in order to win the majority of Parliament seats.

According to political observers, a continuing media campaign against JMP leaders and media outlets concerning protests in Yemen's southern governorates is part of an intimidation play aimed at ignoring opposition parties' calls for implementing comprehensive political reforms, releasing political detainees and rescuing the nation from its repeated crises and turmoil ahead of the upcoming parliamentary elections.

These observers suspect that such a media campaign, to which the Yemeni Cabinet also is contributing, relates to charges it alleged against the opposition parties at its meeting last Tuesday. The charges came after both sides exchanged accusations about the nation's crises and alleged discrepancies against democracy.

Opposition concerned about rigging in the upcoming election

Member of Parliament Fuad Dihaba, who is affiliated with the Islah Party, said in an interview with the Yemen Times that the opposition parties insist that the current Election Law must be amended in order to ensure free and fair elections. He added that the proposed amend-

ments include approving the proportional list and women's quota, pointing out that Parliament already approved most of the amendments, but that the ruling party backed out on its commitment. Asked whether the upcoming parliamentary elections will be held as scheduled or not, Dihaba responded, "The ball is in the ruling party's court," meaning that it depends on the GPC, which controls the nation's affairs.

The crisis between the JMP and the GPC has become sharper after the former declared its rejection of the latter's decisions regarding the Election Law and SCER composition, accusing it of violating the rules of political action and attempting to eliminate opposition from politics, as well as compel it to boycott the upcoming elections, scheduled for April 2009.

The Yemeni Parliament's decision to annul the proposed Election Law amendments and approve the previous version of the law has caused unprecedented controversy and disagreement between Yemen's political parties.

In a statement, opposition parties said that steps taken by the GPC reflect its objection to conducting free and fair elections, adding that eliminating the opposition from SCER membership reflects the GPC's desire to establish a totalitarian regime in Yemen.

The statement further read, "In behaving this way, the ruling party is destroying all of the glorious achievements achieved by the Yemeni Revolution and reunification, in addition to harming democratic principles and abusing human rights."

According to the statement, opposition parties accept the proposed Election Law amendments because they care about national interests and conducting free and fair elections on the specified date. Further, the statement indicated that GPC-affiliated MPs violated the rules and principles governing work in Parliament. Opposition parties lashed out at the GPC for attempting to retain an illegitimate SCER structure, which expired last November.

They also accused the current Yemeni government of exploiting the issue of political detainees jailed for peaceful protest in the southern governorates as a trump card in an effort to pressure them, revealing that the ruling party indicated a desire to release the detainees in exchange for opposition parties' agreement to keep the previous Election Law and annul the proposed amendments.

The JMP affirms that peaceful democratic means are the only way to rescue Yemen from its repeated crises, adding that making a deal with the ruling party to release political detainees is a criminal act because it violates the most basic human and national values.

Islah Party holds the state responsible for increased corruption

By: Almgiddad Mojalli

SANA'A, Aug. 24 — On Saturday, the head of Islah Party's information bureau, Fathi Al-Azab, laid the responsibility for the increase in corruption upon the Yemeni state, further criticizing the deficiency of both Yemeni political parties and society in combating and unveiling corruption before public opinion.

Al-Azab affirmed the necessity of creating a society that resists corruption.

He attributed this increased corruption to three main reasons, the first of which is the governing state and takeovers that involve a large portion of corruption in Yemen.

Secondly, he maintained that corruption within political parties is represented in their silence toward corruption, which has contributed to its increase, and finally, there is Yemeni

society itself, which is willing to live with and accept such corruption.

Al-Azab downplayed the usefulness of oversight authorities such as "Parliament, the Central Organization for Control and Auditing (COCA) and SNACC [the Supreme National Anti-corruption Committee] because these bodies are subject to the decision maker, meaning the ruling General People's Congress Party, which has no real desire to combat corruption," he said at a symposium on corruption in Yemen organized by Women Journalists Without Chains.

Ryan Gliha, public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, describes corruption in Yemen as a cancer that's spreading within the country's body and killing everything good created by Yemenis.

He further maintains that, although they are important steps, appointing SNACC, disclosing financial

declarations and implementing bidding laws aren't enough to combat corruption.

To help, Gliha suggests creating an expanded coalition involving media, academics, activists and civil society to besiege this cancer and then uproot it.

SNACC member Izzadeen Al-Asbahi points out that civil society, the private sector and all three governmental authorities — the legislative, judiciary and executive authorities — all must be involved in combating corruption.

He adds that the role of the state, the private sector and civil society in combating corruption must be based on two things, the first of which is respecting freedom and human rights and creating a legal structure ensuring no corruption.

Second is the existence of an institutional structure and a

commitment to the principles of transparency and competence.

According to Al-Asbahi, Transparency International has identified five fields to focus on in fighting corruption: leadership, governmental reform (including auditing and punishment), creating public awareness and establishing general programs and anti-corruption institutions.

Associate political sociology professor at Sana'a University, Fuad Al-Salahi, adds that social partnership in fighting corruption is based on five factors: official acknowledgment of such social partnership, simplifying access to information and data concerned with anti-corruption issues, building up social coalitions to fight corruption, spreading awareness about the risks of corruption and consolidating the values of uprightness and the principles of transparency.

Quota to enable women to participate in the electoral proces

SANA'A, Aug. 22 — Yemeni female participation in different political, cultural, social and educational fields is of vital importance in achieving real development in the country and promoting democracy and equality, according to participants of a symposium on "The Yemeni woman: A partner in building the future" that was concluded last Thursday in Sana'a. It was organized by the People's Will Organization for Developing Democracy and Supporting National Issues.

Attended by a number of political parties' representatives, local and international organizations and human rights activists as well as representatives from the government, the two-day symposium discussed 18 working papers depicting the current situation of Yemeni women and the role they should be given in order to play a significant role in different fields of society.

The working papers presented during the symposium included discussions of the importance of the quota system and the media for the promotion of female political participation, involving women in development and decision-making issues, women rights in the framework of the Yemeni constitution and legislation, and female participation in the programs of political parties, as well as other social and cultural issues.

In her paper about the quota and its role in enhancing women political participation, Fatima Oqbah, from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) maintained that in the past elections, women didn't achieve active political participation as candidates, particularly when compared with men. She pointed out that the quota system presented a solution that would enable women to ensure active and real participation in the electoral process. She noted that to apply the quota system, an amendment

needed to be added to the electoral law or political parties' law stipulating that women should hold a certain ratio in the list of candidates presented by political parties to the SCER.

Participants stressed that Yemeni legislations and the constitution should be reevaluated, as there existed some legislations which restricted participation of women in various fields, pointing out that these legislations should ensure real equality between men and women.

They also affirmed that women should be given a right to education in different levels in order to promote their role in the development of society.

The symposium also called for the media to play a significant role in highlighting women's rights and roles in society.

They called on religious men and preachers to emphasize in their sermons the role of women in the devel-

opment process, maintaining that women shouldn't be marginalized for political, economic, or social reasons. Political parties were recommended to avoid political dealings aimed towards restricting or disregarding female participation in upcoming parliamentary elections.

Additionally, participants stressed the importance of implementing President Ali Abdullah Saleh's call to use the quota system for female participation in different political and legislative fields in order to ensure their active participation.

Women should participate in decision-making at different governmental facilities in accordance with principles of equality and justice. According to the president's suggestion, women should be given 15 percent of participation in the form of a quota, a ratio that will ensure men cannot completely dominate or control political decision-making and policies.

Continued from page 1

Refugees suffering severe starvation, lack of basic services

The protesters held up photos of their detained relatives and banners demanding the Yemeni government release them. They maintain that the Yemeni Constitution and law, as well as international conventions Yemen has ratified,

criminalize the human rights abuses committed against their jailed relatives. The attorney general promised the protestors to investigate and pay close attention to their allegations.

Civil society organizations sponsoring the protest hold the attorney general accountable for what's happening to those citizens detained for their purport-

ed links to the Sa'ada fighting.

Regarding efforts to reconstruct war-affected areas, Local Administration Minister Abdulqader Hilal, who is also deputy chairman of the Sa'ada Reconstruction Fund, told official media outlets that reconstruction has been hindered due to recurring clashes in the governorate, adding that assess-

ment of war-affected areas will begin early next month.

Hilal emphasized the necessity of rehabilitating damaged schools in order to enable students to enroll for the 2008-2009 school year, further indicating that top priority must be given to mosques, public service facilities and citizens' homes.

In brief

ABYAN**Two al-Qaeda militants hand themselves in to Abyan authorities**

Director of Abyan governorate Ahmed al-Maqdashi said that two al-Qaeda militants had handed themselves in to authorities. The state-run 26sep.net reported that al-Maqdashii also said the security forces in the governorate detained four suspects in the bombing attacks which took place in the district of Ja'ar in last July.

The suspects were arrested at the Khanfer area, he said, adding a hunt is being launch for other five militants charged in connection with the attacks.

23 suspects have been interrogated on charges linked to the Ja'ar bombing attacks and other related convictions and they will stand trial soon, al-Maqdashi said. These suspects face charges ranging from committing terrorist attacks to sheltering wanted people.

AL-JAWF**USAID support developmental projects in al-Jawf reviewed**

Al-Jawf governor Naji Thawaba held talks on Saturday with a delegation of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) over health, education and agricultural cooperation relations between the governorate and USAID. The meeting also focused on the taken procedures and steps to implement a number of service and developmental projects in the governorate as well as the support being provided by USAID in this regard. The USAID delegation also visited some archeological sites in Brash historical area in old city of Hazem and airport.

port of the governorate, and also visited Hazem hospital, health center and maternity and childhood center.

ADEN**20 health cadres trained on taking care of babies**

20 health cadres working in field of taking care of children here are trained on giving consultations over babies and children health. In the course being organized by Nutrition Program in ministry of health in coordination with World Health Organization, the participants will receive a number of oral and practical skills on importance of natural suckling, listening and education skills, taking care of lightweight born and complete nutrition.

Opening the week long course on Saturday, Director of Aden Health Office al-Khader Lasour and director Nutrition Program Awadh Haidra affirmed importance of natural suckling for better growth and protection against many diseases, noting that the country is working on realizing highest ratio of taking care of mother and child.

Political disputes' victims called for application

The special committee of compensation for housing and lands due to political disputes for 1986 and 1994 has called on affected citizens to submit their files to the committee's secretariat in Aden governorate.

The committee affirmed in its meeting on Thursday in Aden, co-chaired by Defence Minister Mohammed Ahmed and Aden governor Adnan al-Jafri, that it deals with all presented issues with complete seriousness and that it will work to

find out suitable solutions for them.

It reviewed a number of issues in its agenda and took a number of decisions in this regard to put different solutions for compensation for housing and land issues triggered by political disputes.

The minister and Aden governor directed the committee to give extreme importance for compensation issues and primarily adopt transparency principle as these issues are considered a part of the important issues President Ali Abdullah Saleh gives high importance and care.

Yemen, China reviewed investment merits in AFZ Aden governor Adnan al-Jefri reviewed on Wednesday with Chinese Consul in Aden Wang Chiang characteristics of Yemeni Investment Law and available investment opportunities for Arab and foreign investors in Aden Free Zone (AFZ). Al-Jefri also demonstrated the facilities presented by the governorate leadership to the investors, calling on the Chinese companies to invest in Aden Free Zone.

He confirmed the deep-rooted Yemeni-Chinese relations, particularly in the economic side, expressing his hope that such relations would witness further progress.

For his side, the Chinese Consul emphasized necessity to activate the twinning agreement between Aden city and Shanghai city so as to extend horizon of development between the two countries.

DHAMAR**DCDHRC launches new program**

Dialogue Center for Developing Human Rights Culture (DCDHRC) in Dhamar launched on Thursday a new cultural and

training program for the last quarter of 2008, September- December, in collaboration with Writers Union branch in the governorate. The program include implementation of activities and training to qualify teachers, police officers, lawyers, journalists and officers of NGOs.

Assistant deputy of Dhamar governor Abdul-Karim Thafan spoke of the state's interest in human rights issues, noting the importance of integrating official and NGOs' efforts to reinforce principles of human rights and introduce the basic principles of human rights.

For his part, DCDHRC chairman Mohammed al-Gharbi reviewed plans and programs of the center via holding training activities and programs to qualify this important group of the society.

TAIZ**Archaeological site discovered in Taiz**

Authorities in Taiz province have discovered a new archaeological site on the Yamanh mountain in the district of Janadya, the state-run 26sep.net said on Thursday.

Manuscripts dating back to the era of Sheba Kings and Thu Ridan as well as an eagle-shaped statue under which a grape cluster graved were found at the site.

Head of the archaeological office in the province Alezi Muhammad Saleh said the site, covered by many trees, was discovered previously by citizens who did not reveal that for authorities, adding citizens used stones of the site to build houses.

Saleh said authorities are currently collecting information about the site to be able to direct archaeological teams to excavate the it.

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Their News

CAC Bank & American Express discusses mutual cooperation sectors

The Chairman, Board of Directors of CAC Bank Mr. Hafiz Me'ayad and the Regional Manager of American Express for Yemen and Oman Mr. Omer Abdellah Al-Beity yesterday discussed the procedures of implementing the cooperation agreement signed by both ends last May to commence the issuance of Credit Cards.

During the meeting, the Chairman, Board of Directors of the bank outlined



the steps taken so far to issue the Silver, Golden and Platinum Credit Cards for VIP clients of the bank.

Mr. Me'ayad stated that a team from the bank has been delegated to the Head Office of American Express in Bahrain to acquire the necessary training to market and promote the use of Credit Cards in the Yemeni market.

Mr. Me'ayad measured this agreement as a leap forward that should be added to the overall achievements

and the continuous improvements of the Bank in banking and credit services.

From his side, the Regional Manager of American Express for Yemen and Oman said that concluding the agreement with CAC was due to the vast experience and proficiency of the bank's employees and the technology backed up services rendered to the bank's clients as well.

He clarified that American Express is confident that the bank shall

accomplish all the required tasks that would make the issuance and promotion of the Credit Cards work as planned.

The bank has signed a membership agreement with American Express last May to issue Silver, Golden and Platinum Credit Cards for VIP clients.

CAC Bank is the second member bank of American Express in Yemen authorized to issue the Credit Cards. American Express was established in

1850 as a global company operating in the areas of financial services, check handling and travel and tourism with activities in 18 different counties in the Middle East & North Africa.

The meeting was attended by the Advisor to the Chairman, Board of Directors of the bank, Mr. Walid Al-Dube'e and Mr. Gary Kiln the Manager, Strategic Relations of American Express for the Middle East & Africa.

Announcement Request for Expression of Interest Provision of Consultancy Services for Tender no (32) 2008

Water harvesting as a source for (drinking) water supply in Taiz City**CONSULTING SERVICES****Expression of interest**

The Taiz Water and Sanitation Local Corporation (TWSLC) has an Investment Budget, and intents to apply part of the budget proceeds to make payments under the contract for a feasibility study concerning the development of Wadi Hawjalla as a water harvesting system.

The system is based on the concept of collecting storm water behind a dam, letting the sediment precipitate from the collected water and releasing the collected water in the wadi with a flow velocity slow enough for infiltrating all the water and store it underground in the wadi aquifer for (later) use.

The service includes:

- The review of a Sketch Plan which is already prepared and to verify the assumptions in the sketch plan;
- Review of existing rain gauges and where necessary installation of extra (new) rain gauges;
- Installation of two or three flow measurements devices to measure run off from wadi branches;
- Investigation of the geometry and permeability of the Wadi Hawjalla aquifer;
- Investigation of the general hydrologic characteristics of the area;
- Investigation of the expected water quality to be produced from the system;
- Study the rehabilitation of one dam and the possible development of an extra dam;
- Study the possibilities to use the precipitated sediment as a base material for derivative products;
- Costs calculations regarding the development and operation of the system and the expected price of the water;
- Impact on the physical and social environment.

The study should serve as a basis for taking a 'go no go' decision about developing the Wadi Hawjalla area as a water harvesting system and should be sufficient detailed to prepare detailed designs of system components in the next phase, in case the system will be developed.

- TWSLC now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the High Tender Board's *Manual for the Procurement of Consultants Services*.

Interested consultants may obtain further information by Dr. Abdullatif Al-Munaifi or by Mr. Saleh Bin Raba'a at the address below from 9:00 – 13:00.

Expression of interest must be delivered before September 10th, 2008.

**Taiz Water and Sanitation Local Corporation,
 Director General,
 P.O. Box 5283, Taiz,
 Republic of Yemen,
 Telephone: +967 (0)4 230774;
 Fax: +967 (0)4 222628;
 E-mail: twslc@yemen.net.ye**

Announcement Request for Expression of Interest Provision of Consultancy Services for Tender no (24) 2008

Desalinated seawater as a source for (drinking) water supply in Taiz City**CONSULTING SERVICES****Expression of interest**

The Taiz Water and Sanitation Local Corporation (TWSLC) has an Investment Budget, and intents to apply part of the budget proceeds to make payments under the contract for a feasibility study concerning desalinated seawater (to be located most probably in Mokha) as a source for (drinking) water supply of Taiz City.

The service includes investigating:

- Method of desalination to be applied;
- The expected water quality of the desalinated water;
- The way the brine will be disposed or, preferably, will be used as a source for derivative products (f.i. salt);
- Source of energy to be used;
- Routing of the transportation line up to Taiz City;
- Characteristics (diameter, material, etc.) of the transportation line;
- Number of boosting stations needed along the transportation line, capacity of each boosting station and type of pumps to be used;
- The expected water quality at arrival at the main tank at TWSLC;
- Acquisition of land for installations and transportation line;
- Protection of the installations and especially the transportation line;
- Measures to overcome disruption in water supply in case of system failure;
- The need of constructing new roads or to improve roads to the installations;
- Environmental and social impact of the installations and transportation line and especially the impact of the brine on the (marine) environment in case the brine will be disposed into the sea or will be infiltrated into the soil
- Expected costs for the water for the various options.

The study should:

- 1) Serve as a basis to take a 'go no go' decision about developing a desalination system for Taiz coming years;
- 2) If the outcome of 1) is 'no go', the report should give an idea when desalinated seawater becomes promising as a water source for Taiz City, if ever;
- 3) If the outcome of 1) is 'go', the report should serve as a basis to make sound decisions regarding the choice of the system components and the energy source to be used for desalination and transporting the water to Taiz City.

- TWSLC now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the High Tender Board's *Manual for the Procurement of Consultants Services*.

Interested consultants may obtain further information by Dr. Abdullatif Al-Munaifi or by Mr. Saleh Bin Raba'a at the address below from 9:00 – 13:00.

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Girls' niqab assassinates their childhood, forces them toward early womanhood

By: Yemen Times Staff
Taiz Bureau

Little Muslim girls often are obliged to enter the world of female veiling due to societal traditions and/or family oppression.

But how do they view the world through this black-colored niqab (a thin cloth worn over the head and face)? And what is society's view regarding such a phenomenon? Is it sympathetic toward their childhood or are girls in Yemeni society obliged to look like adults as early as possible in order to experience early marriage? This report seeks to answer these questions.

Eleven-year-old Ruba plays on the streets and alleys with her peers, whose clean, adorned hair flows uncovered down their backs while she wears her black school clothes (an abaya) and covers both her hair and face with a niqab.

Asked why she's dressed this way, she replies, "My father oppresses me and obliges me to wear the niqab, which gives me a continuous headache and difficulty breathing when I'm studying in class."

Ruba admits that she sometimes must remove it in class, but then she must put it on again as soon as she leaves school for fear of her father because, as she explains, "My father won't allow me to go to school unless I wear it."

Nine-year-old Hajar likewise is forced to wear the niqab by her father, who's considered a conservative and religious man. He says he must do this out of worry for others' opinion about his daughter.

Hajar says she hates to go out wearing the niqab. "People wonder when they see me walking on the street with my face and hair covered. Moreover, I like to play and be free, but I feel suffocated when I wear the niqab."

Although she says she hates it, she must wear the niqab or her parents will punish her if she removes it. "I'm no longer able to play like I used to in the past. I even have to wear it when I leave my house to buy candy."

She adds, "I hate everything black because black is the color of the niqab that my parents force me to wear, telling me that it's shameful to go outside unveiled."

"My teachers also talk a lot about my

parents' wrongdoing against me. At school, I take it off only in class. When I return home, my father asks me if I removed it. I say 'No' in order to escape his punishment."

Hajar also maintains that because of the niqab, she fears people. Additionally, she's concerned about her future, particularly as her father has told her that she'll soon be married to her cousin, although she doesn't want to marry and stop her studies.

Despite the fact that wearing the niqab is traditional in Yemen's conservative society, many Yemenis believe that forcing young girls to wear it goes against their childhood innocence.

University student A'ala, whose mother is Egyptian, notes that she's worn a niqab since high school, but she doesn't see that as a problem because she's an adult. "I wear the niqab because it's part of Yemeni tradition, just as some non-Yemenis living here also like to do."

However, she says, "What concerns me is when parents order their young girls to wear it, with no regard for the fact that they're still children. This violates their childhood and thus, imprisons them within the niqab tradition."

A'ala further maintains that young girls should have sufficient opportunity to enjoy their childhood, free from the societal constraints imposed upon adult females. She adds that some young girls wear a niqab in order to beg on the streets and in markets without being recognized by their relatives.

Um Suha believes that forcing young girls to wear the niqab indicates a family's backwardness. "Those who impose the niqab on their young daughters really mistreat them under the pretext of societal tradition, although such traditions have nothing to do with religion," she maintains.

She adds that while the entire world



Because of tradition, many girls start wearing veils right from their teenage years.

stresses the importance of children's rights, families themselves often violate those rights. She points out that society as a whole and families in particular should be shelters for young girls where they can enjoy their innocence.

According to teacher Iqbal, young girls who wear the niqab are more likely to experience sexual harassment and poor educational performance. She confirms that many young girls forced to wear the niqab perform poorly in school because it prevents their clear vision in class and makes them feel imprisoned.

Further, she clarifies that according to Islam, only mature girls must cover their hair – not children. She adds that

even with regard to covering the hands and face, Islamic teachings stipulate that this isn't obligatory and mature girls may leave their hands and face uncovered if they want to.

"Islam doesn't tell us to impose the niqab on girl children like people in Yemeni society do under the pretext of modesty and virtue," Iqbal says, adding, "Girls who wear a niqab are subjected to sexual harassment because they attract attention from people, who then view them as adults rather than children."

According to psychologist Manal Al-Selwi, imposing the niqab on girl children is a wrong traditional inheritance bequeathed from a former generation to modern Yemeni society. She alleges

that the niqab contradicts such girls' nature because they don't realize what's going on around them.

"Yemeni fathers have a leadership complex, believing they should impose their views upon the other family members, including their young daughters," Al-Selwi explains.

"Some fathers are enthusiastic about abiding by religious teachings and this is a good thing. However, what's wrong is misusing such teachings and imposing them on all other family members, including children," she points out, further proposing that, "Human rights organizations should educate society about the wrongdoing committed against girl children regarding the niqab."



Girls in a basic education school in Taiz. Taiz governorate has one of the highest girls enrolment rates in basic education, the overall literary rate is more 80 percent.

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- Provide technical support to Population sector/MOPH&P and to selected Governorate Health Offices in assessing MNH related needs, implementing, monitoring and evaluating MNH services. This includes identifying gaps, providing corrective evidence based cost-effective interventions, and helping for the development of MNH work-plans. The support to MOH/Pop Sector done through representing UNICEF to the RH Technical
- Contribute when required to the assessment and evaluation of MNH service delivery with all its components (quality of services, human resources, equipments, infrastructure, budget, users satisfaction) at health facility and community level in target governorates such as baseline surveys; rapid assessments; impact evaluations; mid-year, end-year and mid-term reviews. Draft Annual reports, Donor reports and Fundraising proposals related to MNH.
- Assist in establishing an MNH database at Ministry, Governorate and district levels with a view to improve planning, programming, and implementing RH programmes and contribute to the review and regular updates of existing MNH related data recording and reporting tools at all levels. This includes regular MNH data analysis related to the four delays underlying maternal and newborn deaths for re-orientation of MNH interventions and strategies.
- Identify training needs among various levels of service providers at the community level, the peripheral health units and referral hospitals. Help MOPH&P in developing a vision for sustainable capacity building for midwifery and newborn care.
- Ensure that National Reproductive Health Strategy will continue to focus on Home based maternal and new born care with institutionalizing a functional referral system to the B&CEmOCs.
- Follow up and update/innovate on community based interventions and action research related to MNH services including documenting best practices and weaknesses to help promote positive behaviors and discourage harmful practices, and to initiate mechanisms for empowering women in the community.
- Contribute to the identification of local leaders, influential people and target audience for advocacy for promotion of maternal and newborn health services and safe delivery practices. For that innovative approaches might be tested such as the involvement of school adolescent girls and community volunteers for rising awareness and behavioral changes towards better use of MNH
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Interested and qualified individuals should send their application along with the curriculum vitae to yemenhr@unicef.org. Applications received after **August 31, 2008** will not be considered.

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Invitation for General Bid No. (8) for the third time for the year 2008

The TV and Radio General Corporation declared its interest in inviting for general bid number (8) for the third time for the year 2008 for buying, importing, supervising installment, checking, operating, confirming, submitting, and guarantee of computers with its stuff .

All the interested specialist and industrial companies, and accredited agents apply with their written request for this bid during the official work time to the following address:

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For buying and having the entire bid documents with receipt: (\$300) non refundable. The deadline of selling the documents is: 13/9/2008.

The file should be enveloped and sealed with the red wax and submitted to the secretary of bids and out-bids committee of the corporation. The file should be addressed with name of the authority, the name of the project, the number of the bid, and the name of the applicant, and the file should include all the following documents:

- 1- Submitting unconditional banking warranty with amount (\$2000) valid for 120 days starting from the day of opening the files or by a payable check.
- 2- Submitting a copy of the taxing card valid 2008,(all the foreign bidders, who don't work, submit a copy of the register documents for extra cost taxation from their countries.
- 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 utilize from the revenues given from the general corporation for social insurance in Yemen).
- 4- A copy of valid certificate of registration and classifications.
- 5- A copy of the alms card valid for 2008.

The deadline of receiving the documents and opening the files at 1:00 pm on Wednesday 17/9/2008 at the main branch of the corporation.



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- Not less than 1 year experience.
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- Demonstrate good and professional communicative skills with positive work attitude towards supervisors, colleagues and clients.
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Interested candidates with good command in Arabic and English languages should send their full detailed CV along with all supporting documents within 2 weeks to the following address:

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Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Required documentation includes:

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2. Copy of Yemeni ID or passport
3. Copy of supporting documents for educational and experience background
4. List of references that can be contacted, if any

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Words of Wisdom



One issue that is so crucial that I can't exaggerate its importance is the need to catch up with the world in computers. I know it looks stupid to call for computer training and education when half the population is illiterate. But, we can't wait to become fully literate to start looking into computers. We can actually embark on multiple parallel efforts.

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

OUR
OPINIONArab adolescents and
the right to know

Over 11 percent of Arab population is adolescent youth. Although it varies from one Arab country to the other, most teenagers admit they have not had any kind of proper sex and reproductive health education during their growing years and especially during puberty.

Because of immigration, globalization and modernization family life in the region is changing and the youth are exposed to different kinds of media that was not available to their parents. This makes the media seconded by friends as the primary source of information on sex and reproductive health for Arab youth. A national survey of Egyptian adolescents titled Transitions to adulthood which was published in 1999 by the population council in Egypt showed that only 7 percent of boys said they learned about puberty from their fathers although 42 percent of fathers said they talked to their boys about it.

Even if the youth wanted to know about sexual and reproductive health the specialized channels such as health centers and reproductive health service units do not recognize adolescents as a target group. And this is not a one way barrier; even youth do not consider these centers as sources of information for them. A 2000 qualitative research on reproductive health knowledge and needs among Jordanian youth published by Princess Basma Women's Resource Centre showed that Jordanian young people aged 10-24 equated reproductive health with maternal health care and believe that health centers are exclusively for mothers and babies.

Unmarried young Arab women especially face a problem when obtaining contraceptives mainly because socially and religiously they are supposed to be virgins and should not need them. Although a Johns Hopkins University published a Jordanian youth survey reporting that 7 percent of college students admitted to non-marital sex in a study in 1994, as did 4 percent of the general population aged 15-30 in 1999. However, another research on reproductive health of the Arab young people published in 2006 by the American University in Beirut states that even young women who marry early also lack knowledge and access to contraceptive services, let alone basic reproductive health services.

The same research concludes that Arab young people's reproductive health needs are not being fully met due to societal reluctance to address these issues and cultural and religious sensitivities, while health services generally fail to recognize the special needs of this age group, particularly those who are unmarried.

So far, little is known about what young people themselves want in terms of sexual and reproductive health services. It is crucial that young Arabs are provided the opportunity and the adequate resources to learn about their health and how to handle physical and psychological changes. They have the right to know, and we as adults have the obligation to assist them in their self exploration so that they make the correct decisions.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Consequences of the
formal democracy

By: Raddad Al-Salami

When the top decision maker in the country behaves in a way as if he knows everything in the everyday life, his country begins to tremble and enter a critical phase of endless crises. This is the case of our nation throughout three decades of governance by the same ruler, under the reign of whom the country couldn't stabilize despite the available resources, which, if exploited wisely, would help restore security and stability to the nation.

Although the nation's wealth is wasted and its resources run out in the purchase of allegiance and loyalty with the ruler in order to ensure his survival, this will never be feasible, particularly citizens' living conditions continue worsening.

The ruler of this nation is accustomed to make decisions alone without realizing the risk associated with this procedure.

As a result, it has become impossible for the country to get rid of the consecutive crises and persistent backwardness. Yemen's top decision maker proved to be skilled in controlling the tune of contradictions,

which generate from his strong desire to stay in power for a longer time period, as well as bequeath power to his children.

These contradictions, however, grew and continued to grow. Consequently, they began expanding until they exceeded the limit of the ruler's desire to remain in power or bequeath its rule, which is accompanied by endless conflicts and sharp crises, to his sons.

The state of nothingness in the political behavior couldn't produce guarantees to maintain unity of the nation, and a strong proof in support of this is the escalating conflicts and protests in South Yemen and other parts of the north. Citizens of the south are also enraged by the formal democracy the ruler shaped and converted into a faked decoration to cover his negatives.

The ruler deceives will of the people through introducing his formal democracy that continues to create sharp crises and dire situations in the nation. His democracy did nothing for the people as much as it increased their sufferings and hardships.

Democracy in Yemen proved to be passive and helpless because awareness about it did not reach the extent of having strong faith in it as indispensable culture. Under a totalitarian and oppressive regime,

democracy changes into a formal concept that lost its essence and real content.

The opposition cannot escape the blame

The Yemeni opposition, on the other hand, is overwhelmed by the memory of past conflicts and faked conspiracies. It has an ugly face as a result of this formal democracy. This opposition is controlled by the awareness of opportunistic leaders, who are only interested in making personal gains and influence.

The opposition leaders don't respect the principles of their parties, nor do they respect rules and regulations governing operations of their parties. They only work on serving their personal interests. As a result, simple grassroots, who seem to support opposition parties, live in a state of extreme frustration, poverty and deprivation.

Yemen's opposition appears to have signed deals and a package of concessions with the government in exchange for protecting personal interests of its leaders. This is one of the negative consequences the 1994 Civil War left behind.

Source: Al-Wasat Weekly

The worst plague affecting Yemen's development:

Old and new guards

By: Nabeel Haidar

The greatest and most terrible plague affecting development in this country is represented by the concept of "Old guards and the outdated ideas that are currently producing new guards, who don't understand even themselves.

The old guard is a unique octopus that excelled its marine counterpart in the number of body parts.

It existed with hundreds and thousands of arms in numerous official and private sectors. It also has social parts that hinder development and such parts might have been the cells of its brain, thereby controlling all its movements.

This guard, along with students of its school who belong to the new generation, claims that it is mature and understands everything in this life while others are immature since they consider themselves as part of the exalted shrines and principles. As a result, they can not accept any constructive change or justified criticism, nor can they do something good for humanity. This is the way others behave, according to the strong beliefs of the old guards.

Regretfully, the old guard and students of its school exhaust capacities and resources of the nation under the allegation of their being senior, more understandable and more capable of getting things done. This guard doesn't accept anything but obedience to its orders. It accepts nothing but insurance for its sayings and actions.

The worst thing is that these guards are sinking in the swamp of corruption and as are their children. They don't have strong faith in institutionalism and want to run on the base of exceptionality.

Via this exceptionality, these guards make decisions themselves, but apply them on others. They admit the

importance of leadership but deny the significance hierarchy in leadership, and are ready to breach all the rules and traditions in order to meet their moody demands.

Of the notorious characteristics demonstrated by the old guards is that of the white slogans, variegated with black, on their heads don't help them acquire knowledge on what is happening around them. They believe that survival and continuity in this life still requires endless bloodshed, and therefore they find themselves obliged to listen to all the instructions indicating that placing general laws into effect is a public task and not private. They strongly believe that violations, though numerous they are, neither annul the task nor erase its significance.

It prefers wired to wireless communication:

Claiming to care for everything in this life, this guard hinders progress and development in this life. It has no single correct password except for its. It wants affairs to proceed via wired communication and doesn't acknowledge the significance of wireless communication in the daily dealings and finishing people's issues and procedures timely.

The old guard has strong faith that it is the only one who can see, and therefore ignores that others around him are observing his baseless action, wrongdoing and alleged professionalism.

The old and new guards sit on chairs and observe how the shrewd individuals of narrow interests behave. They provide nothing valuable for the everyday life except for creating multiple obstacles to development.

The old guard and its followers convey the same

faked understanding to the new guards. It sees itself as a tall palace, while in fact it is an empty well. It claims to be infallible until the extent of refusing to settle the bills of its daily consumption of water and electricity, and access to communication services.

It refuses to wait at any point of the airport except in the VIP Lounge because it believes that it is entitled to have free services and that the state and community must pay the cost of its services.

The old and new guards may be maids, high-ranking officials, politicians, craftsmen, journalists, writers, housewives, working women, or schoolboys who learned from their parents how to behave this way: hindering developing under the allegation of being mature, understandable and aware of everything.

Source: Al-Thawra State-run Daily

SILVER LINING

Opposition & PGC deadlock
and possible compromise

The failure of the ruling party PGC and opposition coalition JMP to reach a consensus on amendments to elections bill has demonstrated lack of confidence not only between the two sides but also among the JMP parties.

Islah party secretary general Abdulwahab al-Anisi was authorized by the JMP member parties to conduct dialogue with President Ali Abdullah Saleh over the elections law amendments and the elections commission.

The two sides' agreement did not, however, address the crucial issues the opposition was calling for, mainly the change of the elections system from single constituency into proportional one. This issue was said to have been moved to constitutional reforms package as changing the elections system requires constitutional amendments. It will be a part of a deal whereby Saleh agrees to the proportional system or part of it and the opposition accepts that Saleh's tenure in office would be considered from the upcoming constitutional amendments.

I think some traditional figures in the Islah like al-Anisi was pushing towards a compromise with Saleh because they are still psychologically tied to such kinds of mechanisms to reach their gains; in other words, they lived up with such a tradition. But, other figures in the Islah are not overburdened with personal gains and therefore, were not satisfied with the slight amendments to the elections law.

At the same time, Islah is bridled with its coalitions with the socialist party which is the one that crippled the Saleh-Anisi agreement. It was difficult for the Islah or Nasserite party to take any decision without the socialist consent as this will lead to the split of the JMP which would serve the goals of the ruling party. Any division would drive the socialist to be a regional party representing the south. At the same time, it will be difficult for the socialist to go ahead with any compromise without addressing the prisoners of the wave of protests in the south. This is why the socialist refused to name its representatives to the elections commission and stuck to the record of the prisoners as the safety belt that would make the party which has been facing hard times since the 1994 civil war look as a political entity that still holds records to play with, bringing it closer to the people in the south and their woes.

I understand Islah is not with the option that JMP boycotts the elections next April. Participation of the JMP in the elections also serves the interest of the ruling party because without the JMP elections become fruitless and will be a step backward for the Yemen's democratization efforts that are not already able to make more progress due to the current electoral system for the historical legacy of the tribe-based culture puts a few rich men in absolute authority over all women and most other men. The loopholes in the current electoral system limit the chances of opposition parties to gain the number of parliamentary seats that would boost their competitiveness.

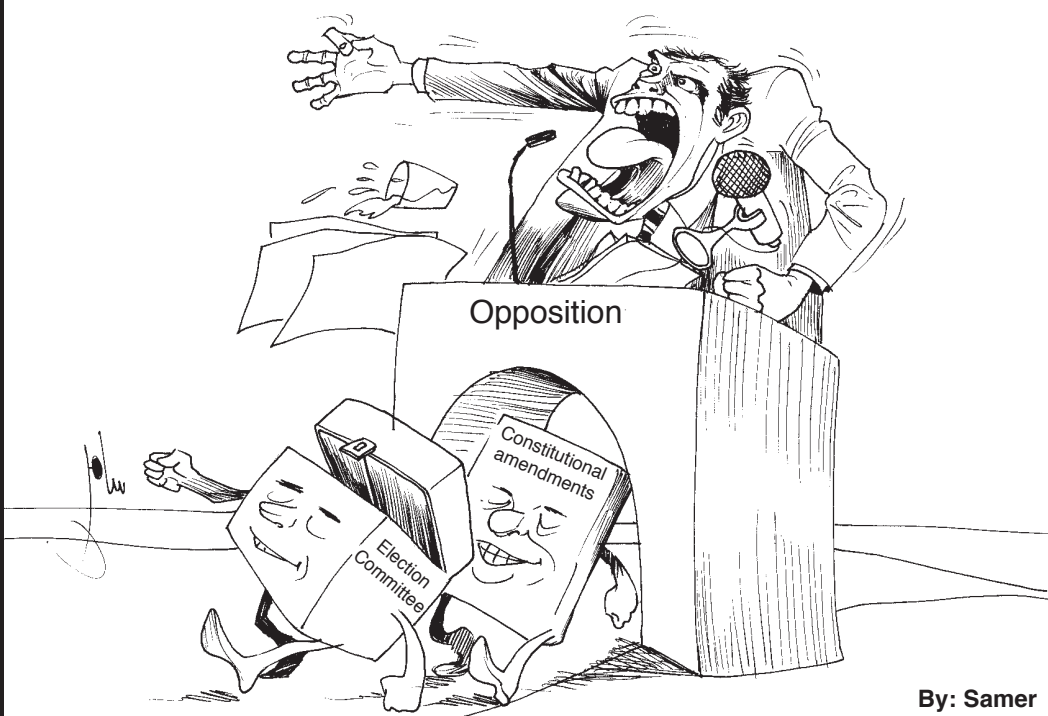
This imbalance results in a toothless parliament that is all the time losing its ability to hold the government accountable.

I believe the opposition should stick to its demands to change the incumbent system that has contributed to weakening party pluralism. However, it seems the traditional force in the Islah party is not interested in this proportional system which will not bring up those religious leaders and influential tribal guys on board as the case now.

Despite the escalating bitter divisions between the ruling and opposition parties, a compromise is still possible for the boycott option is not favorable to the two sides both at the domestic and international levels.

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

SKETCHED OPINION



By: Samer

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Yemen Press Review



NewsYemen.net, an independent News Website
Wednesday, August 20, 2008

Top Stories

- Reforming politics is key to stability, Abwab Magazine says in its editorial
- Rights groups press government to release those detained over alleged connections with Sa'ada fighting
- JMP enraged by ruling party's refusal to amend General Election Law

Members of the Parliament, affiliated with the ruling General People Congress (GPC), have voted by a massive majority to cancel the new draft of election law that contains some amendments and approved the current version placed in effect, the independence news website reported.

It added that Parliament approved the GPC's list of 15 candidates for the membership of the Supreme Committee for Election and Referendum (SCER) that should be reshuffled prior to the parliamentary election scheduled for April 2009.

Parliament's decision came after opposition parties, also known as Joint Meeting Parties, repeatedly refused to name their candidates for SCER and boycotted the Parliament's session on SCER composition and election law amendments that has been adjourned for the third consecutive time.

According to the law, the list of candidates will be submitted to the president to select some of them for SCER membership, but from GPC only.

Head of opposition Islah Party's bloc

Abdul-Rahman Ba-Fadhel vowed on Sunday to forward a list of JMP's candidates for SCER, but member of the JMP Sultan Al-Atwani said the promise of Ba-Fadhel does not represent the JMP's viewpoint.

Spokesman of the JMP Mohammed Al-Qubati said on Sunday that forming the new election committee should be the last point to be addressed and that some points in the election law and the issue of political detainees are still disputed.

Parliament Speaker Yahya Al-Raei said that JMP did not want to amend election law nor did it want to secure release of detainees. "It only wants to hinder the coming parliamentary elections," he noted. Ba-Fadhel said that by the Parliament's decision, the GPC wants to lead the country to "dangerous" direction. MP for Islah Mansour Al-Zindani considered the Parliament's decision as a "victory" for JMP, which he said could push the Parliament to commit such a "legal violation".



Al-Methaq.net, affiliated with General People's Congress (Ruling Party)

Thursday, August 21, 2008

Top Stories

- GPC media personnel urge other journalists to abide by rules of professionalism, enhance democracy
- Government advises opposition parties to stop creating political crises
- It is the fault of those who neither learn nor understand, President Saleh says

Advising party-affiliated media outlets to care about authenticity and not to harm the unity, President Ali Abdullah Saleh confirmed the important role of media institutions, and ministries of education and endowment & guidance in enlightening and educating society, the website reported.

He urged partisan media to care about accuracy and authenticity of information they convey to the readership and protect unity, pointing out that unity is "Our Ship" and "we have to sail by it to the safety shore."

This came during a speech he gave Tuesday at the Broad Media Consultative Meeting, which was organized by Sector of Media and Culture at the General People Congress and attended by media personnel, intellectuals, politicians and educated people from the various Yemeni governorates.

The website quoted Saleh as saying, "We have no problem with the previous election law. We legislated this law with the opposition, and we and they are all partners in the election law. They, however, insisted on amending the law and we responded to their demand."

He added, "We continued to amend the law for two months until we reach the final version of the amended law. The opposition parties are supposed to have voted for the law and submit a list of their candidates for the Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum (SCER). Regretfully, they did not attend the Parliament sitting, assigned for this purpose, nor did they name their candidates for SCER membership."

Saleh clarified that Parliament was compelled to vote for the current election law, placed in effect without

amendments, by the majority of votes. He indicated that each political party is entitled to work hard for winning the majority of votes, but not to fear others.

He continued that opposition parties have the right to declare their objection under democracy that grants them the right to participate in politics, refrain and protest as this is a legal right.



Al-Sahwa.net, affiliated with the Islah Party
Thursday, August 21, 2008

Top Stories

- Saudi Watan newspaper discloses information about Al-Qaeda Organization in Yemen
- JMP accuses ruling party of planning to forge upcoming parliamentary elections
- Parliament's debates on SCER composition reach deadlock

Yemeni parliament did not approve a draft of election law amendments on its sitting Monday, sparking tensions between the ruling GPC and JMP, the website reported in its lead story.

"Rejecting proposed amendments and forming an election commission by the ruling party in isolation is a breach of the agreement reached between political forces," the website quoted Head of Islah Party Abdurrahman Bafadhl as saying.

"Taking such an irresponsible step, the ruling party has hampered the dialogue and coexistence between the political forces" he added, holding the party responsible for any consequences arising from such decision.

He explained that while JMP was to offer a list of its candidates for SCER, GPC made a decision and violated all what was agreed upon by both sides.

Bafadhl further accused what he called "the powerful forces of the ruling party" of aggravating troubles inside the political groups and disobeying orders of president Saleh with regard to releasing political prisoners.

"The GPC's efforts to individualize the state and exclude the opposition are due to help dire situations in the country worsen and destroy democratic development and multi-party system," the opposition leader added.

Mansour Al-Zindani, a Parliament member of the Islah Party, accused the ruling party of preplanning to pass this decision in attempt to conduct unfair and rigged parliamentary elections next year.



Al-Eshteraki.net, affiliated with Yemeni Socialist Party
Thursday, August 21, 2008

Top Stories

- Saleh vows to fight against those who harm national unity
- Security authorities arrest five members of Tawheed brigades in Hadramout
- JMP accuses ruling party of deceiving democracy, reminds it of Saleh's promises to release detainees

Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) released a statement on Tuesday reading, "We claimed the ruling party at an early time to release political detainees," the website reported. The statement adds,

"When Mr. President ordered the relevant authorities in the government to free the detainees, we demanded that his directions should be implemented prior to voting for composition of Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum (SCER)."

It went on to say that "But the ruling party escaped doing so through declarations by its senior leaders. The statement continued that parliamentary blocks of the various opposition parties were shocked at "a coupe" implemented by the ruling party against democracy. They refused to vote for the draft General Election Law amendments, which both sides agreed upon sometime earlier.

The statement accused the ruling General People Congress (GPC) of not fulfilling its promises and obligations, which it agreed upon and signed with its political partners, adding that GPC destroys the principle of political and partisan pluralism and wants to have an election via which it deceives wills of voters.

The statement further reads that the most recent GPC position about the General Election Law confirms that the party masterminds repeated crises in the nation.

The opposition parties also accused the ruling party of exploiting public funds, property and power to buy votes, and such an irresponsible procedure may help it win the majority of seats in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

According to the statement, the ruling party doesn't care about fighting unemployment as much as it cares about oppressing public freedoms, fostering corruption to be come more rampant, encouraging corrupt officials to loot public and private property and creating multiple crises that add an extra burden to people's sufferings.

European Social Democracy's Powerless Power

By: Michel Rocard

At first glance, European social democracy appears to be in crisis. Gordon Brown's slump in the United Kingdom; the brutal shock of Spain's economic downturn; the difficulties of renewing Socialist leadership in France; the collapse of the center-left coalition in Italy; and severe infighting within Germany's SPD: all point to social democracy's seeming inability to seize the opportunity – which the current financial crisis should present – to exert greater influence.

But the simultaneous occurrence and high visibility of these problems is less significant than they appear. Mistakes or clumsiness in governance are not exclusive to the left: Belgium is paralyzed by the threat of break-up, Austria is still looking to cement an unlikely conserva-

tive coalition, Poland is struggling to find a steady balance for its numerous reactionary impulses, and the French president is hitting record lows in terms of popularity.

Two factors help to explain current European uncertainties. First, there is the economic and financial crisis that we are only slowly overcoming. Second, there is the way in which the media are covering it. The combination of the two is, I believe, behind the feeling of powerlessness that is now affecting the whole of Europe, and that may appear to characterize social democracy in particular.

In reporting on the crisis, the media have placed too much emphasis on finance alone, and have paid insufficient attention to the marked slowing of economic growth. But it is the economic slowdown that renders all developed countries less resistant to the financial shocks resulting from the sub-prime problem and from the mixed loan pack-

ages that are then used to dilute the risks attached to sub-prime debt. Indeed, the combination of banking uncertainties, slower growth, and the heightened risk of underemployment and casual labor creates the political weakness now visible in the UK, Spain, Italy, and elsewhere.

Herein lies a real ideological problem. The second half of the twentieth century witnessed the victory of the market economy over the administered economy. The left, which had previously looked to Marx, lost its bearings. Even social democracy, which, particularly in Scandinavia, was an excellent regulator of capitalism, found itself muted in the controversy between Keynesians and monetarists, and, throughout the developed world, the monetarists won. Today's accepted wisdom is that markets are optimally balanced whatever their state, meaning that no government intervention or regulation would be efficient

or desirable.

The current crisis is severe punishment for that immense intellectual error. Not only is the decline of previously accepted social and financial regulations reflected in the relative, but important, drop in wage income as a percentage of GDP – and therefore consumer spending – in all developed countries in the last thirty years, but also the deliberate abolition of controls allows the banking sector to do as it pleases. Still, to judge from most media coverage, the parallel sub-prime and packaged loan crises, which are paralyzing global finance, are entirely attributable to banks' "immorality," and are in no way due to systemic failure.

Simply put, deregulation, privatization, reduced public services, and refocusing corporate management on earnings – all this suits too many people. As a result, the political battle to reintroduce a sense of general interest – of rules and

balance – will be long and hard. What is also clear, even if it is not as well recognized, is that this battle will be primarily intellectual in nature: legitimacy must be given back to the notion of having certain ground rules and public regulatory bodies.

This should be the task for social democrats – but that is where the shoe pinches. We social democrats can no longer fight such battles, because the problem is not only ideological, but also cultural. The media are no longer a commentator, but a participant that has hijacked politics with imagery. Either by accident or design, the media choose only those battles that offer the finest spectacles: clashes of personalities, violence and repression, struggles over national identity, and disputes about moral and sexual attitudes. For the contemporary media, technical controversies about policy hold no interest, because the audience for them is limited.

For example, in preparation for its next congress, the French Socialist Party has succumbed to this reality. We already know that there will be media fireworks, but there will be little talk of economic regulation. The case of Spain – where a competent and respected government is bearing the full brunt of a financial crisis that began elsewhere – is identical. Instead of focusing on the crisis alone, it is fidgeting in the face of the media. Anything that threatens government stability sells newspapers and advertising space, while complicating any resolution of the underlying problems.

Quite simply, a system in which the media behave this way places not only the economy, but also democracy, at risk.

Michel Rocard, former Prime Minister of France and leader of the Socialist Party, is a member of the European Parliament. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2008. www.project-syndicate.org

The American Contradiction Letter from Pakistan

By: Khalil Ahmad

America's wonderful message and example of economic and political freedom has been undermined by its President and politicians: by turning their backs on their founding principles, they have turned their backs on those struggling throughout the world to gain small degrees of those freedoms.

So when Russia invaded Georgia this August in a "peace enforcement operation," America's protests about invading weaker nations that present no threat rang a bit hollow after five years of occupation in Iraq.

Those of us in Pakistan who long for individual freedom, free markets and the rule of law with a working

constitution and an independent judiciary can no longer cite the USA as an example: because our country is a "frontline ally" of the USA in the "war on terror," our political reforms have been held back.

But now that military dictator Pervez Musharraf has announced his resignation, the Bush Administration has lost its closest ally in this War on Terror yet our new democratic process and our weak, corrupt and violent political parties need all the support they can get: this is a huge opportunity for America to help us and to reach hearts and minds in a country that views the USA with resentment but also envy.

Democratic stability in Pakistan would also affect its neighbours India and Afghanistan, and by extension those losing soldiers in the Afghan war,

due in part to Pakistan's lawlessness.

Americans create abundant wealth because they are economically freer than most nations on Earth. In consequence, that makes them politically freer. What underpins all that is the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights, with independent courts and news media.

Despite the Federal state's encroachments on freedoms since 9/11, they are free to pursue most economic, political, social, intellectual, philosophical, moral, spiritual and aesthetic enterprises – free to do whatever they like as long as they do not encroach on others' freedoms.

US foreign policy, however, has never been constrained by its founding principles, not least because Americans have little interest in the outside world:

that's the business of government. But with instant communication, contradictions between its domestic virtues and its imperial excesses are visible, as they were not when, for example, the USA sent Marines to independent Hawaii in 1893 to "enforce neutrality" by reinforcing a coup d'état by foreigners against the monarch.

With the new language of spreading democracy and nation-building, even if such ventures as Iraq and Afghanistan have brought these fine notions into ridicule, that disconnection between rhetoric and reality is all the more stark.

Readers will no doubt cite the role of the USA in World Wars I and II as shining examples of principled warfare but in both cases the USA only came to the aid of its friends when it was attacked. By the same token, the

revolting Stalinist Soviet Union was also on the Allied side in WWII because it too was attacked (by its former ally), so virtue was not an issue.

The saner Americans must realize that they are not going to win this war against Islamist extremism and its allies the way they are going about it now. Envy, religious fanaticism and animosity towards the USA are only fanned by the blatant contradiction in its policies. Unless it is remedied, nothing is going to make any difference.

But America's abundant wealth means that even the massive cost of the invasion of Iraq, more than US\$100 billion a year and rising, is less than two percent of GDP, less than the percentage cost of the Vietnam war, so it could go on for years. Whether the USA can sustain the casualties, falling

military morale and political losses of an endless quagmire are another matter, factors that could lead to sudden withdrawal and humiliation as in Vietnam.

In order to become again an emblem of personal freedom for the oppressed of this earth, the USA needs to go back to basics, following its own Charters of Freedom so beautifully displayed in Washington, DC. Its foreign policy needs to win the hearts of foreign peoples, not their heads of governments. That's the only way to save America, and the rest of us, from its imperial hubris.

Khalil Ahmad is founder and Executive Director of the Alternative Solutions Institute (Lahore), www.asinstitute.org, Pakistan's first free-market think-tank.

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Social stigmas and the adolescent experience of Yemeni youths

Being a conservative society, Yemen attaches many stigmas to issues regarding puberty. As a result, many Yemeni youths reach adolescence with no clue about how to deal with the changes in their bodies, also often accompanied by changes in temper and psychology.

By: Wojoud Mejalli
and Nadia Al-Sakkaf
For The Yemen Times

The onset of menstruation is accompanied by social pressure on girls as they go from being children to women. Different types of pressures accompany boys' advance into manhood, although contradictory to females, this typically means more freedom and more respect for their will and opinions.

Most Yemeni youths obtain information about adolescence and reproductive health from either television, the internet or their friends.

"I still blame my mother for not talking to me about the physical changes our bodies experience during puberty," says Nadeen Mohammed, adding, "I also blame schools for not giving us special courses to understand our bodies and how to deal with these normal changes."

Research on youths' sexual and reproductive health published by American University in Beirut in 2006 investigated these issues among youths aged between 10 and 24 in the Arab world and Iran.

In this research, associate professor of family Jocelyn DeJong and regional youth advisor Golda Al-Khoury commented that the rapid increase in access to education and exposure to the global media has widened generational gaps between parents and their children and altered the ways in which young people receive information.

Although studies show that young people would prefer to learn about puberty and their health from their parents, many parents are reluctant or ill equipped to provide this information.

"Because of the taboos we have in our family in which a girl can't talk about reaching puberty or discuss it, I had a very a serious disease affecting my kidney," Asma Sa'eed recounted, "I had bloody urine, so I told my mother that I was bleeding and she said, 'It's ok, just use what I told you [referring to sanitary pads].'"

"She didn't even discuss the details with me, simply assuming that it was my period. I kept telling myself that it was OK and that the blood was because of my first period. Two days later, I fainted while on my way to school. At the hospital, they told my family that I had a disease that would've killed me had they not rushed me to the hospital."

Because of this incident, Sa'eed says her parents became more open to discussing sexual and reproductive health.

Lack of accurate information about sexuality and reproduction reflects a wider public policy reluctance to provide sex education in schools. Although sex education increasingly is included in curriculums in several more advanced Arab countries, teachers often are too embarrassed to teach it.

Nadeen Mohammed remembers being shocked and frightened when she got her period for the first time. "When I saw the blood, I couldn't stop crying because I thought I'd hurt myself."

Misconceptions

According to Sana'a University gynecology professor Dr. Marwan Shuja'a Al-Deen, puberty often begins among Yemenis at age 10; however, the physical changes become more obvious in boys between ages 13 and 16 years, and between ages 11 and 14 for most girls.

He notes that many wrong concepts accompany puberty, especially regarding women, because their bodies

experience regular monthly changes. For example, many Yemeni mothers believe that bathing or playing sports during menstruation is dangerous and could affect girls' bodies.

"I learned about puberty and what it was like to become a woman through talking to my friends and my mother. The first thing my mother told me when I got my first period was, 'You should never shower when you have your period or you'll face much more trouble than you'll ever know.' Since then, I've followed her advice and never asked why," says Nuha A., who, as a student at the Sana'a University's College of Medicine, knows that what her mother taught her is inaccurate.

Al-Deen clarifies, "It's perfectly fine to do the same activities during menstruation as on other days. In fact, some North American and European sportswomen actually report that they perform better than usual around the beginning of their period because they seem to have extra energy and maybe a bit more aggression than usual."

He adds, "Playing sports also seems to help relieve some premenstrual symptoms."

Another misconception among Yemeni girls is that having their period makes women fragile, vulnerable to disease and they can't donate blood.

Al-Deen explains, "Many girls worry about the loss of blood, believing that it's too much and it makes them weak. I've personally received so many questions and worries about this, to which I simply reply that this loss is mostly blood, but it also contains mucus and other tissue from the lining of the uterus."

"Although it sometimes seems like a lot of blood, it's usually less than 100 milliliters. For example, if you weigh 50 kilograms, you have about 3.5 liters of blood in your body, so losing 100 ml. during a period won't cause any health problems because this blood loss will quickly be replaced by the bone marrow's blood-forming cells."

Of course, this doesn't rule out those cases where heavy menstrual bleeding isn't normal, which, according to Al-Deen, is a medical problem that needs to be addressed accordingly.

As he explains, "If too much blood is lost, a woman can become anemic [not having enough red blood cells], so she may need extra iron in her diet (e.g., from foods or iron tablets) to help her blood create cells to replace that lost blood."

Although the average age of puberty for Yemeni girls is between 11 and 14, some may get their period as young as age 9, while others may experience delayed adolescence. Some consider a girl getting her period early as a sign of maturity and readiness for marriage.

However, the opposite also is true, with parents beginning to worry if their daughters don't get their periods at the same ages as their peers.

Ola'a Yasser recalls, "I remember my family awaiting something from me, actually anticipating and questioning me often about whether I'd had my period yet. When I finally got it as I was nearing age 15, I saw the relief on their faces."

Adolescence and boys

The 2006 research on youths' sexual and reproductive health was based on both published and unpublished literature, in addition to interviews with 51 key informants working mostly at NGOs and international agencies in the region.

Except for Tunisia and Iran, few national government programs address youths' sexual and reproductive health, coupled with the fact that there's a lack of population-based data to guide such programs.

While a strong emphasis on the

integrity and strength of the family unit does have a protective effect, young people lack access to information.

"As a boy, I eagerly awaited puberty so I could prove that I'm a man and have a say within the home and everywhere else. So, I began shaving the hair on my legs and underarms so I'd have more hair on my body and I began pretending to have a strong voice when I was 13. However, I later realized that over time, my body really was changing and I started freaking out," Ahmed Saleh recounts.

Saleh received his knowledge about adolescence from his older brother, who also told him about the real-life responsibilities of becoming a man. "I realized that being a man doesn't just mean your voice changes; rather, it's the ability to handle a situation well and being responsible," he says.

However, Osama Mohsen experienced his puberty differently. "For me, growing up was a disaster. I suddenly had a strong voice and my body started growing hair in new places. I felt ashamed and didn't talk to anyone until my friend told me such things are normal and that I should be happy because I'd become a man."

Regarding the changes most boys experience during puberty, Sana'a University gynecology professor Dr. Asma Ahmed explains, "The first signs of puberty in a boy can show anytime between ages 9 and 15 as he starts growing taller, getting stronger and developing greater muscle mass. The testicles and penis also begin growing larger and it's common and quite normal for one testicle to be larger than the other."

She adds that body hair begins growing in the boy's pubic region, on his legs, underarms and face, further noting that some men continue growing and developing body hair into their 20s.

During this time, an adolescent boy's face, shoulders and back become oilier, which often causes acne. Boys also should wash their hair more often in order to avoid certain diseases and conditions.

Because a boy's sweat glands become more active and produce sweat that smells different from children's body sweat, this can create body odor, so in order to reduce this smell, they should bathe daily and use a deodorant.

Ahmed notes, "Once they develop a coarse or harder voice, many boys feel ashamed and begin avoiding contact with others in society, not realizing that the voice gets deeper in puberty, which sometimes is known as the voice 'breaking' due to the ups and downs in its tone. However, nothing really breaks – it's just called this because the voice box [the larynx] gets bigger."

Although it's a normal process of the male body, one of the most common issues adolescent boys are ashamed to talk about is nocturnal emissions or "wet dreams," which are an ejaculation of semen – not urine – that dampens the sheets or clothing. They are perfectly normal and cannot be controlled or stopped. Girls actually undergo a similar process, but not as much as boys.

Ahmed explains that, "Another embarrassing situation that most boys experience is erections that sometimes occur when they're nervous, excited or simply for no reason at all, and these can make them embarrassed. Other people usually don't notice them as much you do and they go away within minutes."

She adds, "A second experience is that some adolescent boys' breasts may grow slightly or feel tender. This also is normal and a reaction to hormones in the body. It will go away."

STDs and reproductive health issues Adolescents represent 11 percent of the Arab region's population. They also are one of the social groups most susceptible to armed conflicts, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, gender and age discrimination.

According to research on young Arabs published by the American University in Beirut, taboos regarding

discussing sexuality remain a key constraint, while data on unwanted pregnancies and abortions, violence against women and STDs/HIV/AIDS are limited.

Such cultural taboos limit youths' access to sexual and reproductive services and information.

The high social and religious value placed on virginity means that unmarried young women risk judgmental attitudes and stigmatization by health workers if they attempt to obtain contraception.

The 2006 research concluded that sensitivity surrounding youths' sexual and reproductive health has limited the knowledge base, particularly regarding their perspectives and needs, which could help to inform legislation, policies and programs.

Appropriate sex education could be strengthened by working with both parents and teachers. Special attention is needed in designing programs to reach the most vulnerable youths. Above all, government commitment is required to translate small-scale models within the region into national programs that improve the welfare of all young people.

Since the 1994 international population and development conference in Cairo, governments have pledged to improve adolescents' sexual and reproductive health by providing integrated health services, including contraception for sexually active adolescents and health education.

Most world regions still fall well short of these recommendations, especially regarding unmarried youths, but those in Arab countries are particularly underserved.

The Second Arab Women's Development Report published in 2003 and entitled, "Arab Adolescent Girls: Reality and Prospects," confirms

this conclusion, illustrating the situations of female adolescents in seven Arab nations (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen).

The report maintained that the current circumstances surrounding

Arab female adolescents generally aren't conducive to building their futures as autonomous individuals. Additionally, it found a serious lack of preventive health care and information about reproductive and sexual health in the countries studied.

Invitation for Bids

**Tender Advertisement no. (5, 2008) for 1st Time
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The [Yemen Gulf of Aden Ports Corporation – Port of Aden] here announces its desire to invite bidders to Tender no. (5) for supplying [One No. Twin Screw Fast Pilot boat for Port of Aden] which will be financed from:

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Bidders who are willing to participate in this Tender have to submit written applications to [Tender committee Secretary] to receive Bidding Documents for an amount [150 USD] non-refundable. Bidders have to apply during the official working hours at

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- 1- A Bank Guarantee for a lump sum (60.000 USD for one pilot boat) (Sixty Thousand American Dollars.) Bank guarantee has to be valid for not less than 150 days from date of Bid Opening. Bank guarantee may be substituted with a payable cheque.
- 2- Valid tax certificate (A foreign bidder who is not already doing business in Yemen may provide a copy of the appropriate VAT registration document from his home country.)
- 3- Valid Insurance Certificate. (Insurance certificate is required only from firms with employees in Yemen who are entitled to benefits from the Public Enterprise for Social Security in Yemen)
- 4- Valid registration and classification certificate. (In the event of an award of contract if the successful firm is not already registered it will be required to evidence registration with the concerned Entity in Yemen as a requirement for contract effectiveness.)

- A foreign bidder may provide the equivalent documents indicated in 2, 3 and 4 from its country of registration as appropriate.
- The Dead line for submission and bids opening will be (Monday) at [11:00 Am] on 22 September 2008 J. Bids received after this deadline will be returned unopened..
- Bid Opening will take place at [the Office Chairman Executive – Headquarters] and at the same time mentioned above, in presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.
- Potential bidders may inspect BDs before purchasing during working hours for a period 27 days starting from advertisement.



Danish Refugee Council

Tender Notice

**Consultant Needed
Market Based Analysis Skill Gaps in Yemen
Terms of Reference**

Danish Refugee Council [DRC] is an international humanitarian, non-political, non-governmental organization. DRC works in over 21 countries around the world assisting refugees, IDPs and other people in need. DRC is currently starting a program to assist African migrants arriving to the Yemeni coast and refugees living in Yemen.

1.0 Rational

The need for refugees, along with host community members, to be involved in vocational and skill enhancement opportunities is extremely important in the development context. A number of organizations (national and international) have been engaged in improving the skill sets of refugees in Yemen. At the moment the skill enhancement work being offered is not specifically customized to market needs. Identification of gaps between training offered by NGOs and what employers are hiring for must first be identified. After this takes place, specific programs for vocational training and skills development must be designed and implemented to fill the expressed gaps identified.

2.0 Purpose

In order to have an effective and well targeted self-reliance strategy (currently being developed by UNHCR and other key stakeholders in the refugee program in Yemen) it is felt that a demand based market assessment be conducted in order to:

- a. Better formulate vocational training and skill enhancement projects in order to be able to provide linkages between skilled stakeholders and potential employers;
- b. Contribute to the development and implementation of the self-reliance strategy for refugees and host population;
- c. Facilitate Government and Private run vocational training institutes to enhance their training programs to meet the market needs both in Yemen and beyond;

3.0 Overall Objectives of the Assessment

The purposed Market Assessment will focus on the total means by which the Yemeni and refugee youth will be able to have a target based vocational and skill enhancement program. This will ensure that the potential of job placements after successfully completing the training is greatly improved.

The specific Objectives of the assessment are:

- To collect and analyze information on existing and potential market needs in Yemen and the Gulf States;
- To analyze the possible economic opportunities that could facilitate increase of income of refugees and host community members;
- Identify possible programming initiatives for the development of marketable skills and access to increased job opportunities;
- To assess and provide recommendations on how to meet the needs expressed in the skill gaps;

4.0 Approach and Methodology

DRC proposes a participatory approach in undertaking this assessment; this approach contributes to the long-term ownership of the recommendations that are developed and generates internal capacity to deal with challenges that inevitably surface during the implementation process.

The assessment will have a primary focus on Aden, Taiz, Muk'allah, and Sana'a. A literature review along with focus groups with various stakeholders (Government Officials, UN Officials, Community Leaders, and Community Members) will be conducted. For the remaining areas of Yemen, and the Gulf States, only a literature review will be conducted. The assessment will utilize the random sampling technique.

A detailed literature review will be conducted to identify relevant answers to key questions and identify insights on past interventions by various organizations and/or individuals. This will assist in identifying and learning from past successes and failures. This will increase the sustainability of future activities.

5.0 Duration

This consultancy should be completed within 40 days of signing the contract.

Please send your application electronically to the following:
E-mail: lvto.drcyemen@drc.dk

Or by post to:

**P.O Box 7407
Mansoori /Aden-Republic of Yemen**

The deadline for the submission of application is the 3rd of September 2008
Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

Chemicals and tobacco are increasing cancers in Yemen

By: Mahmoud Assamei

Every nation has its own particular reasons and/or factors behind increasing incidences of cancer. In Yemen, chemicals or pesticides used in farming and tobaccos are the main factors in increasing cancer cases, doctors say.

They warn that using tobacco, whether it is smoked or smokeless tobacco such as shamma, which is placed under the tongue or between the lips and gums, coupled with the unregulated use of chemicals in irrigation are factors in the spread of various cancers and other diseases among Yemenis.

Officials and specialists maintain that such chemicals enter the country both legally and illegally, but that the Yemeni government has failed to control them to the degree that they have become used on all farms.

Dr. Mohammed Kedesi, radiation oncologist at the National Oncology Center in Sana'a, said, "We've recently noticed a horrible phenomenon of

increased instances of cancer among Yemenis, although the disease isn't new in this country.

"The international cancer rate is between 80 and 120 cases among every 100,000 people, but that figure is increasing in under-developing countries, including Yemen," Kedesi noted.

He revealed that tobacco use is responsible for 30 percent of cancer cases in Yemen, adding that, "Most Yemenis afflicted with cancer are from Hodeidah governorate because of the bad habit of shamma usage." He pointed out that tobacco contains more than 40,000 toxic substances, 40 of which cause cancer.

Concerning pesticides and chemicals, Kedesi says such substances are a catastrophe in Yemen because of their widespread use and misuse.

Yemeni farmers use such chemicals to make their plant products grow faster, thereby making more profits without considering the possible bad outcomes or catastrophes resulting from such action.

As Kedesi explains, "The problem is

that farmers use huge quantities of pesticides in qat farming. Some of these chemicals either have expired or are banned internationally, which causes a catastrophe for Yemen."

He added, "We've received many cases of those suffering various blood cancers due to spraying plants with such chemicals. Children who work on farms are more vulnerable to blood cancer because they're still growing."

Kedesi confirmed that the oncology center receives 25 new cancer cases every day. Most cancers among men, such as mouth, neck and tongue cancers, could result from their addiction to tobacco and chewing or eating plants sprayed with chemicals.

In an interview, the center's director, Nadeem Mohammed Sa'eed, told BBS that several pesticides are toxic and their prolonged use could cause serious diseases, including cancer.

"As a result of the use of pesticides for qat and vegetable cultivation, about 30 percent of Yemeni cancer patients have mouth and gum cancers. This is really a frightening figure and it repre-

sents one of the world's highest rates for mouth and gum cancers," Sa'eed noted.

Ahmad Al-Basheh, vice chairman of Yemen's Standardization, Metrology and Quality Organization, says many goods enter the country illegally, including chemicals.

Although it has offices in the nation's main outlets, the organization isn't responsible for investigating chemicals and pesticides; rather, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Industrial Ministry are responsible for this.

"Our job begins when we're notified of illegal or dangerous products on the market. We then go to the market to investigate such products," Al-Basheh explained, noting that his organization conducts relatively few investigation campaigns of factories and retail stores.

Because the National Oncology Center is the only center treating and investigating cancer cases in Yemen, many people still await treatment and investigation.

Cancer patients in Yemen suffer shortage of medications and many

require care at the center, but cannot gain access because of crowded rooms and no more beds due to the increasing number of cancer cases in Yemen and only one specialized center in Sana'a.

Newlywed Hana'a Al-Hashedi suffers kidney, lung and liver cancer. Her husband, Abdu Qaid, is at the oncology center seeking medicine for his wife, whom he married just a year ago.

He explains, "My wife stays at home because we can't access a bed at the center. Doctors tell us there are no more beds, so they direct us to wait. The center can't give my wife all of the medicine she needs, which is now two syringes every day at a cost of YR 10,000 each."

Another patient, Najibah Muthanna, is awaiting chemotherapy for stomach and ovarian cancer.

"My wife Najibah is at our home awaiting chemotherapy there. We've waited months to gain access to the center, which is why I'm here today following up this purpose," her husband explained.

Najeeb Al-Qadasi, the oncology cen-

ter's director of inspection and control, agrees with these patients' statements, relating the reasons to the large number of cancer patients coming from across the nation's governorates to the sole center in Sana'a.

"Our center receives 400 cancer patients every month, which is causing heavy pressure on it," Al-Qadasi notes.

Concerning medicine shortages, he points out that cancer medicines are very expensive, coupled with the fact that the receipt of the center's medical purchases often are delayed, which causes a disruption in providing patients their necessary medicines.

The Yemen Times exerted many efforts in an attempt to get an answer from concerned bodies about the nationwide spread of chemicals and their unregulated and random use in Yemen, but received no cooperation from such bodies.

Yemen's Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation refused to comment on the reason for the existence of large quantities of banned chemicals entering the nation both legally and illegally.

Current gov't policies don't solve Yemen's looming water crisis

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For The Yemen Times

Yemen faces huge dangers pertaining to water security and its government policies aren't responding to this danger, according to participants at a seminar organized last Wednesday by the Saba Center for Strategic Studies on "Water security in Yemen: challenges and treatment."

The participants maintained that practical solutions should be implemented in order to solve the current and future water crisis. They suggested that redrawing the historical agricultural map where Yemeni farmers have worked and adapted to water resources in the past will help determine solutions for how to utilize both surface and underground water.

Sana'a University economics professor Nasser Al-Awlaqi believes Yemen's water crisis results from government policies followed since the 1970s focusing on expanding agricultural areas that depend on limited water resources. As a result, the water reserve was drained.

However, Al-Awlaqi pointed out that the situation can be controlled if both water supply and demand are managed "by decreasing water consumption and agriculture in Sana'a basin through coordination between the government and farmers." He added, "We should realize that the water situation in Yemen is dangerous, as there is an approximate 1 billion cubic meter shortfall between supply and demand."

Al-Awlaqi noted that considering water desalination as a solution for Sana'a is difficult, given Yemen's current economic situation. "We shouldn't rely on desalination as an alternative solution to the water crisis in Sana'a, as such a solution only applies to coastal cities. For Sana'a, it's nearly impossible to supply it with desalinated seawater because the project is too costly, particularly within the current economic situation and the nation's limited capabilities."

Sana'a University geology professor Mohammed Al-Duba'ie indicated that population density is one reason for the water crisis in Sana'a. He suggested decreasing the capital city's population from the current 2 million to only 800,000 in an effort to limit its water consumption. He added that a strategic national plan should be put in place concerned with the situations in both the Sana'a and Taiz water basins.

The participants said that lack of technology such as radars and satellites causes speculation about the actual water reserve, maintaining that such devices should be provided because they are minute in determining environmental problems, in addition to



A Qat farm in the middle of the deserted land. Deforestation is one of the eminent dangers facing Yemeni land especially that over 70 percent of agriculture wanner goes to Qat plantations.

helping experts determine suitable remedies, plans and alternatives.

To help find a solution to Yemen's water crisis, the participants recommended the following:

- Treating wastewater
- Moving from a centralized to a decentralized system with regard to handling water usage.
- Thoroughly discussing the water crisis in Sana'a
- Growing crops convenient for existing water quantities
- Controlling water contamination factors
- Focusing on rain-fed agriculture and renewing agricultural terraces
- Increasing social awareness about the water crisis via the media

Yemen is experiencing an aggravating water crisis due to a shortage of underground water. Experts say that some basins, including Sana'a basin, will face complete depletion within two decades, especially given that Yemen lacks rivers and lakes.

Sana'a and Taiz are the top Yemeni governorates experiencing water shortage in their basins. Located 240 kilometers south of Sana'a, Taiz government has suggested several solutions to the crisis, including bringing in desalinated water from the Red Sea or supplying the area water from nearby basins.

A report issued by the General Authority for Rural Area Water confirms that affected residents living in Sana'a depend upon water trucks that fetch water from areas as far as 6 kilometers from the city, with each home using no more than 20 liters of water per day. It further noted that agriculture in these areas has stopped completely

due to lack of water.

Ali Al-Raimi maintains that he spends more than YR 3,000 every month on buying water. "I live in Sana'a and I have to buy water because

the water we get through the public water project isn't enough," he said, adding, "If we didn't buy water from the water truck every week, we wouldn't have any water at all."

According to the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation web site, water decreases in most Yemeni basins between 1 and 8 meters annually. If such draining continues, complete depletion is likely in most such basins within 15 to 50 years as water demand exceeds supply.

Official statistics on water consumption in Yemen reveal 3.5 billion cubic meters used annually, meaning that there's an annual water shortage of more than 1 billion cubic meters. Such quantity is consumed from underground water reserves and is not recovered.

The web site reports that there are 14,000 water wells in Sana'a, which is 10 percent of the entire country's wells. The basin's area is only 1 percent the size of the agricultural area and it supplies only 80 million cubic meters of water every year.

However, annual water consumption in Sana'a basin is 219 million cubic meters, 176 million cubic meters of which is used for agriculture, while 37 million is for household use and 6 million for industries.

Despite seasonal rains that often cause flooding in some areas, the World Bank places Yemen among the world's poorest nations in terms of

water resources. Yemen depends on 45,000 wells, which deplete its already limited water resources due to mismanagement and lack of modern irrigation.

Rainwater and other sources replenish less than three-fourths of the underground water consumed in Yemen. Each individual share of this quantity of water is 150 cubic meters, compared to 1,250 cubic meters per person in other Middle Eastern and South African nations. This represents only 3 percent of an individual portion of water in the world.

A previous World Bank study attributed the aggravation of the water crisis in Yemen to the inactive role of incumbent bodies within the government, further noting that 40 percent of the nation's water is wasted.

According to the WB, Yemen's water crisis negatively affects its economic reforms and efforts to combat poverty.

In this regard, the WB study suggested a group of measures to help Yemen face its water crisis, the most important of which is conducting a national dialogue to discuss the dangers of water scarcity, in addition to promoting the role of institutions concerned with this field, in cooperation with donor organizations, to solve this crisis.



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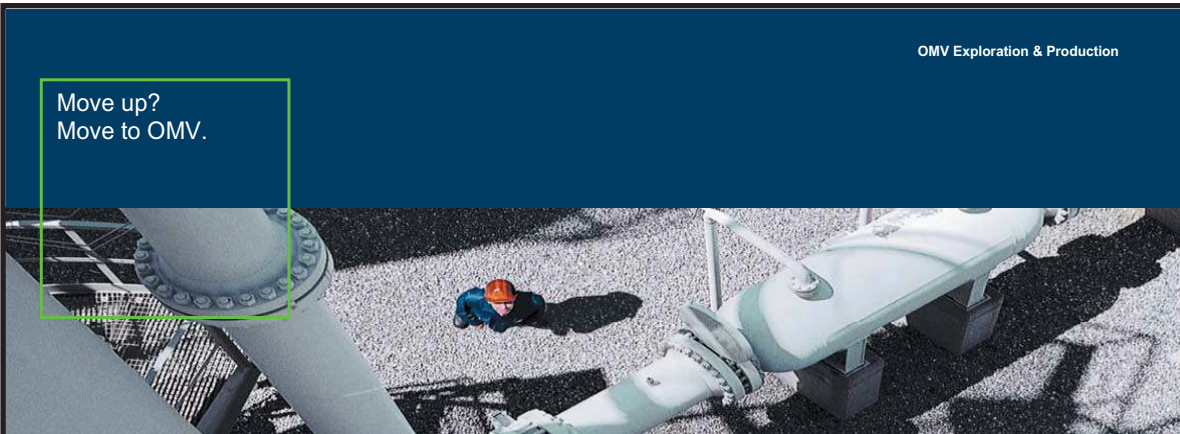
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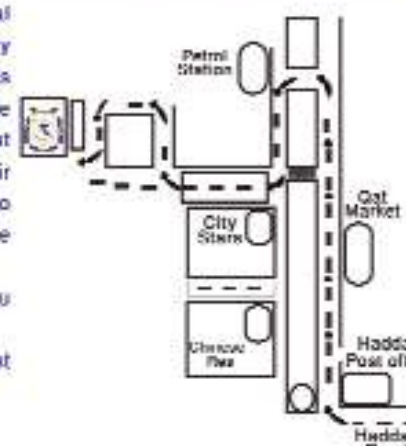
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I lead of School
Karen Al-Badli

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نابة عن أعضاء هيئة التدريس بمدرسة
وديان حمد ترحب بكم وتقول لكم
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تقديم لكم بالأسبوعيات هذا الصيف عروضاً مذهلة تتخللها من عروض الصيف 2008، حيث يمكنكم هذه العروض جوائز قيمة وهدايا مجانية من أجهزة التلفاز والأجهزة المنزلية. كل الهدايا سيتمثلها بمسحوق بالاسبوعيات. إذا انتظرت أسرع لأقرب معرض أجهزة بالاسبوعيات، واجتمع الفرصة فالتعرض.

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“Sadaqah” Part II

A Sacred Institution to Facilitate the Poor

By: Qazi Dr. Shaikh Abbas Borhany

Sadaqah is the best act through which a person could perform for nearness to Allah and fight the forces of evil. The economic system of Islam provides us Talim that wealth should not be accumulated in the hands of one person, neither a wealthy, rich person should become a ‘Shaddad’, ‘Hamman’ and ‘Abu Lahab’ to sit over his wealth like a snake. Similarly, the Trustees of Bait al M’aal should not utilize the fund undeservedly, which is similar to sucking the blood of the poor. Islam totally condemns it. Today the rich and wealthy of a society have become ferocious so as to suck the blood of the poor, but Islam is a religion of Justice, which never allows that a person may become a prey of another person. It provides assurance that all people are not equal, neither in ilm nor in wealth or power. One may be earning a lot, another less. One may be a hard worker, the other may not be so, yet another may be jobless, handicapped or crippled. Qur’an has defined the Ummah as a large family, which deserves and demands a close co-operation, mutual help and care, feeling of sacrifice among each other. Qur’an has given an assurance to this family (Ummah) for survival and bestows a golden principle:

“Help and co-operate among each other in goodness and virtue”.

Rasulullah (S) guides the Ummah regarding Sadaqah and Inf’aq several times, and encourages them through so many Ahadith. Sadaqah is the famous institution of charity. This is an institution through which one can spend in the name of Allah, for the cause of Allah. It is the ‘identity card’ to achieve nearness of Allah. It is the name of carrying good deeds. It is the way to fulfill the needs of the deserving class. Qur’an says:

“Say: “Verily my Lord increases the Rizaq-substance for whomsoever He wills of His servants, and restricts it (for whomsoever He wills) and He repays whatsoever you spend. He is the best of all providers”.

One assurance has been given in Qur’an, which is not found in any other Scriptures:

“Those who spend their money (by giving Sadaqah, Khair’at to deserving) openly or quietly in the day and at night, their reward is with their Lord the Cherisher, they will not face any danger nor face sorrow or grief”.

All commentators of the Qur’an are unanimous on the Nuzul of the above Ayat that it came down in praise of Ali to glorify his Sadaqah of four Darahim in the way of Allah—one by night, one by day, one secretly and one openly.

Let us take an example from some standard level. Today, while man has become materialistic, he first secures his selfish interest. He will not do anything without any interest. But the best assurance for secure profits is given in the following Ayat of the Qur’an:

“The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is as the likeness of a grain, which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains and verily, Allah gives manifold to whomever He wills, and Allah is omniscient, knowing”.

Now pay attention and think over it, what a divine message Qur’an conveys to believers. Those who make a name in misery, whose hearts are narrow and tied up just like a handcuffed chain; they are away from the sense of kindness. Qur’an has mentioned such people in such a strong manner that the entire body shivers on its warnings. Directions have been given as follows:

“Listen! You people are invited to spend your money in the way of Allah, but some among you are miser. In fact they are doing misery with themselves; (i.e. not sharing part in Sadaq’at and Khair’at made them deprived of

Barak’at and Naimat); while Allah is self sufficient and you are needy. If you turn back, He will bring other people in your place (the Naimat you have should be transferred to other) who will not be like you”.

After this, again there is a warning of a horrible punishment as follows:

“No one will be thrown in it but the miser, who deny the truth and turns his back”.

Strong tone and clear wordings of the above Ay’at is enough of a warning to the miser. Numerous Ahadith carry Talim and explain the significance of Sadaqah. He has repeatedly and forcefully informed and insisted upon those in the Ummah, who have been rewarded with bounty, not to spend their wealth as an Isr’af, or for glorification among people. Instead they must spend it on deserving, needy people, who keep their problems hidden, due to self-respect. Many people go to bed without food. In winter, due to shortage of clothes, they face cold winds, and suffer various diseases without medicines.

One should keep in mind that class discrimination and poverty are two different things. In each society, class discrimination problems survive. Guidance of Islam regarding the removal of differences among classes is that the poor class must have the necessities of the life, according to the need of the time. Class discrimination is tyranny, which is the outcome of the three evils. Rasulullah (S) has declared Jih’ad against them. In ‘Ghazwah Badar’, these ‘Three Evils’ were present, and also represented individually. First was the Ruler, Abu Jahl; the second was the capitalist power of Quraish and third was religious leader, Abi Lahab. These three forces are still present today in different faces and dresses. The influential partner of this ‘Troika’ is the Clergy. They are the most dangerous than the two others, as they cheat in the name of Allah and His Rasul. It is their profession, every-

where. ‘Ulama al Su’ does not offer constructive guidance to the Ummah, but mislead them and say the less fortune that it is their destiny. Neither Qur’an nor Rasulullah (S) provides this Talim. If people come out of the Net of the wicked clerics, they would be able to spend better lives. People of all classes should avoid financial support to the clergy in the name of religion, and donate to welfare and charitable projects from which needy people can be helped. An Urdu poet had discussed these crooked clerics, and rightly explained in his poetry as follows:

“Geo Mulla Dharakey Sey; Duniya Margae Faqey Sey”

O Crooked clerics! Enjoy the life, you are free of worries, (as your perpetual source of income is ‘Bait al M’aal’ of public, including non broken chain of donations under numerous heads); while masses have multiple problems, the poor go to sleep without food.

“Tu Kh’aa Mazey Sey Halwey M’andey; Tujh Ku Kiya Hey A’atey Sey”

You enjoy feast everyday; have you ever considered how difficult it is for less-fortune to earn a living?

Qazi Dr. Shaikh Abbas Borhany is attorney at Law & Religious Scholar PhD (USA), NDI, Shahadat al A’alamiyah (Najaf, Iraq), M.A., LLM (Shariah), Member, Ulama Council of Pakista. Email: qazishkborkhany@hotmail.com.

This paper was prepared on the request of the Chairperson, “Council of Islamic Ideology Pakistan” (Constitutional Institution of Pakistan) a few years ago to answer the question: “How can an individual or an institution contribute to upgrade the quality of life of the less fortunate ones? With this discussion on the ‘Institution of Sadaqah’, an attempt has been made to re-establish an institution, to facilitate the poor class of the Ummah and improve their quality of life.

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Influential Hadrami
historian and national poet,
Abdulqader Al-SabbanBy: Eyad N. Al-Samman
alsammanworld@yahoo.ca

Yemeni historian, poet, author and researcher A b d u l q a d e r Mohammed Al-Sabban was born in 1921 in the northern Hadramout city of Sayun, where he began his primary education at age 7.

He joined Sayun’s Al-Nahdha Al-Elmiya School in 1932, at the same time studying various Arabic sciences and Islamic religion with the help of his father. He then moved on to Ribat Bin Silm, a religious school hosting and teaching students, in Ghail Ba-Wazeer district.

Al-Sabban obtained his first job in 1937 as a scrivener at the Judiciary of Shibam, a city in northern Hadramout, where he later established Al-Minbar (The Pulpit) magazine.

In 1938, he participated in founding Al-Sharj University in Mukalla, the largest town in southern Hadramout. That same year, he also helped to found and headed Al-Shabab Club in Sayun.

He established Zahrat Al-Shabab (The Bloom) magazine in 1942, also serving as its editor-in-chief. In 1943, Al-Sabban took part in founding Sawt Al-Watan University in Sayun, also holding the post of its vice secretary.

Working as a teacher in Mukalla in 1944, after nine years, he participated in founding the Hadramout Farmers’ Organization.

He then returned to Sayun and was appointed chairman of that city’s municipality in 1957. In 1963, he par-took in founding the Hadrami Laborers Association, as well as the National Printing and Publishing Company in Sayun.

After World War II, Al-Sabban immigrated to Saudi Arabia to work, where, beginning in 1964, he became secretary to a businessman, while continuing his studies, eventually earning degrees in journalism and accounting from Syria and Egypt.

Al-Sabban returned to Yemen in 1969, working as a lawyer before being appointed Sayun municipality’s financial and legal affairs assistant in 1974. Beginning in 1978, he devoted himself to working as a historical researcher in Sayun’s Culture Office.

In 1979, he was appointed manager of Sayun’s branch of the General Organization of Antiquities, Museums and Manuscripts. Additionally, he participated in founding the Sayun branch of the Yemeni Authors and Writers Union, which he headed until 1987.

Al-Sabban’s life was distinguished by prolific literary and cultural production, with more than 90 books covering history, poetry, jurisprudence and biographies.

Published in 1967, Al-Sabban’s first divan was, “Fi Rabiya’a Al-‘Aumr” (“In the Bloom of Youth”). It contains more than 50 poems he penned during his youth’s bloom and discussing issues such as the joys of youth, the anguishes of expatriation and his nationalistic feelings.

The divan’s romantic poems include, “Al-Samar fi Al-Qamar,”



(“Soiree in the Moon”) and, “Al-Hubb Al-Khalid” (“The Immortal Love”), while its nationalistic poems include, “July 23,” “The Victory of Algeria” and “Unity Day.” It also includes elegizing poems, such as, “My Late Father,” and religious poems such as, “Exalted Ramadan,” and “The Prophet’s Birthday (pbuh).”

Al-Sabban’s second divan, “Fi Al-Tariq” (“On the Route”), still remains in handwritten form. His divan, “Thowaar fi Al-Yaman” (“Revolutionists in Yemen”), was issued in 1990 just after Yemen’s reunification. It includes poems written and recited during different periods of Al-Sabban’s life, including, “Sana’a,” “The Late Gamal Abdul Nasser” and “November 30.”

He also penned two poetic dramas: 1945’s “Salwa and Mohammed, the Lover” and 1959’s “The Livelihood.” Among his other poetic divans are, “Sana’a and Aden,” and, “Democratic Yemen is Speaking.”

One of Al-Sabban’s most significant books about poetry is 1980’s “Public Poetry in Hadramout: Research and Documentation,” published posthumously in 2007. In it, Al-Sabban documented numerous aspects of public poetry’s heritage and reviewed its history, its standards and its major development periods.

Also published posthumously in 2001, his 1974 book, “The Literary Movement in Hadramout,” is a concise study of the phases in the Hadrami literary movement from pre-Islamic times until the end of the 14th Hijra century.

Al-Sabban’s other documentary and social works include: “Historical Notifications About Wadi Hadramout” (1975), “A Comprehensive Look at Semi-desert Life” (1982), “Visits and Habits: Visiting the Prophet Hud (pbuh),” “Perusals in Literature and History,” “Al-Dan in the Hadramout” and “Mosques in Sayun.”

Among his jurisprudential works are, “The Jurisprudential Guide on the Route,” and, “Research on the Imprest’s Issues.”

In 1988, Al-Sabban received the Order of Merit in arts and literature from the presidency staff of Aden’s Supreme People’s Council. He also received the 1989 Arab Historian Medal from the Arab Historians Union’s secretariat-general, two 1993 certificates of appreciation from the U.S. cultural attaché and the U.S. Embassy in Sana’a and the 1998 Sana’a Order of Merit in arts and literature.

In 2004, he was awarded posthumously by the General Center for Studies and Research in Sana’a. Likewise, he received a posthumous certificate from the Yemeni Union of Authors in appreciation for his momentous role in the union.

Al-Sabban died in Sayun on Jan. 13, 1999, at age 80. He was a Yemeni writer who must be imitated for his persistent intellectual, literary and historical activities; however, his work hasn’t received the expected popularity because dozens of his valuable books remain in handwritten form.

Al-Sabban once wrote in one of his books, “I insist on being considered among other authors and poets and I’ll never withdraw from this field. I offer samples of my poetry and I’ll leave the assessment to my readers.”

The history and importance
of Assaid’s oldest mosque

By: Nasser Abdullah Nasser Salah

From an Islamic perspective, mosques everywhere naturally are regarded as houses of Allah (God), built simply to worship Allah, to whom be ascribed all perfection and majesty. They also are places to study and recite the Qur’an, say prayers and gather in remembrance of Allah, aside from being platforms used to spread biased thoughts against those things that are offensive to Islam.

On the other hand, they function as a means to communicate a noble message to teach people that they must understand religion properly in order to distinguish between what is good and evil and to stay away from extremism.

In this regard, the Qur’an notes in Surat Al-Tawbah: 18, “The mosques of Allah shall be visited and maintained by such as believe in Allah and the Last Day, establish regular prayers and practice regular charity [zakat] and fear none (at all) but Allah. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance.”

For this reason, mosques aren’t built for only certain classes of people, but for all who embrace Islam as their religion, regardless of their race or language.

The town of Assaid in Shabwa governorate used to have only three small mosques. They are Al-Habib, Al-Qarib and Omer and Ahmed, named for two pious sheikhs whose tombs are located in the far rear of the mosque.

This third mosque is the oldest and first to be built of mud bricks in the heart of the town south of homes belonging to the Banafa family. It’s said that its first foundation dates back to approximately the third Hijra century. A narrow 60-meter well mysteriously dug into the stone ground served as its water supply.



The old mosque 1373 Hijra.

Previously, an oil-fed light was suspended from the ceiling to light the mosque, followed by gas lamps and then electricity.

The mosque’s current imam, Mohammed Adam Banafa, maintains that his father, Hussein Adam Banafa, reportedly said that the two sheikhs, Omer and Ahmed, came from Medina, Saudi Arabia and were from the insar (helpers), who enjoyed mutual brotherhood with the muhajireen (emigrants), whom the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) established to support Islamic principles there.

Banafa claims that his father told him of a book entitled, “The Gift of Time Regarding the Deeds and Biographies of Great Yemeni Scholars,” by Al-Attas, which provides sufficient evidence and accounts of these two sheikhs.

Built in five stages, one of which already has been mentioned, stage two of the mosque dates back to Hijra year 608, in which another adobe building was built during the time of imam Sheikh Abdulguffar Banafa and contin-

ued until Hijra year 1320, when imam Sheikh Saleh Bin Abdullah Al-Haji Banafa began supervising the third stage.

Stage four followed in Hijra year 1373, during which time its western and southern sides were expanded, entirely financed through charity, led by the sheikdom’s amir (prince),

Abdullah Bin Muhsin Bin Farid, the Banafa sheikhs and Sa’eed Bin Hussein Mujawer, in addition to other charitable donations.

Under imam Sheikh Hussein Bin Saleh Adam Banafa, the mosque was widened and built of both earth and stone, with a minaret, and was large enough to accommodate approximately 300.

The mosque’s fifth and current building phase was in Hijra year 1410, during which time immigrants living abroad, particularly those in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, contributed generously, led by Hiderah Salem Ahmed Bin Rawis.

A new upstairs mosque holding more than 3,000 worshippers was construct-

ed, along with a new minaret. The mosque’s current imam is Mohammed Hussein Adam Banafa, who also is a marriage official and a religious trustee.

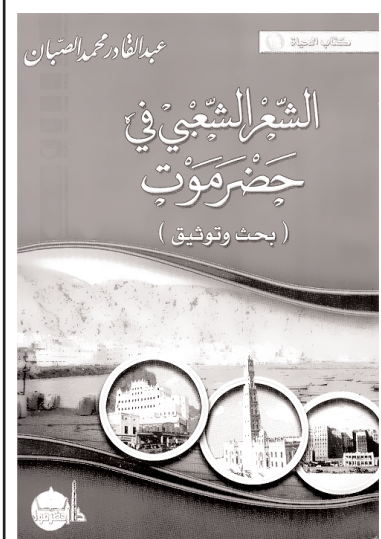
Although the upstairs mosque was built directly on top of the oldest building, with an extension of its western and southern parts, the old one still exists and is used only during Ramadan, particularly for breaking the fast out of consideration for the two tombs of Omer and Ahmed isolated near the back wall.

As Assaid’s oldest and the large mosque, it has played a great and important role in drawing large numbers to assemble for religious occasions, particularly Friday sermons and prayers, but also gathering worshippers to celebrate the Prophet Mohammed’s (pbuh) birthday, enabling area residents to seclude themselves there during Ramada and utilizing its minaret and a microphone for the daily prayer calls so that those indoors can hear them.

Over the years, particularly during the 1990s, no fewer than 12 mosques were built in Assaid to meet the needs of its increasing population and help both young and elderly residents to comply with the calls to prayer and perform them satisfactorily in groups within their own areas.

Mosques actually are sacred houses that are dear to every Muslim all over the Islamic world. For this reason, respecting and frequenting them, as well as attending collective prayers there, greatly benefits those who continue doing good deeds.

As noted in Surat An-Nur: 36 in the Qur’an, “In [those] houses, which Allah has permitted to be raised to honor for the celebration in them of His name. In them is He glorified in the mornings and in the evenings (again and again).”



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